

# WORLD STANDARDIZED RULES OF THE WORLD POOL-BILLIARD ASSOCIATION (WPA)

(Version 11/01)

{The WPA Rules of Play were updated at the 1999 General Assembly, whereby it was approved to recognize a five year moratorium on rules changes to last through the end of year 2004}

## 1. Rules For Tournament Play

*The following rules concern the play, scoring, officiating and responsibilities for tournament competition in all pocket billiard games. However, the precepts and principles of these rules are to be considered part of the games' General Rules and should be applied as appropriate to all play, whether or not a formal tournament.*

### 1.1 **PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY**

It is the player's responsibility to be aware of all rules, regulations and schedules applying to competition. While tournament officials will make every reasonable effort to have such information readily available to all players as appropriate, the ultimate responsibility rests with the player. *(For exceptions to this rule, see Rule 2.16.)* The player has no recourse if such information is not volunteered; the responsibility for knowing the situation and/or the rules lies with the player.

### 1.2 **ACCEPTANCE OF EQUIPMENT**

Tournament players should assure themselves, prior to beginning play, that the balls and other equipment are standard and legal. Once they begin play of a match, they may no longer question the legality of the equipment in use (unless the opponent and tournament officials both agree with the objection and any available remedy proposed by the tournament officials).

### 1.3 **USE OF EQUIPMENT**

Players may not use equipment or accessory items for purposes or in a manner other than those for which the items were intended (refer to rules 3.41 and 3.42). For example, powder containers, chalk cubes, etc., may not be used to prop up a mechanical bridge (or natural hand bridge); no more than two mechanical bridges may be used at one time, nor may they be used to support anything other than the cue shaft. Extra or out-of-play balls may not be used by players to check clearances or for any other reason (except to lag for break); the triangle may be employed by players to ascertain whether a ball is in the rack when a match is not officiated and the table has not been pencil-marked around the triangle area. *(Also see Rule 2.15.)*

### 1.4 **EQUIPMENT RESTRICTIONS**

Players may use chalk, powder, mechanical bridge(s) and cue(s) of their choice or design. However, tournament officials may restrict a player if he attempts action that is disruptive of either the house equipment or normal competitive conditions. As examples, a player may: be restrained from using red chalk on green cloth; be advised not to use powder in

such an excessive fashion as to unduly affect the balls or table cloth; and be barred from using a cue with a noisemaking device that is clearly disruptive to other competitors.  
(Also see Rule 2.15.)

### **1.5 MARKING OF TABLES**

When racking the balls, a triangle must be used. Prior to competition, each table and the triangle to be used on it shall be marked so as to ensure that the same triangle will be used throughout the tournament on the same table. An accurate and clearly visible pencil line must also be marked on the cloth: (1) around the outer edge of the triangle to ensure accurate and consistent placement to enable accurate judgement as to ball positions; (2) on the long string to enable accurate spotting of balls; and (3) on the head string to facilitate determinations of whether balls are behind the head string. The head spot, center spot and foot spot must also be determined to be accurately marked, whether with discreet penciled "plus" marks, or with standard spots if being employed. In games which do not require them, the center and head spots do not need to be marked.

### **1.6 ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION**

The management of each tournament shall reserve the right to set forth rules and procedures appropriate and reasonable for the particular tournament involved, such as may regard players' dress requirements, method of receiving entry fees, refund policy of entry fees, scheduling flexibility, pairing procedures, practice procedures, etc. However, for tournaments to receive a WPA sanction, certain requirements must be met, primarily with regard to safeguarding and ensuring proper distribution of the prize fund.

### **1.7 LATE START**

A player must be ready to begin a match within 15 minutes of the start of the match, or the opponent wins by forfeit. The starting time is considered to be the scheduled time or the time the match is announced, whichever is later.

### **1.8 NO PRACTICE DURING MATCH**

While a match is in progress, practice is not allowed. Taking a shot that is not part of that match is a foul. (*Refer to Rule 1.6*)

### **1.9 ASSISTANCE NOT ALLOWED**

While a match is in progress, players are not allowed to ask spectators for assistance in planning or executing shots. If a player asks for and receives such assistance, he loses the game. Any person, except the opponent, who offers any significant assistance to a player, verbal or non-verbal, will be removed from the area. (*Refer to Rule 2.28*)

### **1.10 FAILURE TO LEAVE THE TABLE**

When a player's inning comes to an end, the player must discontinue shooting. Failure to do so is loss of game (exception in 14.1 - ruled as "deliberate foul").

### **1.11 SLOW PLAY**

If in the opinion of the referee a player is impeding the progress of the tournament or

game with consistently slow play, the referee can warn the player and then at his discretion impose a time limit up to a maximum of 45 seconds that applies to both players between shots (that is, both players are put on a shot-clock). If the referee does impose a time limit and that limit is exceeded by a player who has received a 10 second "time" warning, a foul will be called and the incoming player is rewarded according to the rules applicable to the game being played. During a player's inning, the shot-clock starts when the previous shot ends, and runs until tip-to-ball contact begins the next shot. The time while a shot is in progress is not counted. If a player begins with cue ball in hand, the shot-clock starts when he has possession of the cue ball, and any spotting or racking is finished. If a player has not approached the shot, a warning with the announcement of "time" should be made 10 seconds prior to the time limit being reached. If a player exceeds the time limit specified for the tournament, a foul will be called and the incoming player is rewarded according to the rules applicable to the game being played. In the case of a player down over the ball at the 10 second mark prior to the time limit, no announcement is to be made and no penalty is to be imposed. In the event of a player standing up off the shot, "time" will be called at that point and normal shot clock procedure is followed. Each player may call for one extension per rack. The extension period is identical to the time limit imposed. In the event of a tie score with only one game remaining, each player may utilize two extensions. Player must insure that the referee/timekeeper is aware when an extension is called.

#### **1.12    *SUSPENDED PLAY***

If a player shoots while play is suspended by the referee, he loses the game. Announcement of the suspension is considered sufficient warning. (*Also see Rule 2.27*)

#### **1.13    *TIME OUT***

If time outs are allowed, a player is only allowed to take a time out during his/her turn at the table or between sets (if a format with sets is used). During a time out, a sign should be placed on the table by the referee, and no practice will be allowed on that table. In general, each player will be allowed one time out per match, and a maximum of five minutes per time out. When a format with sets is used, each player will be allowed one time out in the final set (in the third set if playing best-of-3, or in the fifth set if playing the best-of-5 sets). This final-set rule applies regardless of whether a player has taken a time out in an earlier set.

#### **1.14    *CONCESSION***

If a player concedes, he loses the match. That is, if a player attempts to unscrew his jointed playing cue stick while the opponent is at the table and during the opponent's decisive game of a match, it will be considered a concession of the match. No warning from the referee is required in the case of a concession. (*Refer to Rule 2.22*)

#### **1.15    *SCORING OF FORFEITS***

Matches forfeited for any reason under these rules shall not result in any scores being included in the statistics of a tournament, regardless of whether any score had been reached prior to the declaration of forfeiture. For official records, no point scores should be recorded, but rather the notations "W(F)" and "L(F)" as appropriate should be

employed. (Matches lost through disqualification are considered forfeits for purposes of this rule.)

If, however, the player awarded a match through the opponent's forfeiture has posted a high run (or similar accomplishment for which an award is granted) during play of the match prior to declaration of forfeiture, that high run or other mark shall be eligible for the tournament award or prize.

## **1.16 *PLAYING WITHOUT A REFEREE***

When a referee is not available, any dispute between the two players will be resolved by the Tournament Director or an appointed substitute.

### **1.16.1 *CUE BALL FOULS ONLY***

When a referee is presiding over a match, it is a foul for a player to touch any ball (cue ball or object ball) with the cue, clothing, body, mechanical bridge or chalk, before, during or after a shot. However, when a referee is not presiding over a game, it is not a foul to accidentally touch stationary balls located between the cue ball and the shooter while in the act of shooting. If such an accident occurs, the player should allow the Tournament Director to restore the object balls to their correct positions. If the player does not allow such a restoration, and a ball set in motion as a normal part of the shot touches such an unrestored ball, or passes partly into a region originally occupied by a disturbed ball, the shot is a foul. In short, if the accident has any effect on the outcome of the shot, it is a foul. In any case, the Tournament Director must be called upon to restore the positions of the disturbed balls as soon as possible, but not during the shot. It is a foul to play another shot before the Tournament Director has restored any accidentally moved balls.

At the non-shooting player's option, the disturbed balls will be left in their new positions. In this case, the balls are considered restored, and subsequent contact on them is not a foul.

It is still a foul to make any contact with the cue ball whatsoever while it is in play, except for the normal tip-to-ball contact during a shot.

### **1.16.2 *JUMP AND MASSE SHOT FOUL***

If a match is not refereed, it will be considered a cue ball foul if during an attempt to jump, curve or masse the cue ball over or around an impeding numbered ball that is not a legal object ball, the impeding ball moves (regardless of whether it was moved by a hand, cue stick follow-through or bridge).

### **1.16.3 *THIRD OPINION***

When a shot comes up that seems likely to lead to controversy, either party may request a tournament official or a third party to judge the legality of the shot.

### **1.16.4 *SPLIT HITS***

If the cue ball strikes a legal object ball and a non-legal object ball at approximately the

same instant, and it cannot be determined which ball was hit first, the judgement will go in favor of the shooter.

#### **1.16.5 RACKING**

The balls must be racked as tightly as possible, which means each ball should be touching its neighbor. Refrain from tapping object balls more than absolutely necessary; it is preferable to thoroughly brush the area of the rack to even out the cloth.

*(Further instructions for Tournament Play are Included in the Next Section, "Instructions For Referees.")*



## **2. Instructions For Referees**

### **2.1 TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS/REFEREES**

Where these rules refer to a "referee," it should be noted that the referees' prerogatives and discretion also pertain to other tournament officials as appropriate.

### **2.2 REFEREE'S AUTHORITY**

The referee will maintain order and enforce the rules of the game. The referee is the final judge in all matters of fact, and is in complete charge of the match. The referee may consult other tournament officials for rule interpretations, ball positions, etc. However, all matters of judgement are his and his alone; they cannot be appealed to higher tournament authority by players; only if the referee is in error on a rule or its application may higher tournament authority overrule him.

### **2.3 REFEREE'S RESPONSIVENESS**

The referee shall be totally responsive to players' inquiries regarding objective data, such as whether a ball will be in the rack, if a ball is in the kitchen, what the count is, how many points are needed for a victory, if a player or his opponent is on a foul, what rule would apply if a certain shot is made, etc. When asked for a clarification of a rule, the referee will explain the applicable rule to the best of his ability, but any misstatement by the referee will not protect a player from enforcement of the actual rules. The referee must not offer or provide any subjective opinion that would affect play, such as whether a good hit can be made on a prospective shot, whether a combination is can be made, or how the table seems to be playing, etc.

### **2.4 FINAL TOURNAMENT AUTHORITY**

Though these rules attempt to cover the vast majority of situations that arise in competition, there still may be the occasional need for interpretation of the rules and their proper application under unusual circumstances. The Tournament Director or other official who assumes final responsibility for a tournament will make any such required

decision (other than referee's judgement calls) at his discretion, and they shall be final.

**2.5     *WAGERING BY REFEREES***

Referees are strictly prohibited from any wagering of any kind involving the games, players or tournament in any way. Any such wagering by a referee (or other tournament official) shall result in his immediate dismissal and the forfeiture of his entire financial compensation for the tournament.

**2.6     *EQUIPMENT PREPARATION***

In general, the referee will clean or have the table and balls cleaned as necessary. He will ensure that chalk, powder and mechanical bridges are available. He will mark or have marked, the spots, the head string, the long string and the outer edge of the triangle, directly on the playing surface, when required by specific game rules.

**2.7     *RACKING***

After the referee has racked the balls for a game, the player may examine the balls as racked but the referee shall be the sole authority regarding the suitability of the rack for play.

**2.8     *CALLING SHOTS***

If a referee incorrectly calls a shot, where required by specific game rules, a player should correct him before completing the shot. If an incorrect call does occur for any reason, the shot shall be credited if, in the judgement of the referee, the player did legally execute the shot as intended.

**2.9     *CALLING FOULS***

The referee will call fouls as soon as possible after they occur. No further play may occur until a decision regarding a foul has been rendered and both players informed. If the offending player continues to shoot after a foul is called, the referee may consider the action to be unsportsmanlike conduct, and the offending player loses the game (or fifteen (15) points if playing 14.1 Continuous). The referee shall inform the incoming player of ball-in-hand where specific game rules apply and should pick up the cue ball and hand it to the incoming player. The referee may announce "Ball-in-hand."

**2.10    *SPLIT HITS***

When the referee observes that the cue ball strikes a legal object ball and a non-legal object ball at approximately the same instant, and it cannot be determined which ball was hit first, the judgement will go in favor of the shooter.

**2.11    *CLEARING POCKETS***

On tables which do not have ball return systems, the referee will remove pocketed object balls from full or nearly full pockets. It is the player's responsibility to see that this duty is performed; he has no recourse if a ball rebounds from a full pocket.

**2.12    *CLEANING BALLS***

During a game a player may ask the referee to clean one or more balls. The referee will

clean any visibly soiled ball.

**2.13 SPOTTING BALLS**

To avoid any unnecessary guidance to a player when spotting balls, the referee should position each ball so that the number is facing upward.

**2.14 SOLICITING INFORMATION**

If the referee does not have a clear view of a possible foul, he may form his decision by any means by which he feels comfortable.

**2.15 INAPPROPRIATE USE OF EQUIPMENT**

The referee should be alert for a player using equipment or accessory items for purposes or in a manner other than those for which the items were intended, or for the use of illegal equipment, as defined under "equipment specifications." Generally, no penalty is applied. However, should a player persist in such activity or use of equipment, after having been advised that such activity or use is nor permissible, the referee or other tournament official may take action against him as appropriate under the provisions of "Unsportsmanlike Conduct." (*Also see Rules 1.3 and 1.4.*)

**2.16 MANDATORY WARNINGS.**

The referee must warn a player who is about to commit a serious foul (such as three consecutive fouls, requesting coaching assistance, or failure to stop shooting after a foul has been called) whenever the referee has been given enough time to do so; otherwise, any foul is considered to be a standard foul (except as specially noted). For instance, in games where the rule applies the referee must inform a player who has had two (2) consecutive fouls; otherwise, the player is considered to have had only one foul prior to the shot. The referee must inform a player when an object ball is touching a rail; otherwise, any contact on that ball is considered to have driven that ball to the rail. The referee should notify the player as soon as the corresponding situation arises and whenever enough time was given to issue the warning. A warning issued just as a stroke occurs or is about to occur is not considered sufficient time for the shooter to react, and the warning will be considered not to have been issued.

**2.17 RESTORING A POSITION**

When necessary for balls to be restored or cleaned, the referee will restore disturbed balls to their original positions to the best of his ability. The players must accept the referees judgement as to placement. The referee may ask for information for this purpose from whatever source deemed appropriate.

**2.18 OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE**

When outside interference occurs during a shot that has an effect on the outcome of that shot, the referee will restore the balls to the positions they had before the shot, and the shot will be replayed. If the interference had no effect on the shot, the referee will restore the disturbed balls and play will continue. If the balls cannot be restored to their original positions, the game should be replayed with the original player breaking.

**2.19 ILLEGALLY CAUSING BALL TO MOVE**

Any player who, in the referee's judgement, intentionally causes a ball to move by any illegal means (pushing on bed cloth, bumping or slapping table, etc.) will lose the game and/or match by forfeit. No preliminary warning from the referee is required. (Referee's judgement and discretion under "Unsportsmanlike Conduct.")

**2.20 JUDGING DOUBLE HITS**

When the distance between the cue ball and the object ball is less than the width of a chalk cube, special attention from the referee is required. In such a situation, unless the referee can positively determine a legal shot has been performed, the following guidance may apply: if the cue ball follows through the object ball more than 1/2 ball, it is a foul.

**2.21 OUT OF HEAD STRING WARNING**

When player has the cue ball in hand behind the head string, the referee shall warn him before he shoots if he has placed the cue ball on or within 1/2 ball width outside of the head string. If the player then shoots from on or within the specified distance outside the string the stroke is a foul. If the shooter places the cue ball outside of the head string beyond the specified limit, no warning is required and the stroke is a foul. (*See specific game rules for penalty. Also refer to Rule 3.9.*)

**2.22 REMAINING IN PLAYER'S CHAIR**

Players are to remain in the chair designated for their use while opponent is at the table. Should a player need to leave the playing area during matches, he must request and receive permission from the referee. Should a player leave the playing area without the permission of the referee, it will be a concession and loss of game (or fifteen (15) points if playing 14.1 Continuous). The referee shall apply his good judgement to ensure that undue time is not being used or that a player is not abusing the privilege as a means of unsettling an opponent.

**2.23 OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE PROHIBITED**

Unless specifically permitted by the rules of a given tournament, players may not knowingly accept any form of playing advice during a match. A player may not engage in communication, either verbal or nonverbal, with persons other than the tournament officials or his opponent during play, or during time-outs. Should a player desire to so communicate, for example to obtain a beverage, get a piece of equipment, etc., he should either communicate through a tournament official or with the approval and observance of the referee.

If the referee has reason to believe that a player knowingly solicited or accepted outside assistance in any manner regarding the play of a game or match, he shall take steps appropriate under the provisions of "Unsportsmanlike Conduct."

In team or doubles play, communication rules may be altered by the appropriate organization as provided for under "Administrative Discretion."



**2.24 NON-PLAYER INTERFERENCE OR HARASSMENT**

If a non-player by any means interferes with either or both players, the referee should request the offending non-player or players be removed from the playing area for the duration of the match.

**2.25 SLOW PLAY**

*(Refer to Rule 1.11)*

**2.26 PROTESTS**

A player may request a rule interpretation or protest a failure to call a foul to the referee or appropriate tournament authority, but the request or protest must be made immediately and prior to any subsequent shot being taken, or it cannot be considered or honored. If the player fails to do so, the foul is considered not to have occurred. The referee is the final judge on all matters of fact. If either player thinks the referee is applying the rules incorrectly or has made an interpretation incorrectly, the referee must take the protest to the tournament director or an appointed substitute. The tournament director or his appointed substitute's interpretation of the rules is final. Play will be suspended until the protest is resolved.

All players must honor an opponent's request that play be halted if an official is to be summoned or if a referee is to check or verify a rule question with other officials. Failure to honor such requests may result in disqualification or forfeiture of the game or match under the provisions of "Unsportsmanlike Conduct."

**2.27 SUSPENDING PLAY**

The referee has the authority to suspend play during protests by players and whenever he feels that conditions are unsuitable for play to continue. If a spectator is interfering with the game, play may be suspended until that spectator is removed from area. *(Also see Rule 1.12.)*

**2.28 UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

The referee has the right and obligation to ensure that no player engages in any activity which, in his judgement, is unsportsmanlike in nature, embarrassing, disruptive or detrimental to other players, tournament officials or hosts, or the sport in general. The referee or other officials shall have the right to penalize or disqualify, with or without warning, any player who acts in an unsportsmanlike manner.

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### **3. General Rules for Pocket Billiards**

*These general rules apply to all pocket billiard games, UNLESS specifically noted to the contrary in the individual game rules.*

#### **3.1 TABLES, BALLS, EQUIPMENT**

All games described in these rules are designed for tables, balls and equipment meeting the standards prescribed in the WPA Equipment Specifications.

#### **3.2 RACKING THE BALLS**

When racking the balls a triangle must be used, and the apex ball is to be spotted on the foot spot. All the balls must be lined up behind the apex ball and pressed together so that they all have contact with each other.

#### **3.3 STRIKING CUE BALL**

Legal shots require that the cue ball be struck only with the cue tip. Failure to meet this requirement is a foul.

#### **3.4 CALLING SHOTS**

For games of call-shot a player may shoot any ball he chooses, but before he shoots, must designate the called ball and called pocket. He need not indicate any detail such as kisses, caroms, combinations, or cushions (all of which are legal). Any additionally pocketed ball(s) on a legal stroke is counted in the shooter's favor.

#### **3.5 FAILURE TO POCKET A BALL**

If a player fails to pocket a ball on a legal shot, then the player's inning is over, and it is the opponent's turn at the table.

#### **3.6 LAG FOR BREAK**

The following procedure is used for the lag for the opening break. Each player should use balls of equal size and weight (preferably cue balls but, when not available, non-striped object balls). With the balls in hand behind the head string, one player to the left and one to the right of the head spot, the balls are shot simultaneously to the foot cushion and back to the head end of the table. The player whose ball is the closest to the innermost edge of the head cushion wins the lag. The lagged ball must contact the foot cushion at least once. Other cushion contacts are immaterial, except as prohibited below. It is an automatic loss of the lag if:

- (a) The ball crosses into the opponent's half of the table;
- (b) The ball fails to contact the foot cushion;
- (c) The ball drops into a pocket;
- (d) The ball jumps the table;
- (e) The ball touches the long cushion;
- (f) The ball rests within the corner pocket and past the nose of the head cushion, or;

- (g) The ball contacts the foot rail more than once. If both players violate automatic-loss lag rules, or if the referee is unable to determine which ball is closer, the lag is a tie and is replayed.

### **3.7 OPENING BREAK SHOT**

The opening break shot is determined by either lag or lot. (The lag for break procedure is required for formal competition.) The player winning the lag or lot has the choice of performing the opening break shot or assigning it to the opponent.

### **3.8 CUE BALL ON OPENING BREAK**

The opening break shot is taken with cue ball in hand behind the head string. The object balls are positioned according to specific game rules. On the opening break, the game is considered to have commenced once the cue ball has been struck by the cue tip.

### **3.9 DEFLECTING THE CUE BALL ON THE GAME'S OPENING BREAK**

On the break shot, stopping or deflecting the cue ball after it has crossed the head string and prior to hitting the racked balls is considered a foul and loss of turn. The opponent has the option of receiving cue ball in hand behind the head string or passing the cue ball in hand behind the head string back to the offending player. (*Exception: 9-Ball, see rule 5.3: "cue ball in hand anywhere on the table"*). A warning must be given that a second violation during the match will result in the loss of the match by forfeiture. (*See Rule 3.28.*)

### **3.10 CUE BALL IN HAND BEHIND THE HEAD STRING**

This situation applies in specific games whereby the opening break is administered or a player's scratching is penalized by the incoming player having cue ball in hand behind the head string. The incoming player may place the cue ball anywhere behind the head string. The shooting player may shoot at any object ball as long as the base of the object ball is on or below the head string. He may not shoot at any ball, the base of which is above the head string, unless he first shoots the cue ball below the head string and then by hitting a rail causes the cue ball to come back above the head string and hit the object ball. The base of the ball (the point of the ball touching the table) determines whether it is above or below the head string. If the incoming player inadvertently places the cue ball on or below the head string, the referee or the opposing player must inform the shooting player of improper positioning of the cue ball before the shot is made. If the opposing player does not so inform the shooting player before the shot is made, the shot is considered legal. If the shooting player is informed of improper positioning, he must then reposition the cue ball. If a player positions the cue ball completely and obviously outside the kitchen and shoots the cue ball, it is a foul (*Refer to Rule 2.21*). When the cue ball is in hand behind the head string, it remains in hand (not in play) until the player drives the cue ball past the head string by striking it with his cue tip. The cue ball may be adjusted by the player's hand, cue, etc., so long as it remains in hand. Once the cue ball is in play per the above, it may not be impeded in any way by the player; to do so is to commit a foul. Additionally, if the shot fails to contact a legal object ball or fails to drive the cue ball over the head string, the shot is a foul and the opposing player has ball in hand

according to the specific game rules.

**3.11 *POCKETED BALLS***

A ball is considered pocketed if as a result of an otherwise legal shot, it drops off the bed of the table into the pocket and remains there. (A ball that drops out of a ball return system onto the floor is not to be construed as a ball that has not remained pocketed.) A ball that re-bounds from a pocket back onto the table bed is not a pocketed ball.

**3.12 *POSITION OF BALLS***

The position of a ball is judged by where its base (or center) rests.

**3.13 *FOOT ON FLOOR***

Player must have at least one foot in contact with the floor at the moment the cue tip contacts the cue ball, or the shot is a foul. Foot attire must be normal in regard to size, shape and manner in which it is worn.

**3.14 *SHOOTING WITH BALLS IN MOTION***

It is a foul if a player shoots while the cue ball or any object ball is in motion (a spinning ball is in motion).

**3.15 *COMPLETION OF STROKE***

A stroke is not complete (and therefore is not counted) until all balls on the table have become motionless after the stroke (a spinning ball is in motion).

**3.16 *HEAD STRING DEFINED***

The area behind the head string does not include the head string. Thus, an object ball that is dead center on the head string is playable when specific game rules require that a player must shoot at a ball past the head string. Likewise, the cue ball when being put in play behind the head string (cue ball in hand behind the head string), may not be placed directly on the head string; it must be behind it.

**3.17 *GENERAL RULE, ALL FOULS***

Though the penalties for fouls differ from game to game, the following apply to all fouls:

- (a) Player's inning ends;
- (b) If on a stroke, the stroke is invalid and any pocketed balls are not counted to the shooter's credit, and;
- (c) Any ball(s) is respotted only if the rules of the specific game require it.

**3.18 *FAILURE TO CONTACT OBJECT BALL***

It is a foul if on a stroke the cue ball fails to make contact with any legal object ball first. Playing away from a touching ball does not constitute having hit that ball.

**3.19 *LEGAL SHOT***

Unless otherwise stated in a specific game rule, a player must cause the cue ball to contact a legal object ball and then:

- (a) Pocket a numbered ball, or;
- (b) Cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a cushion or any part of the rail. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul.

### **3.20 CUE BALL SCRATCH**

It is a foul (scratch) if on a stroke, the cue ball is pocketed. If the cue ball touches an object ball that was already pocketed (for example, in a pocket full of object balls), the shot is a foul.

### **3.21 FOULS BY TOUCHING BALLS**

It is a foul to strike, touch or in any way make contact with the cue ball in play or any object balls in play with anything (the body, clothing, chalk, mechanical bridge, cue shaft, etc.) except the cue tip (while attached to the cue shaft), which may contact the cue ball in the execution of a legal shot. Whenever a referee is presiding over a match, any object ball moved during a standard foul must be returned as closely as possible to its original position as judged by the referee, and the incoming player does not have the option of restoration. (*Also see Rule 1.16*)

### **3.22 FOUL BY PLACEMENT**

Touching any object ball with the cue ball while it is in hand is a foul.

### **3.23 FOULS BY DOUBLE HITS**

If the cue ball is touching the required object ball prior to the shot, the player may shoot toward it, providing that any normal stroke is employed. If the cue stick strikes the cue ball more than once on a shot, or if the cue stick is in contact with the cue ball when or after the cue ball contacts an object ball, the shot is foul. (*See Rule 2.20. for judging this kind of shot.*) If a third ball is close by, care should be taken not to foul that ball under the first part of this rule.

### **3.24 PUSH SHOT FOULS**

It is a foul if the cue ball is pushed by the cue tip, with contact being maintained for more than the momentary time commensurate with a stroked shot. (Such shots are usually referred to as push shots.)

### **3.25 PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY FOULS**

The player is responsible for chalk, bridges, files and any other items or equipment he brings to, uses at, or causes to approximate the table. If he drops a piece of chalk, or knocks off a mechanical bridge head, as examples, he is guilty of a foul should such an object make contact with any ball in play (or the cue ball only if no referee is presiding over the match).

### **3.26 ILLEGAL JUMPING OF BALL**

It is a foul if a player strikes the cue ball below center ("digs under" it) and intentionally causes it to rise off the bed of the table in an effort to clear an obstructing ball. Such jumping action may occasionally occur accidentally, and such "jumps" are not to be considered fouls on their face; they may still be ruled foul strokes, if for example, the

ferrule or cue shaft makes contact with the cue ball in the course of the shot.

**3.27 JUMP SHOTS**

Unless otherwise stated in rules for a specific game it is legal to cause the cue ball to rise off the bed of the table by elevating the cue stick on the shot, and forcing the cue ball to rebound from the bed of the table. Any miscue when executing a jump shot is a foul.

**3.28 BALLS JUMPED OFF TABLE**

Balls coming to rest other than on the bed of the table after a stroke (on the cushion top, rail surface, floor, etc.) are considered jumped balls. Balls may bounce on the cushion tops and rails of the table in play without being jumped balls if they return to the bed of the table under their own power and without touching anything not a part of the table. The table shall consist of the permanent part of the table proper. (Balls that strike or touch anything not a part of the table, such as the light fixture, chalk on the rails and cushion tops, etc., shall be considered jumped balls even though they might return to the bed of the table after contacting items which are not parts of the table proper). In all pocket billiard games, when a stroke results in the cue ball or any object ball being a jumped ball off the table, the stroke is a foul. All jumped object balls are spotted (except in Nine-Ball and in Eight Ball) when all balls have stopped moving. See specific game rules for putting the cue ball in play after a jumped cue ball foul.

**3.29 SPECIAL INTENTIONAL FOUL PENALTY**

The cue ball in play shall not be intentionally struck with anything other than a cue's attached tip (such as the ferrule, shaft, etc.). While such contact is automatically a foul under the provisions of Rule 3.19., if the referee deems the contact to be intentional, he shall warn the player once during a match that a second violation during that match will result in the loss of the match by forfeiture. If a second violation does occur, the match must be forfeited.

**3.30 ONE FOUL LIMIT**

Unless specific game rules dictate otherwise, only one foul is assessed on a player in each inning; if different penalties can apply, the most severe penalty is the factor determining which foul is assessed.

**3.31 BALLS MOVING SPONTANEOUSLY**

If a ball shifts, settles, turns or otherwise moves "by itself," the ball shall remain in the position it assumed and play continues. A hanging ball that falls into a pocket "by itself" after being motionless for 5 seconds or longer shall be replaced as closely as possible to its position prior to falling, and play shall continue. If an object ball drops into a pocket "by itself" as a player shoots at it, so that the cue ball passes over the spot the ball had been on, unable to hit it, the cue ball and object ball are to be replaced to their positions prior to the stroke, and the player may shoot again. Any other object balls disturbed on the stroke are also to be replaced to their original positions before the shooter replays.

**3.32 SPOTTING BALLS**

When specific game rules call for spotting balls, they shall be replaced on the table on the

long string after the stroke is complete. A single ball is placed on the foot spot; if more than one ball is to be spotted, they are placed on the long string in ascending numerical order, beginning on the foot spot and advancing toward the foot rail. When balls on or near the foot spot or long string interfere with the spotting of balls, the balls to be spotted are placed on the long string as close as possible to the foot spot without moving the interfering balls. Spotted balls are to be placed as close as possible or frozen (at the referee's discretion) to such interfering balls, except when the cue ball is interfering; balls to be spotted against the cue ball are placed as close as possible without being frozen. If there is insufficient room on the long string between the foot spot and the foot rail cushion for balls that must be spotted, such balls are then placed on the extension of the long string "in front" of the foot spot (between the foot spot and the center spot), as near as possible to the foot spot and in the same numerical order as if they were spotted "behind" the foot spot (lowest numbered ball closest to the foot spot).

### **3.33 JAWED BALLS**

If two or more balls are locked between the jaws or sides of the pocket, with one or more suspended in air, the referee shall inspect the balls in position and follow this procedure: he shall visually (or physically if he desires) project each ball directly downward from its locked position; any ball that in his judgement would fall in the pocket if so moved directly downward is a pocketed ball, while any ball that would come to rest on the bed of the table is not pocketed. The balls are then placed according to the referee's assessment, and play continues according to specific game rules as if no locking or jawing of balls had occurred.

### **3.34 ADDITIONAL POCKETED BALLS**

If extra balls are pocketed on a legal scoring stroke, they are counted in accord with the scoring rules for the particular game.

### **3.35 NON-PLAYER INTERFERENCE**

If the balls are moved (or a player bumped such that play is directly affected) by a non-player during the match, the balls shall be replaced as near as possible to their original positions immediately prior to the incident, and play shall resume with no penalty on the player affected. If the match is officiated, the referee shall replace the balls. This rule shall also apply to "act of God" interference, such as earthquake, hurricane, light fixture falling, power failure, etc. If the balls cannot be restored to their original positions, replay the game with the original player breaking. This rule is not applicable to 14.1 Continuous where the game consists of successive racks: the rack in progress will be discontinued and a completely new rack will be started with the requirements of the normal opening break (players lag for break). Scoring of points is to be resumed at the score as it stood at the moment of game disruption.

### **3.36 BREAKING SUBSEQUENT RACKS**

In a match that consists of short rack games, the winner of each game breaks in the next. The following are common options that may be designated by tournament officials in advance:

- (a) Players alternate break.

- (b) Loser breaks.
- (c) Player trailing in game count breaks the next game.

### **3.37 *PLAY BY INNINGS***

During the course of play, players alternate turns (innings) at the table, with a player's inning ending when he either fails to legally pocket a ball, or fouls. When an inning ends free of a foul, the incoming player accepts the table in position.

### **3.38 *OBJECT BALL FROZEN TO CUSHION OR CUE BALL***

This rule applies to any shot where the cue ball's first contact with a ball is with one that is frozen to a cushion or to the cue ball itself. After the cue ball makes contact with the frozen object ball, the shot must result in either:

- (a) A ball being pocketed, or;
- (b) The cue ball contacting a cushion, or;
- (c) The frozen ball being caused to contact a cushion attached to a separate rail, or;
- (d) Another object ball being caused to contact a cushion with which it was not already in contact. Failure to satisfy one of those four requirements is a foul. (Note: 14.1 Continuous and other games specify additional requirements and applications of this rule; see specific game rules.) A ball which is touching a cushion at the start of a shot and then is forced into a cushion attached to the same rail is not considered to have been driven to that cushion unless it leaves the cushion, contacts another ball, and then contacts the cushion again. An object ball is not considered frozen to a cushion unless it is examined and announced as such by either the referee or one of the players prior to that object ball being involved in a shot.

### **3.39 *PLAYING FROM BEHIND THE STRING***

When a player has the cue ball in hand behind the head string (in the kitchen), he must drive the cue ball to a point across the head string before it contacts either a cushion, an object ball, or returns to the kitchen. Failure to do so is a foul if a referee is presiding over a match. If no referee, the opponent has the option to call it either a foul or to require the offending player to replay the shot again with the balls restored to their positions prior to the shot (and with no foul penalty imposed). Exception: if an object ball lies on or outside the head string (and is thus playable) but so close that the cue ball contacts it before the cue ball is out of the kitchen, the ball can be legally played, and will be considered to have crossed the head string. If, with cue ball in hand behind the headstring and while the shooter is attempting a legitimate shot, the cue ball accidentally hits a ball behind the head string, and the cue ball crosses the line, it is a foul. If with cue ball in hand behind the head string, the shooter causes the cue ball to hit an object ball accidentally, and the cue ball does not cross the headstring, the following applies: the incoming player has the option of calling a foul and having cue ball in hand, or having the balls returned to their original position, and having the offending player replay the shot. If a player under the same conditions intentionally causes the cue ball to contact an object ball behind the



headstring, it is unsportsmanlike conduct.

**3.40 CUE BALL IN HAND FOUL**

During cue ball in hand placement, the player may use his hand or any part of his cue (including the tip) to position the cue ball. When placing the cue ball in position, any forward stroke motion of the cue stick contacting the cue ball will be considered a foul if not a legal shot.

**3.41 INTERFERENCE**

If the non-shooting player distracts his opponent or interferes with his play, he has fouled. If a player shoots out of turn, or moves any ball except during his inning, it is considered to be interference.

**3.42 DEVICES**

Players are not allowed to use a ball, the triangle or any other width-measuring device to see if the cue ball or an object ball would travel through a gap, etc. Only the cue stick may be used as an aid to judge gaps or as an aid to aligning a shot, so long as the cue is held by the hand. To do so otherwise is a foul and unsportsmanlike conduct. (*Also see Rules 1.3, 1.4 and 2.15*)

**3.43 ILLEGAL MARKING**

If a player intentionally marks the table in any way to assist in executing the shot, including the placement of chalk, it is a foul.

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## **Tournament Pocket Billiards**

### **4. EIGHT-BALL**

*Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the General Rules of Pocket Billiards apply.*

**4.1 OBJECT OF THE GAME**

Eight-Ball is a call shot game played with a cue ball and 15 object balls, numbered 1 through 15. One player must pocket balls of the group numbered 1 through 7 (solid colors), while the other player has 9 through 15 (stripes). The player pocketing either group first, and then legally pocketing the 8-ball wins the game.

**4.2 CALL SHOT**

In Call Shot, obvious balls and pockets do not have to be indicated. It is the opponent's right to ask which ball and pocket if he is unsure of the shot. Bank shots and combination shots are not considered obvious, and care should be taken in calling both the object ball and the intended pocket. When calling the shot, it is never necessary to indicate details such as the number of cushions, banks, kisses, caroms, etc. Any balls pocketed on a

foul remain pocketed, regardless of whether they belong to the shooter or the opponent. The opening break is not a "called shot." Any player performing a break shot in 8-Ball may continue to shoot so long as any object ball is legally pocketed on the break.

#### **4.3 RACKING THE BALLS**

The balls are racked in a triangle at the foot of the table with the 8-ball in the center of the triangle, the first ball of the rack on the foot spot, a stripe ball in one corner of the rack and a solid ball in the other corner.

#### **4.4 ORDER OF THE BREAK**

Winner of the lag has the option to break. In 8-Ball the winner of each game breaks in the next unless otherwise specified by the tournament organizer. The following are common options that may be designated by tournament officials in advance:

- (a) Players alternate break.
- (b) Loser breaks.
- (c) Player trailing in game count breaks the next game.

#### **4.5 LEGAL BREAK SHOT**

(Defined) To execute a legal break, the breaker (with the cue ball behind the head string) must either (1) pocket a ball, or (2) drive at least four numbered balls to the rail. When the breaker fails to make a legal break, it is a foul, and the incoming player has the option of (1) accepting the table in position and shooting, or (2) having the balls reracked and having the option of shooting the opening break or allowing the offending player to rebreak.

#### **4.6 SCRATCH ON A LEGAL BREAK**

If a player scratches on a legal break shot, (1) all balls pocketed remain pocketed (exception, the 8-ball: see rule 4.9), (2) it is a foul, (3) the table is open. Please Note: The incoming player has cue ball in hand behind the head string and may not shoot an object ball that is behind the head string, unless he first shoots the cue ball past the head string and causes the cue ball to come back behind the head string and hit the object ball.

#### **4.7 OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF TABLE ON THE BREAK**

If a player jumps an object ball off the table on the break shot, it is a foul and the incoming player has the option of (1) accepting the table in position and shooting, or (2) taking cue ball in hand behind the head string and shooting.

#### **4.8 8-BALL POCKETED ON THE BREAK**

If the 8-ball is pocketed on the break, breaker may ask for a rerack or have the 8-ball spotted and continue shooting. If the breaker scratches while pocketing the 8-ball on the break, the incoming player has the option of a rerack or having the 8-ball spotted and begin shooting with ball in hand behind the head string.

#### **4.9 OPEN TABLE**

(Defined) The table is "open" when the choice of groups (stripes or solids) has not yet

been determined. When the table is open, it is legal to hit a solid first to make a stripe or vice-versa. Note: The table is always open immediately after the break shot. When the table is open, it is legal to hit any solid or stripe first in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid. However, when the table is open and the 8-ball is the first ball contacted, it is a foul and no stripe or solid may be scored in favor of the shooter. The shooter loses his turn; the incoming player is awarded cue ball in hand; any balls pocketed remain pocketed; and the incoming player addresses the balls with the table still open. On an open table, all illegally pocketed balls remain pocketed.

#### **4.10 CHOICE OF GROUP**

The choice of stripes or solids is not determined on the break even if balls are made from only one or both groups, because the table is always open immediately after the break shot. The choice of group is determined only when a player legally pockets a called object ball after the break shot.

#### **4.11 LEGAL SHOT**

(Defined) On all shots (except on the break and when the table is open), the shooter must hit one of his group of balls first and (1) pocket a numbered ball, or (2) cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a rail. Please Note: It is permissible for the shooter to bank the cue ball off a rail before contacting the object ball; however, after contact with the object ball, an object ball must be pocketed, or the cue ball or any numbered ball must contact a rail. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul.

#### **4.12 "SAFETY" SHOT**

For tactical reasons, a player may choose to pocket an obvious object ball and also discontinue a turn at the table by declaring "safety" in advance. A safety shot is defined as a legal shot. If the shooting player intends to play safe by pocketing an obvious object ball, then prior to the shot, the shooter must declare a "safety" to the opponent. It is the shooter's responsibility to make the opponent aware of the intended safety shot. If this is not done, and one of the shooter's object balls is pocketed, the shooter will be required to shoot again. Any ball pocketed on a safety shot remains pocketed.

#### **4.13 SCORING**

A player is entitled to continue shooting until failing to legally pocket a ball of his group. After a player has legally pocketed all of his group of balls, he shoots to pocket the 8-ball.

#### **4.14 FOUL PENALTY**

Opposing player gets cue ball in hand. This means that the player can place the cue ball anywhere on the table (does not have to be behind the headstring except on opening break). This rule prevents a player from making intentional fouls which would put an opponent at a disadvantage. With "cue ball in hand," the player may use a hand or any part of a cue (including the tip) to position the cue ball. When placing the cue ball in position, any forward stroke motion contacting the cue ball will be a foul, if not a legal shot. (*Also see Rule 3.39*)

#### **4.15 COMBINATION SHOTS**

Combination shots are allowed; however, the 8-ball can't be used as a first ball in the combination. Should such contact occur on the 8-ball, it is a foul.

#### **4.16 ILLEGALLY POCKETED BALLS**

An object ball is considered to be illegally pocketed when (1) that object ball is pocketed on the same shot a foul is committed, or (2) the called ball did not go in the designated pocket, or (3) a safety is called prior to the shot. Illegally pocketed balls remain pocketed and are scored in favor of the shooter controlling that specific group of balls, solids or stripes..

#### **4.17 OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE**

If any object ball is jumped off the table, it is a foul and loss of turn, unless it is the 8-ball, which is a loss of game. Any jumped object balls are not respotted

#### **4.18 JUMP AND MASSE SHOT FOUL**

While "cue ball fouls only" is the rule of play when a match is not presided over by a referee, a player should be aware that it will be considered a cue ball foul if during an attempt to jump, curve or masse the cue ball over or around an impeding numbered ball that is not a legal object ball, the impeding ball moves (regardless of whether it was moved by a hand, cue stick follow-through or bridge).

#### **4.19 PLAYING THE 8-BALL**

When the 8-ball is the legal object ball, a scratch or foul is not loss of game if the 8-ball is not pocketed or jumped from the table. Incoming player has cue ball in hand. Note: A combination shot can never be used to legally pocket the 8-ball, except when the 8-ball is the first ball contacted in the shot sequence.

#### **4.20 LOSS OF GAME**

A player loses the game by committing any of the following infractions:

1. Fouls when pocketing the 8-ball (exception: see 8-Ball Pocketed On The Break).
2. Pockets the 8-ball on the same stroke as the last of his group of balls.
3. Jumps the 8-ball off the table at any time.
4. Pockets the 8-ball in a pocket other than the one designated.
5. Pockets the 8-ball when it is not the legal object ball.

Note: All infractions must be called before another shot is taken, or else it will be deemed that no infraction occurred.

#### **4.21 STALEMATED GAME**

If, after 3 consecutive turns at the table by each player (6 turns total), the referee judges (or if no referee, both players agree) that attempting to pocket or move an object ball will result in loss of game, the balls will be reracked with the original breaker of the stalemated game breaking again. The stalemate rule may be applied regardless of the

number of balls on the table. Please Note: Three consecutive fouls by one player in 8-ball is not a loss of game.

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## **5. NINE-BALL**

*Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the General Rules of Pocket Billiards apply.*

### **5.1 OBJECT OF THE GAME**

Nine-Ball is played with nine object balls numbered one through nine and a cue ball. On each shot, the first ball the cue ball contacts must be the lowest numbered ball on the table, but the balls need not be pocketed in order. If a player pockets any ball on a legal shot, he remains at the table for another shot, and continues until missing, committing a foul, or winning the game by pocketing the 9-ball. After a miss, the incoming player must shoot from the position left by the previous player, but after any foul the incoming player may start with the cue ball anywhere on the table. Players are not required to call any shot. A match ends when one of the players has won the required number of games.

### **5.2 RACKING THE BALLS**

The object balls are racked in a diamond shape, with the 1-ball at the top of the diamond and on the foot spot, the 9-ball in the center of the diamond, and the other balls in random order, racked as tightly as possible. The game begins with cue ball in hand behind the head string.

### **5.3 ORDER OF THE BREAK**

Winner of the lag has the option to break. In 9-Ball the winner of each game breaks in the next unless otherwise specified by the tournament organizer. The following are common options that may be designated by tournament officials in advance:

- (a) Players alternate break.
- (b) Loser breaks.
- (c) Player trailing in game count breaks the next game.

### **5.4 LEGAL BREAK SHOT**

The rules governing the break shot are the same as for other shots except:

1. The breaker must strike the 1-ball first and either pocket a ball or drive at least four numbered balls to the rail.
2. If the cue ball is pocketed or driven off the table, or the requirements of the opening break are not met, it is a foul, and the incoming player has cue ball in hand anywhere on the table.
3. If on the break shot, the breaker causes an object ball to jump off the table, it is a foul and the incoming player has cue ball in hand anywhere on the table. The object ball is not respotted (exception: if the object ball is the 9-ball, it is respotted).

## **5.5 CONTINUING PLAY**

On the shot immediately following a legal break, the shooter may play a "push out." (*See Rule 5.6*). If the breaker pockets one or more balls on a legal break, he continues to shoot until he misses, fouls, or wins the game. If the player misses or fouls, the other player begins an inning and shoots until missing, committing a foul, or winning. The game ends when the 9-ball is pocketed on a legal shot, or the game is forfeited for a serious infraction of the rules.

## **5.6 PUSH OUT**

The player who shoots the shot immediately after a legal break may play a push out in an attempt to move the cue ball into a better position for the option that follows. On a push out, the cue ball is not required to contact any object ball nor any rail, but all other foul rules still apply. The player must announce the intention of playing a push out before the shot, or the shot is considered to be a normal shot. Any ball pocketed on a push out does not count and remains pocketed except the 9-ball. Following a legal push out, the incoming player is permitted to shoot from that position or to pass the shot back to the player who pushed out. A push out is not considered to be a foul as long as no rule (*except rules 5.7 and 5.8*) is violated. An illegal push out is penalized according to the type of foul committed. After a player scratches on the break shot, the incoming player cannot play a push out.

## **5.7 FOULS**

When a player commits a foul, he must relinquish his run at the table and no balls pocketed on the foul shot are respotted (exception: if a pocketed ball is the 9-ball, it is respotted). The incoming player is awarded ball in hand; prior to his first shot he may place the cue ball anywhere on the table. If a player commits several fouls on one shot, they are counted as only one foul.

## **5.8 BAD HIT**

If the first object ball contacted by the cue ball is not the lowest numbered ball on the table, the shot is foul.

## **5.9 NO RAIL**

If no object ball is pocketed, failure to drive the cue ball or any numbered ball to a rail after the cue ball contacts the object ball on is a foul.

## **5.10 IN HAND**

When the cue ball is in hand, the player may place the cue ball anywhere on the bed of the table, except in contact with an object ball. The player may continue to adjust the position of the cue ball until shooting.

## **5.11 OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE**

An unpocketed ball is considered to be driven off the table if it comes to rest other than on the bed of the table. It is a foul to drive an object ball off the table. The jumped object ball(s) is not respotted (exception: if the object ball is the 9-ball, it is respotted) and play

continues.

**5.12 JUMP AND MASSE SHOT FOUL**

If a match is not refereed, it will be considered a cue ball foul if during an attempt to jump, curve or masse the cue ball over or around an impeding numbered ball, the impeding ball moves (regardless of whether it was moved by a hand, cue stick follow-through or bridge).

**5.13 THREE CONSECUTIVE FOULS**

If a player fouls three consecutive times on three successive shots without making an intervening legal shot, the game is lost. The three fouls must occur in one game. The warning must be given between the second and third fouls. A player's inning begins when it is legal to take a shot and ends at the end of a shot on which he misses, fouls or wins, or when he fouls between shots.

**5.14 END OF GAME**

On the opening break, the game is considered to have commenced once the cue ball has been struck by the cue tip. The 1-ball must be legally contacted on the break shot. The game ends at the end of a legal shot which pockets the 9-ball, or when a player forfeits the game as the result of a foul.

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**6. 14.1 CONTINUOUS**

*Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the General Rules of Pocket Billiards apply.*

**6.1 OBJECT OF THE GAME**

14.1 is a nomination game. The player must nominate a ball and a pocket. The player is awarded one point for every correctly nominated and pocketed ball on a legal stroke, and is allowed to continue a turn until failure to pocket a nominated ball or commits a foul. The player can pocket the first 14 balls, but before continuing a turn by shooting at the 15th (and last remaining) ball on the table, the 14 pocketed balls are racked as before, except with the apex space vacant. The player then attempts to pocket the 15th ball in a manner so that the racked balls are disturbed and he can continue the run. The player who scores the predetermined point total for a game (usually 150 in major tournament play or any agreed upon total in casual play) prior to the opponent, wins the game.

**6.2 PLAYERS**

2 players or 2 teams.

**6.3 BALLS USED**

Standard set of object balls numbered 1-15, plus the cue ball.

**6.4 THE RACK**

Standard triangle rack with the apex ball on the foot spot, 1-ball on the racker's right

corner, 5-ball on left corner. Other balls are placed at random and must touch their neighbors.

## **6.5 SCORING**

Any ball legally pocketed counts one point for the shooter.

## **6.6 OPENING BREAK**

Starting player must either (1) designate a ball and a pocket into which that ball will be pocketed and accomplish the shot, or (2) cause the cue ball to contact a ball and then a cushion, plus cause two object balls to contact a cushion. Failure to meet at least one of the above requirements is a breaking violation. Offender's score is assessed a 2-point penalty for each breaking violation. In addition, the opponent has the choice of (1) accepting the table in position, or (2) having the balls reracked and requiring the offending player to repeat the opening break. That choice continues until the opening break is not a breaking violation, or until the opponent accepts the table in position. The three successive fouls rule does not apply to breaking violations. If the starting player scratches on a legal opening break, he is charged with a foul and assessed a one point penalty, which applies toward the "Successive Fouls Penalties." The incoming player is awarded cue ball in hand behind the head string, with object balls in position.

## **6.7 RULES OF PLAY**

1. A legally pocketed ball entitles a shooter to continue at the table until he fails to legally pocket a called ball on a shot. A player may shoot any ball, but before the shot, must designate the called ball and called pocket. Details such as kisses, caroms, combinations, or cushions (all of which are legal) need not be indicated. Any additionally pocketed ball(s) on a legal stroke is scored as one point for the shooter.
2. On all shots, a player must cause the cue ball to contact an object ball and then (1) pocket a numbered ball, or (2) cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a cushion. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul. When an object ball is not frozen to a cushion, but is within a ball's width of a cushion (referee to determine by measurement if necessary), a player is permitted only two consecutive legal safeties on that ball using only the near rail. If such safety play is employed, that object ball is then considered frozen to the rail on the player's next inning. The General Rules of Pocket Billiards "Frozen Balls" requirements apply if the player chooses to make the first cue ball contact with that object ball on the third shot. (Note: If a player has committed a foul on the shot immediately before or the shot immediately after playing this ball, then he must immediately meet the requirements of the "Frozen Ball" rule when playing this object ball. Also, if he has committed two consecutive fouls, he must immediately meet the requirements of the Frozen Ball rule when playing this object ball. If such player fails to meet the requirements of the Frozen Ball rule, he is considered to have committed a third successive foul and the appropriate point penalty is assessed as well as one point for each of the previous fouls. All 15 balls are then reracked and the player committing the infraction is required to break, as at the beginning of the game.)
3. When the 14th ball of a rack is pocketed, play stops momentarily with the 15th ball remaining in position on the table; the 14 pocketed balls are then racked (with the space at the foot spot vacant in the triangle). Player then continues, normally pocketing



the 15th (or "break" ball) in such manner as to have the cue ball carom into the rack and spread the balls to facilitate the continuance of his run. However, player is not compelled to shoot the 15th ball; he may shoot any ball he desires. See Diagram below if the 15th ball is pocketed on the same stroke as the 14th ball.

<b>Cue Ball Lies 15<sup>th</sup> Ball Lies</b>	<b>IN THE RACK</b>	<b>NOT IN THE RACK &amp; NOT ON HEAD SPOT *</b>	<b>ON HEAD SPOT *</b>
<b>IN THE RACK</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in kitchen	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: head spot Cue Ball: in position	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: center spot Cue Ball: in position
<b>POCKETED</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in kitchen	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in position	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in position
<b>IN KITCHEN BUT NOT ON HEAD SPOT *</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: in position Cue Ball: head spot		
<b>NOT IN KITCHEN &amp; NOT IN THE RACK</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: in position Cue Ball: in kitchen		
<b>ON HEAD SPOT *</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Ball: in position Cue Ball: center spot		<i>*On Head Spot Means to interfere with spotting a ball on the head spot</i>

4. A player may call a safety rather than an object ball (for defensive purposes). Safety play is legal, but must comply with all applicable rules. The player's inning ends when a safety is played, and pocketed balls are not scored. Any object ball pocketed on a called safety is spotted.

5. A player may not catch, touch, or in any way interfere with a ball as it travels toward a pocket or the rack area on a shot (to include catching a ball as it enters a pocket by having a hand in the pocket). Doing so is a special "deliberate foul" and is penalized one point for the foul and an additional 15 point penalty, for a total of 16 points. The incoming player then has choice of (1) accepting the table in position with the cue ball in hand behind the head string, or (2) having all 15 balls reracked and requiring the offending player to shoot under the requirements of the opening break.

6. If the 15th (unpocketed) ball of a rack and/or the cue ball interferes with the triangle being lowered straight down into position for racking, refer to the diagram, which indicates the proper manner of relocating balls. *(The gray boxes are those situations in which there is no interference, both balls remain in position.)*

7. When a player has the cue ball in hand behind the head string (as after a scratch) and all object balls are behind the head string, the object ball nearest the head string may be spotted upon request. If two or more balls are an equal distance from the head string, the player may designate which of the equidistant balls is to be spotted.

## **6.8 ILLEGALLY POCKETED BALLS**

All spotted. No penalty.

## **6.9 OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE**

The stroke is a foul. Any jumped ball(s) is spotted after the balls come to rest.

## **6.10 CUE BALL AFTER JUMPING OFF TABLE/SCRATCH**

Incoming player has cue ball in hand behind the head string, unless the

provision of Rule of Play 6.7.2, 6.7.5 or 6.12 (below) apply to the offender's foul and dictate alternate choices or procedures.

#### **6.11 *PENALTIES FOR FOULS***

One point deducted for each foul. Note: penalties are more severe for deliberate fouls (*Rule of Play 6.7.5*) and third "Successive Fouls" (*6.12 below*). Incoming player accepts cue ball in position unless foul was a jumped cue ball, pocket scratch, deliberate foul (*Rule of Play 6.7.5*) or third successive foul.

#### **6.12 *SUCCESSIVE FOUL PENALTIES***

When a player commits a foul, penalization is one point (or more as appropriate) and a notation is made and posted by the scorer that the player is "on a foul." The player remains "on a foul" until the next shot attempt, at which time the foul may be removed by successfully pocketing a called ball, or completing a legal safety. If failing to meet these requirements on the next turn at the table, the player is penalized one point. The notation is changed to "on two fouls." If he fails to meet the requirements of successfully pocketing a called ball or completing a legal safety on the third consecutive turn at the table, penalization is one point and an additional penalty of 15 points is assessed (a total of 18 points for three consecutive fouls equals -18 points). The commission of a third successive foul automatically clears the offender's record of fouls. The incoming player then has choice of (1) accepting the table in position, or (2) having all 15 balls reracked and requiring the offending player to shoot under the requirements of the opening break. Rules for the opening break apply. It should be emphasized that successive fouls must be committed in successive turns (or playing attempts), not merely in successive innings. For example, if a player ends inning six with a foul, steps to the table for inning seven and fouls (he is "on two fouls"), and then starts inning eight with a legally pocketed ball before scratching on his second shot attempt of the inning, he has not committed three successive fouls, even though there were fouls in three successive innings. As soon as he legally pocketed the ball to start inning eight, he cleared the two fouls. He is, of course, "on one foul" when he plays the first stroke attempt of inning nine.

#### **6.13 *SCORING NOTE***

The deduction of penalty points can result in negative scores. A running score can read "minus one," "minus two," "minus 15," etc. (A player can win a game with a score of 150 while the opponent has scored but two fouls. The final score would read 150 to -2.) If a player fouls on a shot that has not pocketed a ball, the point penalty is deducted from his score at the end of the previous inning. If a player fouls and pockets a ball on the same shot, that ball is spotted (not scored) and the point penalty is deducted from his score at the end of the previous inning.

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## **7. Rules for Wheelchair Competition**

*The International Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Sports Federation (ISMWSF) is recognized by the World Pool-Billiard Association (WPA), the world governing body of pocket billiards, as governing all international competitions concerning wheelchair pocket billiards. The ISMWSF has adopted the rules of play within these pages except for the amendments, exceptions and alterations stipulated below.*

### **7.1 CUE SPORTS CLASSIFICATION**

There are Three (3) Classes for those competing in wheelchairs.

1. Those players with hand or arm disabilities who cannot make or sustain a functional bridge while playing a shot.
2. Those players who can make and sustain a functional bridge but who have no stability and balance due to a lack of functional trunk muscles. These players support themselves at the table with their bridge hand.
3. All other players with a good to normal balance meeting the criteria for minimal disability.

### **7.2 MINIMAL DISABILITY**

A minimal disability is a significant disability that prevents a player from playing standing up.

### **7.3 GENERAL RULES**

1. Players must remain seated on the cushion or seat of the wheelchair when playing a shot.
2. Feet must be kept clear of the floor; should the feet or footplates touch the floor it will be deemed a foul.
3. Players in Class 1 may request the referee for assistance with rest and equipment, etc.
4. Below the knee strapping is allowed to keep the feet on the footplates. However, strapping above the waist is not allowed except for medical reasons when it will be taken into account for classification purposes.

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