

# Billiards Buzz

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**EUROPEAN OPEN  
KILLER**

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# FROM THE Head Rail

MIKE HOWERTON

**M**arch was a busy month. I attended the Billiard Congress of America's Expo and the vibe in the room seemed very positive. Vendors all seemed to be happy with more foot traffic and every one said their sales were up from previous years.

A conversation that was happening at the trade show was the reported communication between Matchroom and the World Pool Association. It sounds like an agreement, that has been long in the making, is finally coming close to being finished. This is something that has needed to be resolved for too long and everyone wants to see the drama come to an end. Let's hope that an official announcement is released soon.

It was interesting to see a new player atop the AzBilliards Money List. I know it's just a matter of time before Fedor gets his physical health under control and is back to dominating the game, but it is kinda fun to see a new face at the top for now.

Speaking of new faces, congrats to Moritz Neuhausen for his first World Nineball Tour victory. Very well done, and hopefully the first of many more.

Until next time.  
Mike



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*Jayson Shaw*



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# FILLER'S WINNING SHOTS AT THE DCC 9-BALL

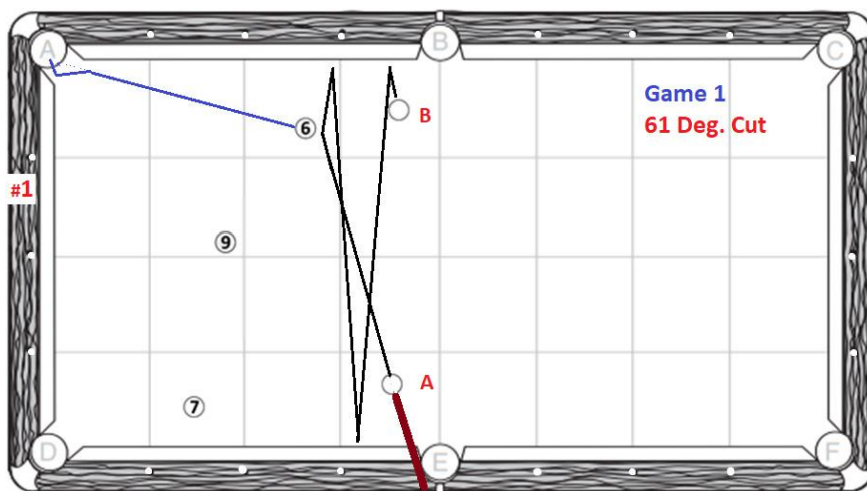
In late January Joshua Filler **successfully** defended his title at the Derby City Classic's 9-Ball division. In this column I am going to take you through his **final** match, as I put the spotlight on the one shot that I think was the key to winning each game.

**B**efore we get started with the shots, it is worth noting the various categories that the big shots belong in. Two of the shots were the first shot of the run, one of them being an extremely difficult one to pocket. Three of his game winners were Recovery Shots which came after he missed position. The biggest of these was also the matching winning shot. And four of the shots were arguably the best position plays of these games.

I picked these shots by making another viewing of the match. And then it hit me – a useful learning exercise for you would be to conduct the same kind of analysis when watching matches on tape, such as those at Accu-Stats.com. Look for that one key shot each rack. See what you can learn from it. And when there are two contestants for the big shot, put on your thinking cap and choose one over the other, and why you selected it. So, without further ado, let's dive into the 9 shots that helped Filler to retain his crown at the DCC 9-Ball.

## 1 – THIN CUT ON 6-BALL

Filler was in the midst of a routine runout when he was forced to play a 3-rail route on the 5-ball into the side. When the cue ball stopped well short of ideal shape on the 6-ball, as shown in **Diagram 1**, this ball instantly turned into the game winner. The cut was 61 degrees, which is on the border between super thin and razor thin.



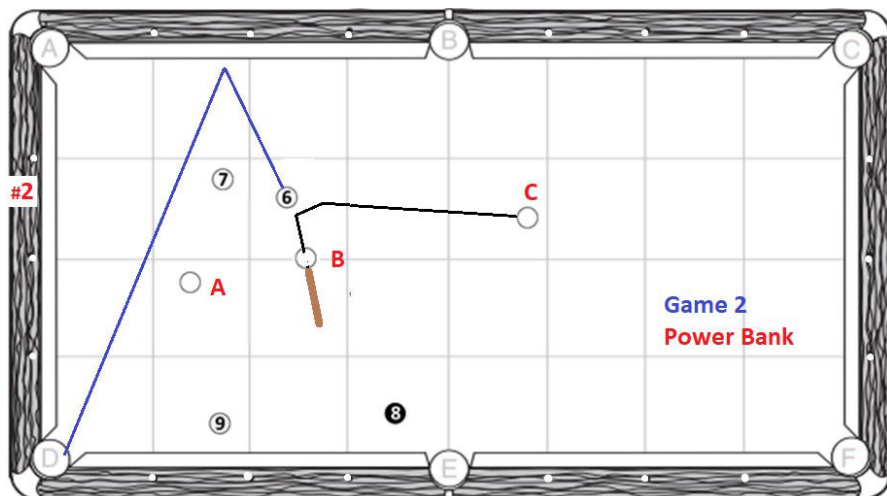
Upping the difficulty factor was the 6-ball's distance to the pocket, the length of the cue ball to the 6, the fact that he was bridging on the rail, and the use of inside english.

Filler made an excellent shot even though the ball struck the rail before rebounding into the pocket. Given the difficulty of this shot, I think we can cut

Filler a little slack for failing to send the ball into the center of the pocket. On this shot and most of the ones Filler plays, he holds his follow through until the object ball is well on its way to the pocket.

## 2 – BANK ON 6-BALL

Filler is one of the best in the world at devising run out patterns, and then exe-



cutting them to near perfection. Still, he's human, so he does make mistakes as we saw in Game 1. In Game 2, as shown in **Diagram 2** he was playing for position at Cue Ball A for the 6-ball into the side, as shown by where he placed his tip. But he came up short and was faced with a choice. He could play any one of several safeties.

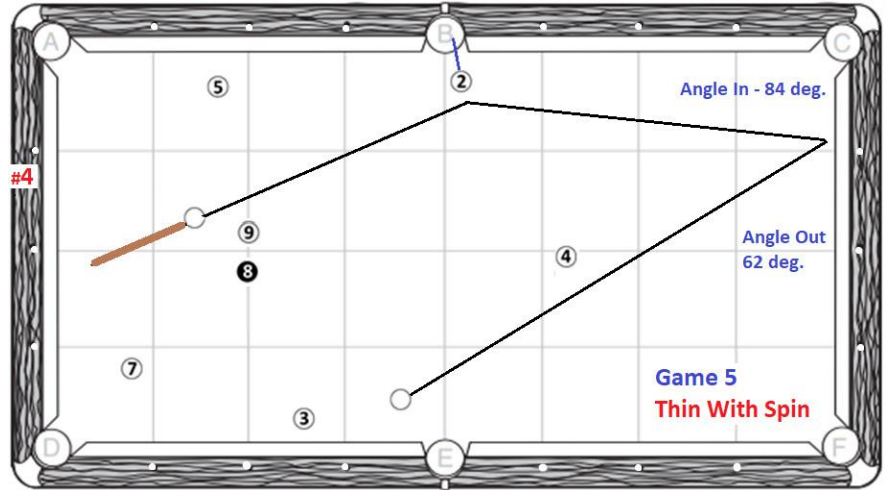
But this late in the game the chance of playing a strong safety, the kind that instantly wins games, was not great. So, sometimes that little voice that says "go for it" rules out, as it does so often with Filler due, in no small part, to his awesome firepower.

On this bank Filler had to cut the 6-ball slightly to the left. He used a hard stroke (a 7) which resulted in the position up table at Cue Ball C. The speed shortened the bank slightly, adding to the accuracy of the shot.

### 3 – JACKED UP POWER FOLLOW!!!

In a previous column I advised on certain difficult shots that you first assume your stance to see what the shot looks like and feels like. With this knowledge you are now ready to get down and play the shot. Another technique, when playing on a clock, is to take an extension – not necessarily to decide what to shoot, but to give yourself time to gear up for your very best effort.

On the shot in **Diagram 3**, Filler, a fast player, took 45 seconds to get ready

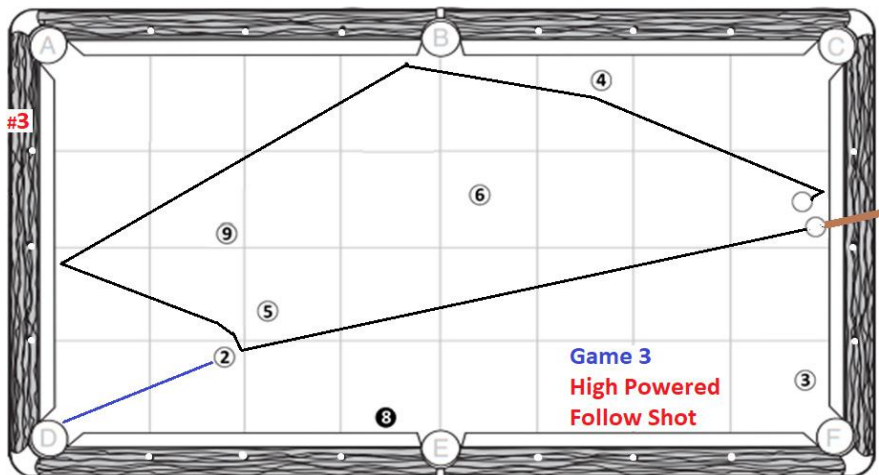


to shoot. That was, as the illustration shows, time very well spent as he converted on this monster table-length high powered follow shot while shooting off the rail. Whew!

The net result is that he was able to send the cue ball about 20' to within a couple of inches of where it started out for super shape on the 3-ball.

Making this long shot was tough enough. But Filler slammed it into the pocket with total confidence, causing the cue ball to arc over to contact near the middle diamond. It then almost hit the point or scratched in the side, but it didn't. And after brushing the 4-ball the cue ball bounced gently off the end rail for position on the 3.

Most players, even top pros, would never even consider playing a shot like this,



but Filler does, and quite often, which is another skill that has led to him, with a Fargo rating of 857 (when 800 is world class), to becoming the best 9-Ball player in the world.

### 5 – THIN IN SIDE WITH SPIN

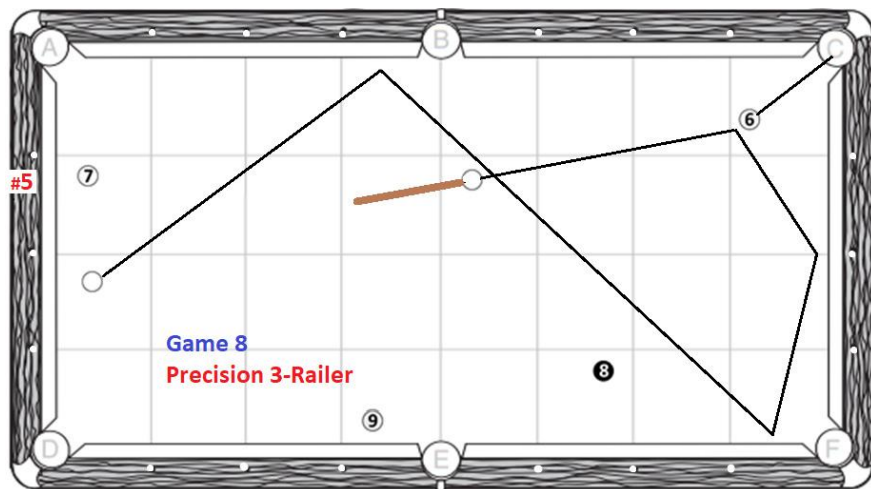
Filler started this run off of Pagulayan's dry break with a rather fortunate double bank on the 1-ball. He came up short, but his miss brought the opposite corner pocket into play.

He was then left with a thin cut into the side on the 2-ball. He undercut it slightly, cheating the right side of the pocket. And he used low outside (right) english to take the corner pocket out of play. In addition, the english opened the angle as shown in **Diagram 4**, steering the cue ball's path across the table for excellent position on the 3-ball.

### 8 – PRECISION 3-RAIL POSITION

Filler played the precise 3-rail position play depicted in **Diagram 5** with a very forceful stroke, which was necessary because of the relatively shallow cut for this type of position play. On his follow through after contact his elbow dropped at least 7-8" and he quickly elevated his body to make room for his powerful follow through, in which his tip went 8-9" past the point of contact.

Notice how he doubled the corner hitting just above the pocket, and this led



game, set up the entire run. Before playing the shot, Filler walked to near Pocket A to survey this area for his upcoming shot. But then he chose to play the shot in the illustration.

This 1-rail route required the use of inside (left) english which, at this distance, made the 2-ball quite missable even though it was not far from the pocket. Reversing the cue ball's path off the end rail enabled Filler to avoid having to deal with all of those other balls, which would have been the case if he'd chosen to play a 2-rail route. Notice that he did not try to get close to the 3-ball, which ensured that the cue ball's path would not widen out and possibly leave him behind the 4-ball. While this shot is not a big crowd pleaser, those in the know will appreciate the fine points that he displayed in this rack opening position play.

to him missing the side with a small margin to spare. While it looks like he is tempting fate, with his level of skill at routing the cue ball he can play for smaller margins for error because he just knows that he's not going to scratch.

As an aside, I wonder if he was planning to have the cue ball hit the fourth rail and bounce off it a couple of inches.

### 9 - 3-RAILS TO THE SHORT SIDE

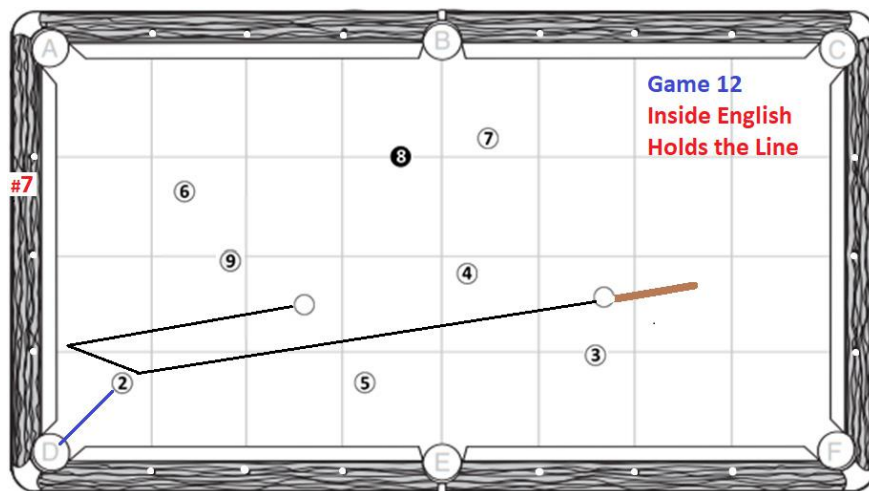
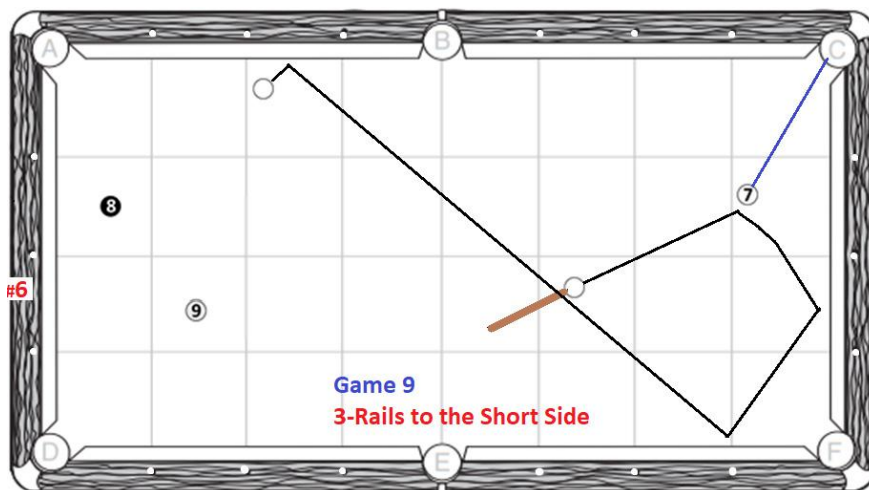
As matters would have, Filler's next big winning shot was also a 3-rail position, as shown in **Diagram 6**. This time the natural route took him to the short side of the 8-ball. Now, he could have played for the opposite side of the 8, with its larger position zone. But playing this route would have brought both the 9-ball and the corner pocket into play, whereas the short side eliminated these hazards.

Once again, his elbow dropped several inches on his follow through.

In the small complaints department, I would wager that Filler would have liked to have the cue ball stop a ball's width further down the table and a ball's width further off the rail. These minor imperfections did not prevent him from closing out game 6, and taking a 6-3 lead in this race to 9.

### 12 - INSIDE ENGLISH HOLDS THE LINE

The early rack position play shown in **Diagram 7**, which was the first shot of the





# KEEP YOUR HEAD STILL—OR LOSE YOUR NICKELS!

ANTHONY BEELER

I once played a match against the iconic “Nickel Jack” Goode, an opponent who had nickels tucked into the crevices of his ears.

At first, I thought it was a sharking tactic, but when I asked him about it, he explained that it was his way of keeping his head still—if he moved too much, the nickels would fall out. That moment made me realize just how far players will go to gain an edge. In this article, we’ll explore several effective ways you can practice keeping your head still for greater accuracy and consistency in your game.

## 1. Record Yourself Playing

One effective method is recording your practice sessions. Set up a camera or phone at different angles to capture your head movement while shooting. Watching yourself play allows you to analyze whether you move your head during execution. Identifying and addressing these movements will improve your consistency.

## 2. Use the ‘Freeze’ Drill and Count to Four

The freeze drill helps develop muscle memory for keeping your head still. Line up a shot and take your stroke,

but instead of immediately moving after contact, hold your head and body in the exact position for a few seconds. Count to four before getting up from the shot. This practice helps reinforce the habit of staying down through the shot and prevents unnecessary movement.

## 3. Press Firmly into the Slate with Your Bridge Hand

A stable bridge hand can contribute to overall shot stability. When setting up your shot, press firmly into the slate with your bridge hand to create a sol-



id foundation. The “pressing down” also requires you to stop pressing to get up off the shot. This added stability of this method is one effective way to help lock yourself down.

## 4. Develop a Pre-Shot Routine

Many players move their head because they lack a structured pre-shot routine. Develop a consistent sequence of steps before taking a shot, including aiming, getting into your stance, and ensuring your head is stable. Having a routine reduces the likelihood of last-minute adjustments that might cause head movement.

## 5. Focus on Moving Your Eyes Only

When aiming and executing a shot in pool, it’s essential to keep your head completely still and rely only on



your eyes to track the target. Instead of adjusting your head position, train yourself to move only your eyes when checking the cue ball and object ball. Your line to the pocket should have already come from your standing aim. By keeping your head locked in place and letting your eyes do the work, you develop a more stable and repeatable stroke.

## 6. Rest Your Jaw on Your Shoulder

Some players improve their head stability by resting their jaw on the front of their shoulder while down on the shot. One player comes to mind. Two-time world bank pool champion Larry "Take it to the Banks" Price did this religiously. This physical anchor helps minimize movement and reinforces a still position throughout execution. Do a search for some of his matches on YouTube and you will see exactly what I mean.

## 7. Slow Down Your Stroke

Rushing through a stroke can lead to unnecessary head movement. Practicing slow and deliberate strokes helps you focus on staying still throughout the shot. Gradually increase speed while maintaining stability.

## 8. Have a Training Partner Observe You

A second pair of eyes can be invaluable. Ask a coach or practice partner to watch your head movement and provide feedback. Sometimes, you may not realize you're moving, but an

observer can point out inconsistencies and help correct them.

## Final Thoughts

Don't lose your nickels! Developing the habit of keeping your head still requires discipline and conscious effort. By incorporating these drills and techniques into your practice routine, you will see improved accuracy, consistency, and overall performance. Over time, head stability will become second nature, allowing you to focus on other aspects of your game and reach higher levels of play.

Anthony Beeler is the current *Billiards Instructor of the Decade* and is a former BCAPL National Champion. He has numerous "Top 25" national finishes and is the primary author of the *ACS National Billiards Instructor's Manual*. He has also authored the book *Unstoppable! Positive Thinking for Pool Players*. Anthony currently has the highest established Fargo Rating of any Master Instructor. He has won over 300 tournaments and has defeated numerous professional players in tournament competition.

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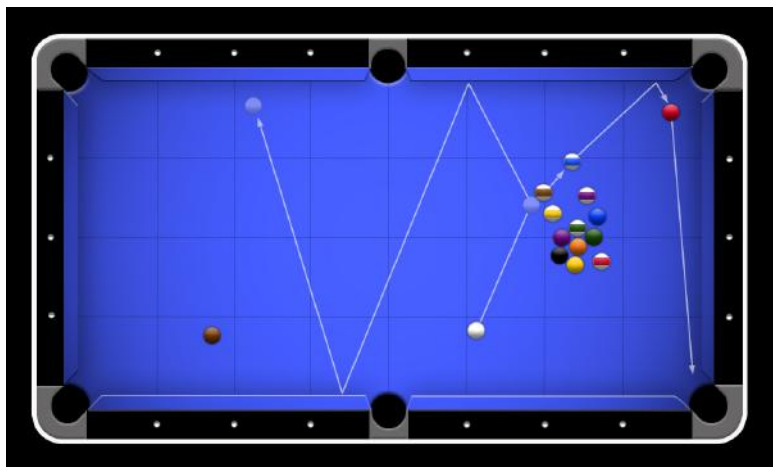
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**F R O M**



**A**ccu-Stats Video Productions has been bringing us World Class Pool on video for the last 30 years. With this column, we hope to bring you some examples of the best shots that come up between the greatest players who play this game.

This month, we focus on a shot from The Rifleman, Buddy Hall, from the 2001 Derby City Classic. Hall was leading two games to one, against Cliff Joyner, but Joyner have the three in front of his pocket, hidden by the stack.

Buddy came up with this creative bank-kick to not only clear the one from Cliff's pocket, but to score it in his own.

It feels like there are a number of ways this shot could have gone wrong, but now with the confidence of The Rifleman.





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# Gospel Trick Shot #62

## 374 Shot

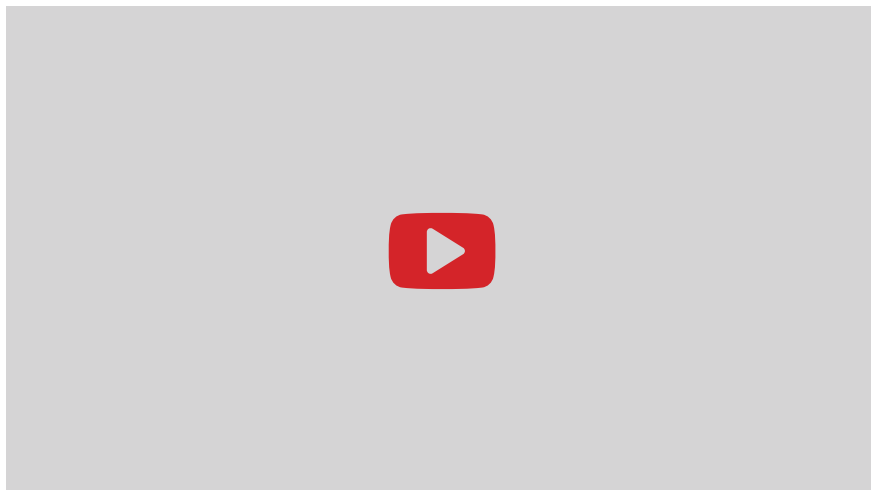
**History of the Trick Shot:** This shot performed by Steve Lillis is a combination of three different Gospel Trick Shots strung together to produce a gospel message. All three of these shots were published back in 2020 in AZBilliards Buzz Magazine. They were part of the original 12 Gospel Trick Shots that were featured in Steve's second book called "What's That In Your Hand" published in 2019 and available on Amazon. AZBilliards publisher Mike Howerton suggested we publish one Gospel Trick Shot of the month and so the journey began in November 2019. The first shot is called "Be Still" which was GTS #6. The second shot called "Peer Pressure" also known as "Direction" or "Choices" was published as GTS #3. The third and final shot is the "Wall" shot published as GTS #5.

**GTS Name and Why:** The numbers 374 represent using three balls in the first shot, 7 balls in the second shot, and 4 balls in the third shot. Those numbers together yield the scripture reference for the Bible verse found in Psalm 37:4. Together those three shots produce a quick one-minute or longer gospel message. The first shot encourages us to be still and delight ourselves in the Lord. The second shot reveals the direction God has for each of us which will be the desires of our heart as we line up with the heart of our Creator. The third shot reminds us that there will always be walls or obstacles to try to take us off course. However, with the help of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we will end up where God intended and where we want to be not only for this life but for all eternity.

**Scripture Reference:** Psalm 37:4 says "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart".

**Cue Ball Placement:** Cue ball placed in different locations depending on the shot. The first shot "Be Still" has the cue ball in the middle being still. Pick up the cue ball in hand to make the second and third shots as diagramed and in the video.

**Object Ball(s) Placement:** Use any numbered object balls for each shot except for the 8 Ball in the middle of the second shot which is "Peer Pressure". All set ups are as shown in the diagram. Make sure all balls are completely frozen. The first ball in each shot is the key to proper set-up. Use the diamond on the rail as a guide for the first shot. The 8 Ball is on the foot spot for the second shot with the other six balls surrounding it with an equal gap size maybe 1/2 inch between object balls and the 8 Ball. Use the point on the right of the side pocket for the first ball as a guide on the third shot and place the other three balls in a straight line directly in front of that first ball as indicated in the diagram.



**Objective:** When all the balls are set-up correctly you can easily move from shot to shot while you deliver the message. The first shot has three balls being pocketed while the cue ball stays still. The second shot only the 8 Ball is pocketed indicating direction. In the third shot the wall or obstacle comes down with 4 balls being pocketed while the cue ball comes back to pocket another ball with the help of the triangle (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

**Special Notes:** Test all shots individually first before attempting to do all three shots in one attempt. After completing the first two shots, you may add a triangle and an object onto the table as diagramed for the last shot.

**Crowd Reactions:** This is a good way to start a Gospel Trick Shot show. With all three shots tested and set-up the performer can focus on introductions and the intention of the show. It allows an opportunity to think about what to say and interact with the audience before the show. Instant credibility is established after the three shots are executed. If you miss one just move on with a joke or oneliner as you have three chances! Yours truly Steve Lillis has found this to be very effective. Some of our team members like Phil Ball can do an entire Gospel Trick Shot show without me shooting as I have set up multiple shots for Phil to execute while talking to the audience. Audiences have commented how much they like this team approach.



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# JOSHUA FILLER

## DOMINATES TO WIN 2025 EUROPEAN OPEN POOL CHAMPIONSHIP

Jack Mitchell - Matchroom Multi Sport / Photo courtesy Taka Wu - Matchroom Multi Sport

**Joshua Filler delivered a masterclass at the 2025 European Open Pool Championship, storming to victory with a commanding 13-1 triumph over Naoyuki Oi at Hotel Hills Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina.**

Final Result:

**Joshua Filler 13-1 Naoyuki Oi**

Naoyuki Oi claimed the opening rack, but his hopes of building an early lead were quickly dashed in the second. A costly scratch on an attempted jump shot handed control to Filler, who wasted no time in launching his charge.

In the sixth rack, Oi had a chance to turn the tide, skillfully escaping Filler's hook on the 3-ball and potting it to regain control. However, his momentum was short-lived as a misjudged cut on the 6-ball proved costly, gifting Filler another opening. The German star wasted no time in clearing the table, stretching his lead to 5-1.

The seventh rack saw Filler accidentally hook himself, forcing a foul that offered Oi a lifeline. Yet, Oi's struggles continued as he missed a routine 7-ball, allowing Filler to capitalise with a precise 7-9 carom, widening the gap even further.

Oi's troubles mounted in the eighth rack when a failed jump shot on the 2-ball led to another foul. Filler, in ruthless 'Killer' fashion, wasted no time in sweeping up yet another rack.

With momentum firmly on his side, Filler was relentless, shutting down any chances for Oi to make a comeback. By the time the fourteenth and final rack arrived, the result was all

but sealed. The German star delivered one last flawless clearance to complete an astonishing thirteen-rack run, claiming the European Open Pool Championship in emphatic style.

Filler's dominant performance was not just a statement victory—it was a long-awaited redemption. After falling short in previous editions of the European Open, he finally captured the crown, adding yet another prestigious title to his already illustrious collection.

In partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Sarajevo Canton, the 2025 European Open Pool Championship exceeded expectations, delivering a thrilling week of Nineball

action, electrifying atmosphere, and high-stakes drama as Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina played host to the prestigious event for the first time.

### NEXT MATCHROOM EVENT

The next signature Matchroom multi-table open event will be the UK Open Pool Championship in Telford, United Kingdom. The tournament takes place from May 6-11 at Telford International Centre.

For more information, click [here](#).

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# MORITZ NEUHAUSEN CROWNED THE 2025 IFX PAYMENTS PREMIER LEAGUE POOL CHAMPION

Jack Mitchell - Matchroom Multi Sport / Photo courtesy Taka Wu - Matchroom Multi Sport

**Moritz Neuhausen claimed his first-ever Matchroom title in emphatic fashion, delivering a flawless 7-0 victory over former champion Francisco Sanchez Ruiz to be crowned the 2025 IFX Payments Premier League Pool winner.**

Hosted for the first time at Hills Hotel in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Sarajevo Canton, the Premier League Pool showcased eight days of high-level competition, culminating in a dominant performance from the young German star.

## Stage Three

Robbie Capito reclaimed the top spot in Stage Three with crucial victories over Neuhausen, Shaw, and Chua, finishing level with Chua in match wins but edging ahead with a superior rack difference of 14. Chua and Ruiz followed closely behind, with the Spaniard securing third place with 19 match wins.

The battle for the final semi-final spot was fiercely contested between Jayson Shaw, Aloysius Yapp, and Neuhausen, with Yapp leading the race at the start of the day. However, a dramatic hill-hill showdown between Neuhausen and Yapp saw the German reignite his chances, securing a vital win. Neuhausen then faced Shaw in his final Stage Three match, delivering a crucial 5-2 victory to clinch the last spot in the semi-finals.

## Semi-Finals

Francisco Sanchez Ruiz was the first to book his place in the final, producing a commanding 7-2 victory over Johann Chua. The pair had met earlier



Moritz Neuhausen

in Stage Three, where Ruiz narrowly edged out the Filipino, but this time, the Spaniard dominated from start to finish, moving one step closer to reclaiming the title.

In the second semi-final matchup, Neuhausen faced group frontrunner Capito. The Hong Kong star raced to a 5-3 lead, but a missed bank shot on the 6-ball proved costly, giving Neuhausen an opening. The German capitalised with a relentless charge, levelling the match at 5-5 before producing a clinical rack run to reach the hill. With momentum on his side, Neuhausen closed out the match with another flawless clearance, securing his

first-ever Premier League Pool final appearance.

## Final

Ruiz won the lag and broke first, but an unfortunate scratch off the 3-ball handed Neuhausen an early advantage. The German wasted no time, sinking a golden break in the second rack to surge ahead 2-0. By the fourth rack, he had extended his lead to 4-0, though a positional error on the 4-ball momentarily gave Ruiz a chance to respond.

However, the Spaniard's stay at the table was brief, as he failed to pot the 7-ball, allowing Neuhausen to stretch his lead to 5-0. A tense safety battle followed in the sixth rack, but Neuhausen remained composed, methodically clearing the table to reach the hill.

With victory in sight, Neuhausen executed a brilliant safety on the 2-ball, forcing Ruiz into a difficult response. When the Spaniard failed to make a pot, the German seized the opportunity, completing a flawless clearance to seal a stunning 7-0 triumph.

Across the past eight days, Neuhausen racked up an impressive 127 match wins, and in his final showdown against a former champion, he not only claimed the Premier League Pool title but also etched his name into Matchroom history with his first-ever major title.



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# SVB DOWNS ATENCIO IN FINALS, GOES UNDEFEATED (AGAIN) TO DEFEND US OPEN 10-BALL TITLE

Skip Maloney - AzB Staff / Photo courtesy Molina Mike - Windows Open

**In a highly-entertaining, tight race to 13, Shane Van Boening and Jesus Atencio battled it out in the finals of the \$15,000-added US Open 10-Ball Championships last night (Tues., March 4) at Griff's in Las Vegas. Van Boening went undefeated, successfully defending the title he claimed last year.**

**F**or those interested in the overall narrative of this event, detailing how Van Boening and Atencio ended up in the finals, you can find a prequel to this report on our front page ("Van Boening/Thorpe and Atencio/De Luna set to square off in US Open 10-Ball semifinal").

Prior to the final, the two had engaged in the event semifinals, in which Van

Boening eliminated Thorpe 11-7, while Atencio was busy defeating Jeffrey De Luna 11-8. In races to 11, the average number of racks-against in the 14 single-elimination matches prior to the finals was 8. None of them went double hill, though six of them finished at 11-9.

As one might safely expect, the finals of the event, demonstrated all of the

pool 'magic' one might expect from its two competitors. Great shot-making, position play and as usual, the appearance, on a couple of occasions, of Lady Luck (and sibling, Miss Bad Luck). But it was not without its. . . oddities.

Half of the games played (6 of 12), halfway through the match when they were tied at 6-6, were won off of an op-



*Shane Van Boening, Brandon and Jesus Atencio*

ponent's break. There would be only one game won off of an opponent's break in the second half. Atencio got that statistical ball rolling when he opened the scoring off SVB's break. He would regain a game lead only twice more; at 5-4 and three racks later, at 6-5, both, also, off of SVB's break.

The longest run of the 23-game match was recorded once, by both of them. Atencio recorded his 'three-fer' when he was down by two (4-2) and advanced to take a lead at 5-4. The next run of three put Van Boening on the hill at 12-10.

And speaking of 'oddities,' Shane Van Boening gave Atencio ball in hand when he miscued, shooting at the 1-ball in rack #14. This allowed Atencio to tie the match at 7-7. It was the sixth tie of eight in the match. After the seventh tie at 8-8, Atencio made a terrific, table-length bank shot at the 1-ball and watched as the cue

ball nestled itself up-tight against the 3-ball, with the 2-ball nestled in on the other side of it. The 'oddity' of this was an uncharacteristic reaction from Van Boening, who is generally one of those individuals you might find pictured next to the definition of 'stoic.' A stream-camera caught him sitting on the sideline after Atencio's shot, making eye contact with someone off-camera. With a laugh, he used two fingers to wipe imaginary sweat from his brow.

So, back and forth it went, to a 9-9 tie, with stream commentators and 'chat' participants hoping for a double hill finish. Van Boening chalked up an unremarkable 19th game to take the lead, at which point, Atencio stepped to the table and recorded the event's first dry break, which eventually gave Van Boening a two-rack lead at 11-9.

On Van Boening's subsequent break, he dropped four balls and got the rest

of them into their holes, reaching the hill, ahead by three at 12-9. On his subsequent break, Atencio recorded his and the match's second dry break. In something of a short 'comedy of errors' however, he recovered to win his 10th (and final) game. Van Boening was snookered right out of the gate and had to execute the match's first 'push.' Later, Atencio would scratch, turning the table back over to Van Boening, who would make an unforced error shooting at the 4-ball, that allowed Atencio to finish.

At 12-10, Van Boening opened the match's last game by dropping three on the break and then, making a three-ball combination that had a way of moving the remaining balls into a clear, 'connect the dots' situation and the cue ball in perfect position for him to exploit it. And he did, closing out the rack and claiming his second straight US Open 10-Ball Championship title.

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# VAN BOENING

## GOES UNDEFEATED TO CLAIM SECOND STRAIGHT US OPEN TITLE

Skip Maloney - AzB Staff / Photo courtesy Molina Mike - Windows Open

**“Numbers don’t lie,” said every math teacher who ever lived.**

The good ones might have also informed you that while that may be true, it is also true that numbers can occasionally fail to tell the whole story. Case in point: The finals of the \$10,000-added US Open 8-Ball Championships at Griff’s in Las Vegas over the weekend that gave Shane Van Boening his second US Open title in a week. The most relevant number to emerge from that final matchup between the 41-year-old “South Dakota Kid” and the 27-year-old Oliver Szolnoki from Hungary was the final score 11-4.

By all indications, that number tells the story of a blowout, a dominant performance, a walk in the park, a ‘connect the dots’ breezy romp for Van Boening. Standard stuff for him. It also borders on a ‘failed to show up’ assessment of Szolnoki’s time at the table. Given a few other numbers that emerged from that last match, it was nowhere near as easy as the 11-4 number indicates. Both the competitors and spectators (in-person or watching the GriffTV stream) remained vigilant and focused as the match progressed, all the way through, until the last three games.

Of the 15 games played, only three of them featured a rack won by the competitor who didn’t break that rack. Significantly, those three were won by Van Boening. There were 12 ‘break and run’s. Also significantly, Van Boening recorded eight of them. Neither competitor chalked up more than three racks in a row, with Van Boen-

ing doing it three times. The first one began when Van Boening broke the match’s initial tie at 1-1 and ended up with a 4-1 lead. The second came after Szolnoki broke and ran rack #6 to pull within two at 4-2. The last one started with Van Boening ahead 8-4, which became 9-4 (his largest lead, which he’d had at 7-2 and 8-3 as well). His largest lead then became six, as he reached the hill at 10-4, and then seven, as he claimed the US Open 8-Ball title, his second in a row after going undefeated to successfully defend his US Open 10-Ball title, earlier in the week.

It came down to three unforced errors by Szolnoki, coinciding with the three matches Van Boening won off his break. One was a position error that left Szolnoki without a shot in the fourth rack. Instead of capitalizing on his own break and tying the score at 2-2, Van Boening cleared the table and was ahead 3-1. The other two were out-and-out misses; in rack #8, Szolnoki missed pocketing the last ball that would have given him a shot at the 8-ball. Van Boening not only stepped to the table and cleared his four balls and the 8-ball, but managed (via carom) to drop Szolnoki’s last ball as well.

The last set of three wasn’t really a factor, as it occurred in rack #14, with Van Boening ahead by five at 9-4. Like the previous miss, this was no tough shot. It was clearly a shot that as a professional, should have put the target ball in its intended pocket, but didn’t.

All of which created an entertaining match that never seemed to be totally out-of-reach for Szolnoki. Even behind 4-9, there was an awareness that his demonstrated abilities throughout the match to that point, could have set him out on a run, long enough to catch, if not overtake Van Boening’s lead. It just didn’t happen.



Shane Van Boening

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# VANN CORTEZA

## GOES UNDEFEATED TO CLAIM US OPEN BANKS TITLE

Skip Maloney - AzB Staff / File photo courtesy Erwin Dionisio

### Lunda completes seven-match, loss-side winning streak to challenge Vann Cortezza in finals

Previously, on the US Open Banks Championship events – Lee Vann Cortezza had advanced to the hot seat to do battle with Oliver Ruuger, while on the loss side, Evan Lunda and Sergio Rivas, along with Marc Vidal Claramunt and John Morra squared off to do battle for advancement to the quarterfinals. Further details available in yesterday's (March 11) posting.

Taking them in order of their occurrence, the loss side battles came up first. Lunda kept his four-match, loss-side winning streak alive with a 4-1 victory over Rivas. Claramunt added to his shorter, two-match, loss-side streak with a double-hill win over Morra. Lunda made it six in a row on the loss side with a 4-2 win over Claramunt and then, seven in a row, when he eliminated Ruuger in the semifinals 4-1.

It took nearly four hours (3:46) for Vann Cortezza and Lunda to play the race-to-6 final. As a spectator experience, banks matches can be as grueling as One Pocket, with a great many shots being taken that have nothing to do with putting a ball in a hole. Played with a typical 9-ball rack, banks pool swings back and forth in individual games as each player attempts to be the first to pocket five banked balls.

At about 20 minutes into the opening game, Vann Cortezza was up 4-1 (balls pocketed). Lunda fought back to within one at 4-3. He tied and then won the first game by pocketing the same ball twice; the 4-ball, as it happened. Cortezza had left him with a cross-side shot at it, aiming from the area of the left corner pocket. He made the shot, in effect, tying the game score, but the cue ball kept traveling and dropped the last ball on the table (the 3-ball), and left the cue ball sitting in the right corner pocket. It became an 'illegally pocketed ball, which was to be re-set on the 'spot' (lead position in a normal 9-ball rack). As a matter of convenience, Lunda reached into the ball return area, picked up the 4-ball that he'd just dropped legally and re-set it on the 'spot.' Aiming from just outside the right corner pocket, he dropped it into the opposite side pocket from where he'd put it in the first time. Thus, finishing game #1, 25 minutes after it had begun, with Lunda in the lead 1-0.

Were we to delve that deeply into detail for each of the nine racks that were played, you'd likely still be reading when the

US Open One Pocket final got started at around 9 p.m. (EDT) on Friday night (March 14). So, we won't. Lunda would go on to take a 3-1 game lead over Vann Cortezza, but the match turned around at that point. With all of the ups, downs and sideways that characterizes the game of Bank Pool, Cortezza settled into his comeback; one rack, one ball at a time, just the way it's laid out in Pool 101 for every game discipline. Just after midnight, earlier this morning (March 12), Cortezza completed that comeback. Lunda didn't win a game after taking his 3-1 lead, and Cortez went on to claim the US Open Banks title.

Lee Vann Cortezza



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# **LUNDA COMES FROM THE LOSS SIDE, DOWNS GOMEZ IN FINAL TO WIN US OPEN ONE POCKET TITLE**

Skip Maloney - AzB Staff / Photo courtesy Molina Mike - Windows Open

**As the four US Open Championships held at Griff's in Las Vegas this past week wound down to their final battles in the \$10,000-added, 25-entrant One Pocket event on Friday, March 14, there was one, possibly two matches left to anticipate.**

**L**ee Vann Corteza had completed an undefeated run through the field of the Open Banks tournament by downing Evan Lunda in the finals of that tournament on Wednesday night (March 12). There was a chance, possibly two, that they'd meet in the One Pocket event.

The bracket 'draw' set the potential for their first meetup in a hot seat match that didn't happen. It almost happened, as both of them advanced to the winners' side semifinal. Neither advanced to the hot seat match, though they would meet in the event quarterfinals. It was Lunda who advanced from there to claim the One Pocket title, meeting and defeating the event's hot seat occupant, Roberto Gomez.

Of the 48 matches played in the 2025 US Open One Pocket Championship, 70% of them (34) were either shutouts or matches in which the winner had given up just a single rack. On the winners' side, racing to 4, there were 11 shutouts (the most of any score recorded), five matches that ended 4-1, three that ended 4-2 and only three double-hill matches. On the loss side, shutouts proved to be the least prevalent score of the three possible (eight of them). There were 10 matches that ended 3-1, and nine that went double hill. It would appear that some competitors (those who end up on the winning side of a shutout) get right into the swing of things, while others take some time to acclimate themselves to the particular (some might

argue 'peculiar') mindset necessary to compete well in One Pocket.

Eventual winner Evan Lunda, who'd won this event in 2023, downing Billy Thorpe in the final, was one of the former. His path to the winners' side semifinal went through three opponents with an aggregate game score of 12-1. He shut out Adam Kroll and teenager Savannah Easton before giving up a single rack to Marc Vidal Claramunt. Lunda advanced to a winners' side semifinal against Alex "The Lion" Pagulayan, who (with an opening-round bye) arrived with an aggregate score of 8-0, having shut out John Morra and Louis Demarco.

From the other end of the bracket, Gomez and Vann Corteza worked their way through the field to the other winners' side semifinal. Gomez chalked up an aggregate score of 8-0; shutouts over Tyrel Blowers and (of all people) Tony "T-Rex" Chohan, while Corteza went through a shutout (Phill Yee), a 4-1 win (Payne McBride) and one of the three, winners' side double-hill matches (Mike Delawder).

The Lion sent Lunda to the loss side 4-2, as Gomez gave up just one to Corteza. Gomez claimed the hot seat

with a double-hill win over Pagulayan and (according to the digitalpool time stamp) settled into a three-hour wait for the final match.

On the loss side, Cortez arrived to draw Tyrel Blowers, who'd followed his loss to Gomez with two straight double-hill wins, over Joe Worrell and Cody Booth, followed by 3-1 wins over Claramunt and DeMarco. Lunda drew T-Rex, who'd backed up his loss to Gomez with two double-hill victories over Bob Herchik and Kashton Keeton.

Both matches for advancement to the quarterfinals went double-hill; Corteza over Blowers and Lunda over T-Rex. Thus, pitting the winner and runner-up of the US Open Banks event against each other in a match that would advance one of them to the semifinals. Lunda gave up just a single rack to Corteza in those quarterfinals and was equally stingy versus Pagulayan in the semifinals.

The final match was an extended race to 5. For the third straight time, Lunda 'closed the door' early, this time against Gomez. Lunda gave up yet another single rack and claimed the US Open One Pocket Championship title.



*Evan Lunda*

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# **GOMEZ WINS TWO OUT OF THREE VERSUS DEUEL TO CLAIM 34TH ANNUAL ANDY MERCER MEMORIAL**

Skip Maloney - AzB Staff

**In 12 of the 20 years that the Philippines' Roberto Gomez has been providing input into his AZBilliards' profile, he has been among the top 50 players on the AZBilliards' Money Leaderboard.**

**A**t the end of 11 of those 12 years, his average position on that Leaderboard was 20, with a low of #49 in 2017 and a high, reached just last year, at #8. Oddly enough, he finished his best recorded earnings year to date (2022) at #9 (an oddity related to the total amounts earned by the top-tier competitors in that year). In the first three months of this year (the last of the 12), he has reached his highest point on the Leaderboard (#7), though it remains to be seen whether he'll remain in that position until the end of this year.

He's off to a good start. This past weekend (March 21-24), he chalked up his first event title of 2025 by winning the \$3,700-added, 34th Annual Andy Mercer Memorial 9-Ball Classic which drew a full field of 64 entrants to Rum Runner Lounge in Las Vegas. Two weeks ago, at events of the US Open, he went undefeated to the hot seat match of the One Pocket event, claimed it with a victory over Alex Pagulayan and then lost the final to Evan Lunda. He finished in the money at two other US Open events; 9th in 10-Ball and 5th in 8-Ball. Two weeks before that, also in Vegas, he was edged out in the finals of the Predator Pro Billiard Series' Bank Pool Showdown by Billy Thorpe. Six other appearances since the ball dropped in Times Square to usher in the New Year include four at the Derby City Classic

(3rd in the Big Foot Challenge), the Jay Swanson ("Swanee") Memorial (9th) and the Las Vegas Open (5th).

In the end, this year's Andy Mercer Memorial came down to a three-match battle between Gomez and Corey Deuel; hot seat match and a true double-elimination final. Each had faced their share of challenges on the road to their first match, battling for the hot seat.

Gomez got through his first three matches with an aggregate score of 18-4. In races to 6, Gomez downed Josh Smith (3), shut out Robert Pulver and gave up just a single rack to Mike Hutcheson. Then, Mitch Ellerman put up a double-hill fight against him in a winners' side quarterfinal. Gomez survived that challenge and entered his match against John Lalo in one of the winners' side semifinals with an aggregate score of 24-9.



*Roberto Gomez with Rum Runners Owner Geno Hill*

Deuel arrived at his winners' side semifinal match with an aggregate score of 24-5. He chalked up two 6-1 victories over Troy Ridder (1st match) and Brian Parks (in a winners' side quarterfinal), while in the middle, shutting out Jimmy Sweeney and giving up three racks to Kings Santy. He drew Ian Costello in the other winners' side semifinal.

Gomez got into the hot seat match with a 6-1 victory over Lalo, as Deuel and Costello locked up in a double-hill match that did, eventually, advance Deuel to his first meetup with Gomez. Gomez dominated, claiming the hot seat 6-1.

Costello and Lalo came over to the loss side and picked up two competitors who'd lost their winners' side quarterfinal. Mitch Ellerman, who'd lost to Gomez, downed Max Eberle 6-2 and Sean Lane 6-1 to draw Costello. Brian Parks, who'd lost to Deuel, won



**THE 14-POINT FARGORATE EDGE FOR GOMEZ (789/775) GAVE HIM A 13 PERCENTAGE-POINT EDGE IN HIS CHANCES OF WINNING THE FINAL MATCH VERSUS DEUEL (56.5%/43.5%).**




a double-hill battle versus John Mora and eliminated Nico Scalise 6-2 to pick up Lalo.

Costello won an almost-double hill battle (6-4) over Ellerman and advanced to the quarterfinals. Parks gave up just a single rack to Lalo and joined him. Parks gave up just two to Costello to win that quarterfinal match and earn himself a rematch against Deuel in the semifinals.

Deuel had allowed Parks just one rack in their initial meetup. Parks doubled his contribution, but it wasn't nearly enough. Deuel punched his ticket to the true double-elimination final rematches with the 6-2 win over Parks.

The 14-point FargoRate edge for Gomez (789/775) gave him a 13 percentage-point edge in his chances of winning the final match versus Deuel (56.5%/43.5%). Or final two of them, if it came to that. And it did. They battled to a somewhat predictable double-hill opening set that was won by Deuel. And though we weren't afforded the opportunity to poll the spectators on this, they were likely the only ones hoping for a second double-hill match. It almost came to that. Deuel chalked up four of the five he needed to make it happen, but Gomez closed it out by winning the 10th rack, claiming the 34th Annual Andy Mercer title with a 6-4 win.



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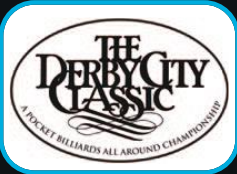
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# BENOIT GOES UNDEFEATED, DOWNS MILLER TWICE TO WIN JPNEWT SEASON OPENER IN VERNON, CT

Skip Maloney - AzB Staff / Photo courtesy JPNEWT

**It just keeps getting harder to ignore, this Miller meets Benoit matchup at the tables (or, just to be equitable, the Benoit meets Miller matchup) that's been the J. Pechauer Northeast Women's Tour (JPNEWT) back story for a couple of years now.**

**S**tarted slowly, when Ashley Benoit first started cashing on the tour just two years ago, then began to pick up speed as her finish numbers just kept getting smaller and smaller. Briana Miller, in the meantime, had already established herself on two pool 'fronts;' tour directing the JPNEWT and becoming its most consistent winner. She was the woman to beat and everybody knew it. Still do. Not invincible, of course, but very formidable.

Of the five times since January of '24 that Miller and Benoit have come up against each other in a hot seat match, final, or both, Benoit has won two of the three events in which they played a final match. They opted out of a final match twice, both times with Benoit in the hot seat at the time. Miller's 'final included' victory came at the end of the Bluefelt, CT State Women's 9-Ball event (Jan. '24); Benoit claiming the hot seat, Miller coming back from the semifinals to

win. Benoit's two 'finals included' wins were recorded at the 2024 season finale and just this past weekend (March 8-9) at the 2025 season opener, a \$1,000-added event, which drew 35 entrants to Racks Billiards and Bar in Vernon, CT.

Miller downed Benoit to claim the hot seat this past December, but Benoit came back from the semifinals to shut her out in a race-shortened (to 3) final. In Connecticut this past weekend,



Billie Billing, Ashley Benoit, Christine Pross and Briana Miller

Benoit began her 2025 campaign by going undefeated, downing Miller in both the hot seat match and final.

In races to 5 (both sides of the bracket), Benoit's seven-match trip to the event title began with four matches in which she'd gave up a total of four racks; one to Loreen Belfor, none at all to Kelly Bilodeau, another one to Elise Vaillancourt, and two to Sandy Cheng. This set her up to face Billie Billing in one of the winners' side semifinals.

Miller, in the meantime (with an opening-round bye), got through her first three, giving up just three racks. She opened with a shutout over Leann D Ettore, gave up one to Crystal Atkinson, and two to Thea Niemiec, drawing Carol Clark in the other winners' side semifinal.

Miller graduated to the hot seat match with a 5-2 win over Clark. Benoit

oit fought a double-hill battle against Billing to join her. Benoit claimed the seat 5-2.

Moving to the loss side, Clark and Billing picked up two opponents who would both end up as winners of the unofficial 'most matches played' award. Emily Smith, who'd been shut out by Clark in the opening round of play, went on to win six straight, that included a 5-2 victory over Niemiec and a 5-1 win versus Vaillancourt, to draw Billing. Christine Pross lost her opening-round match to Malinda Vazquez and also won six straight. She survived two straight, double-hill matches, against Sandy Cheng and Kristyn Swanger just ahead of picking up Clark.

When Clark withdrew from their match, Pross leapfrogged directly to the quarterfinals, although she'd wait overnight to play against Billing, who'd eliminated Smith 5-3. Billing

would survive a double-hill challenge by Pross in those quarterfinals before chalking up just a single rack in a 5-1 semifinal loss to Miller.

This final match twixt Benoit and Miller was on. FargoRate odds, based on their respective rates (Miller at 675, Benoit at 616), gave Benoit a slightly better than a 1-in-4 (26.5%) chance of winning their race to 5. Miller got a rack closer than she'd gotten when Benoit claimed the hot seat, but Benoit won the match and JPNEWT's season opener 5-3.

Miller, in her role as tour director, thanked the ownership and staff at Rack Billiards and Bar for their hospitality, along with title sponsor J. Pechauer Custom Cues, PA ProAM Pool and Get Your Game On. The next stop on the JPNEWT, scheduled for April 26-27, will be a \$1,000-added event, hosted by Sticks & Stones Billiards in Brick, NJ.

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# PAGULAYAN AND BOOTH

## JOIN ONE POCKET HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Steve Booth photo courtesy Bob Beaulieu

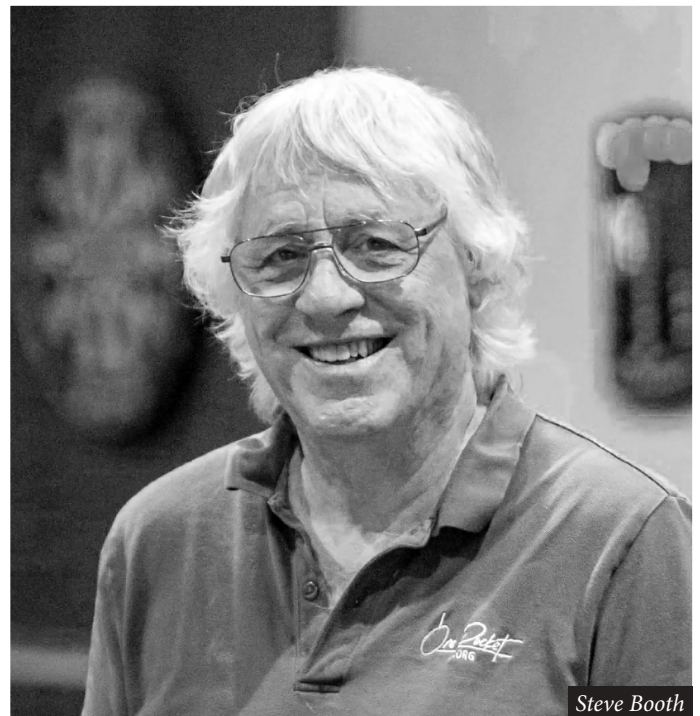
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**P**layer inductee: **Alex Pagulayan** has been the dominant One Pocket player of his time, both in tournament play and in head-to-head challenge matches against the best in the game. In fact in recent years, not one of the best players in the world has stepped up to challenge Alex head-to-head without a handicap. And even with a handicap to overcome, Alex has come out the winner. His One Pocket tournament wins include:

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Scotty Townsend Memorial 2018, 2019,  
2022 Midwest Pro-Am 2016, 2018



Alex Pagulayan



Steve Booth

**Meritorious Service inductee: Steve Booth**, founder of **OnePocket.org**, the premier One Pocket related website. Launched in May 2004, Steve has used the website to freely promote everything about the game of One Pocket. With Steve's leadership, OnePocket.org created the modern rules for One Pocket. The website has become the go-to source for the history of the game and its legendary players. Countless new converts to One Pocket from around the world have built, and continue to build, their foundation of knowledge with the aid of OnePocket.org resources.

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**Matchroom Sport Chairman, Eddie Hearn** stated: "We are delighted to announce the launch of the Florida Open Pool Championship, scheduled for August 5-10 at the wonderful Caribe Royale Resort in Orlando, Florida. Home to of course, last year's Mosconi Cup, where we sold over 10,000 tickets. Building on the momentum of the U.S. Open, this event offers another prime opportunity for 256 players

to compete against the world's best players, with a \$200,000 prize fund. Mark your calendars—you won't want to miss this spectacular tournament."

**Vice President of Operations & Managing Director, Amaury Piedra** commented: "Caribe Royale is proud to work with our great partners

at Matchroom to bring world class events to Orlando. After the success of the 2024 Mosconi Cup this inaugural Florida Open is a natural follow up. We're looking forward to hosting another tremendous event that brings in players and fans alike from the State and around the nation. Matchroom, Caribe Royale, and Orlando will once



again be the hub of Nine-Ball for this event!”

**Skyler Woodward**, captain of Team USA at the 2024 Mosconi Cup, shared his excitement for the new event: “Playing at the Caribe Royale during the 2024 Mosconi Cup was incredible, and I can’t wait to return for the Florida Open. It’s an amazing venue with everything a player and fan could want – the atmosphere is going to be electric. This is exactly the kind of tournament that shows how big nine-ball is getting, and I’m thrilled to be part of it.”

**CEO of Matchroom Multi Sport, Emily Frazer** stated: “Bringing the World Nineball Tour back to Florida for a brand new Open event is a massive step in expanding the tour across the USA. The Caribe Royale proved to be an outstanding venue during the last year’s Mosconi Cup, and we’re excited to build on that success with the

“ **PLAYING AT THE CARIBE ROYALE DURING THE 2024 MOSCONI CUP WAS INCREDIBLE, AND I CAN’T WAIT TO RETURN FOR THE FLORIDA OPEN. IT’S AN AMAZING VENUE WITH EVERYTHING A PLAYER AND FAN COULD WANT – THE ATMOSPHERE IS GOING TO BE ELECTRIC.**

– **Skyler Woodward** ”

Florida Open Pool Championship. This event will showcase the world’s best players in a premier setting, delivering an unforgettable experience for fans and competitors alike. With a \$200,000 prize fund and our signature Matchroom production, the Florida Open is set to be a true highlight of the WNT season.”

The **Florida Open** marks a significant milestone in the World Nineball Tour’s mission to deliver world-class tournaments and strengthen collaborations with premier venues like Caribe

Royale. As a potential cornerstone of the WNT calendar, this event is poised to captivate players and fans with its high stakes and unparalleled setting.

Don’t miss the opportunity to witness a spectacular showdown in the Sunshine State! Tickets will be available soon—secure your spot early and experience the action live.

For all the latest updates, follow Matchroom Pool on **Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, and YouTube**

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# BILLIARD TV PARTNERS WITH MATCHROOM SPORT TO STREAM 10 YEARS OF MOSCONI CUP CONTENT

**Billiard TV, the first 24/7 television network with programming dedicated exclusively to cue sports, has partnered with Matchroom Sport to stream Mosconi Cup events from 2015-2024.**

**B**illiard TV is celebrating the launch of the most prestigious international nine-ball pool tournament in the world with three nights of classic Mosconi Cup action March 21-23 from 8 p.m. to midnight EST each night.

“Billiard TV continues to grow in both offerings and audience, and this new partnership with Matchroom Sport, a historical leader in the industry, is a huge milestone for the channel,” says Brendan Canning, co-founder and chief commercial officer of Triple B Media, which operates Billiard TV. “The Mosconi Cup is one of the preeminent

professional events on the cue sports calendar each and every year and we’re honored to be able to stream it and serve fans all over the world.”

The internationally renowned and extensive Mosconi Cup library is an incredible addition to Billiard TV’s already robust selection of cue sports content aggregated and curated from across the globe. The new content on Billiard TV spans the past 10 years of Mosconi Cup competition presented as both highlight shows and full event footage.

“Matchroom is a proven industry leader and brings billiard fans excit-

ing content with top-notch production value,” says Emily Frazer, CEO of Matchroom Multi Sport. “Billiard TV has proven to be an emerging force in the billiards space since its launch, and we’re happy to forge this partnership as our first foray into the free, ad-supported television (FAST) world and bring our tremendous content to a channel with such a wide reach.”

Billiard TV has expanded its content library and is airing live events from leading cue sports leagues and associations on 150 days in 2025. Viewership of the network surged in 2024 with a

**BILLIARD** TV

*Team Europe celebrates winning the 2024 Mosconi Cup*



63% year-over-year increase, ending the year with 65 million unique viewers. In addition, Billiard TV's average watch time per session was 80 minutes.

Since launching in 2021, Billiard TV has amassed key partnerships throughout the sport including with the Predator Pro Billiard Series, Predator Euro Tour, Women's Professional Billiard Association, International Pool Association, American Poolplayers Association, Accu-Stats and more. All told, Billiard TV will stream more than 50 multi-day professional events this year, totaling more than 1,000 hours of live programming.

Billiard TV is available to watch via a growing range of television platforms, including Samsung TV Plus, Pluto TV, LG Channels, DAZN, YouTube TV, Fubo, Sling TV, Xfinity Stream, Xumo Play, Google Freeplay, Plex, Distro TV, Local Now, Tivo, Free Live Sports, TCL,

sports.tv, Freecast, Stremium, Channel Box and Vidaa. (Availability of Billiard TV on a given platform may vary by country.) Billiard TV is also available to stream via its own Roku app

as well as on Streamstak, Triple B's owned and operated platform.

**Watch Billiard TV**

**ABOUT TRIPLE B MEDIA**

Triple B Media is a full-service content company, specializing in the operation of television networks and content distribution throughout the world. Triple B Media owns or operates television networks including Billiard TV, Bark TV, PowerSports World, ACL Cornhole TV, Boxing TV and more. Triple B Media also operates its own digital platform, Streamstak.

**ABOUT MATCHROOM**

Matchroom is a world-leading sports promotion company specialising in creating and delivering unforgettable live events across a range of sports, including snooker, pool, darts, and boxing. With over four decades of experience, Matchroom produces events watched by millions of fans worldwide, combining top-tier competition with unrivalled entertainment value. Through global partnerships, innovative broadcasting, and digital engagement, Matchroom is committed to driving the growth and visibility of its sports on the international stage.

For more information, visit [www.matchroom.com](http://www.matchroom.com)

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# WORLD NINEBALL TOUR ANNOUNCES BLOCKBUSTER AUGUST SWING ACROSS AMERICA

The World Nineball Tour is set to take the USA by storm this August with an electrifying lineup of tournaments spanning coast to coast.

Featuring five thrilling events, including two prestigious Matchroom Majors, this landmark month cements America's position as a powerhouse destination on the global nineball stage.

## WNT AUGUST AMERICA TOUR

**Rally in the Shenandoah Valley** – 31 July – 2 August, Virginia  
Prize Fund: \$32,400

**Florida Open Pool Championship** – 5-10 August, Florida  
Prize Fund: \$200,000

**Battle of the Bull** – 13-16 August, Virginia  
Prize Fund: \$70,000

**US Open Pool Championship** – 18-23 August, New Jersey  
Prize Fund: \$500,000

**McDermott Classic** – 29-31 August, Massachusetts  
Prize Fund: \$25,000 TOTAL PRIZE FUND: **\$827,400**

## CATCH ALL THE AUGUST ACTION ON WNT TV, THE NEW HOME OF EVERYTHING NINEBALL

Kicking off the WNT's American summer is the Rally in the Shenandoah Valley at On Cue Sports Bar & Grill in Front Royal, Virginia. This Bronze-tier WNT Ranking Event offers a \$32,400 prize fund, drawing top-tier talent to compete in an intense showdown in the heart of Virginia.

All eyes then shift to Orlando, Florida, as the Florida Open Pool Cham-

pionship makes its grand debut at the stunning Caribe Royale Resort. This new Matchroom Major boasts a \$200,000 prize fund and will see the world's best players battle for a historic first title in the Sunshine State.

The action continues with another high-stakes showdown in Virginia as Battle of the Bull takes centre stage at Wolf's Den Billiards, Roanoke. With a grand \$70,000 prize pot and, this event is set to attract the fiercest competitors looking to climb the rankings.

The month's crown jewel arrives in Atlantic City, New Jersey, with the US Open Pool Championship, the most historic nineball event in the world, celebrating its 48th edition at Harrah's Resort. With an glorious \$500,000 prize fund and a champion's purse of \$100,000, this Matchroom Major will

once again deliver world-class drama as the sport's biggest stars chase one of the most prestigious titles in cue sports.

Closing out the WNT's explosive August swing is the McDermott Classic, a Bronze-tier WNT Ranking Event, at Amazin Billiards, Malden, Massachusetts. With \$25,000 in prize money, this event provides a crucial opportunity for players to make their mark before the tour moves into the autumn calendar.

Emily Frazer, CEO of Matchroom Multi Sport, said: "The WNT's expansion across America is a game-changer for professional pool. With two huge Matchroom Majors and key ranking events throughout August, the USA is proving to be a true hub for elite nineball competition. The Florida Open and the US Open Pool Championship, alongside exciting ranking events, will deliver nonstop action for players and fans alike. This is what the future of professional nineball looks like."

With **WNT TV** providing **exclusive coverage in the USA**, alongside an array of global broadcasters ensuring international fans don't miss a moment, August is set to be an unforgettable month for the World Nineball Tour.

For all the latest updates, follow Matchroom Pool on **Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, and YouTube**

For more information, visit [www.matchroom.com](http://www.matchroom.com)

Shane Van Boening



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# Tourney Results

## Mar 01 - Mar 02

### 15th N.E. Pool & Billiard Hall of Fame 9-Ball Open

#### Snookers - Sports Billiards, Bar & Grill

- Providence, RI
- 1 Kledio Kaci \$1,400
  - 2 Robb Saez \$900
  - 3 Joe Dupuis \$750
  - 4 Bob Mendenjian \$600
  - 5 Kevin Guimond \$450
  - 5 Lukas Fracasso-Verner \$450
  - 7 Guy Bouthot \$300
  - 7 Steve Mack \$300
  - 9 Dave Shlemperis \$200
  - 9 Frankie Hernandez \$200
  - 9 Paul Cormier \$200
  - 9 Tsephel Tenzin \$200
  - 13 Ervis Dervishi \$100
  - 13 John Francisco \$100
  - 13 Jordan Emerson \$100
  - 13 Peter Bowman \$100

## Mar 01 - Mar 05

### US Open 10-Ball Championship 2025

#### Griff's

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- 1 Shane Van Boening \$10,000
  - 2 Jesus Atencio \$6,000
  - 3 Billy Thorpe \$2,600
  - 3 Jeffrey De Luna \$2,600
  - 5 John Morra \$900
  - 5 Mark Estiola \$900
  - 5 Ruslan Chinakhov \$900
  - 5 Tyrel Blowers \$900
  - 9 Lee Vann Corteza \$440
  - 9 Marc Vidal Claramunt \$440
  - 9 Max Eberle \$440
  - 9 Oliver Szolnoki \$440
  - 9 Roberto Gomez \$440
  - 9 Sergio Rivas \$440
  - 9 Teddy Garrahan \$440
  - 9 Vitaliy Patsura \$440

## Mar 01 - Mar 02

### TOP Tour Stop

#### Dot's Cue Club

- Rocky Mount, NC
- 1 Jimmy Faircloth \$700
  - 2 Wayne Hill \$500
  - 3 Robbie West \$350
  - 4 Mickey Hall \$250
  - 5 Jerry Cannon \$135
  - 5 Robbie Crosby \$135
  - 7 Dylan Lee \$105
  - 7 Jimmy Bird \$105

## Mar 01 - Mar 02

### 15th N.E. Pool & Billiard Hall of Fame 9-Ball Open Second Chance

#### Snookers - Sports Billiards, Bar & Grill

- Providence, RI
- 1 Steve Sutton \$300
  - 2 Russell Bellisle \$200
  - 3 Bob Ellis \$140
  - 4 Kerry McAuliffe \$100
  - 5 Jose Concepcion \$60
  - 5 Michael Toohig \$60

## Mar 01 - Mar 02

### Arizona Women's Billiards Tour 2025 Stop 1

#### Bullshooters

- Phoenix, AZ
- 1 Cpriana Martinez \$440
  - 2 Faryn Agiert \$320
  - 3 Holly Swider \$230
  - 4 Nina Tagley \$160
  - 5 Claudia Justus \$100
  - 5 Hannah Whitcomb \$100

## Mar 02 - Mar 02

### Mezz Cues LA 9-Ball Series Stop

#### Good Timez Billiards

- Huntsville, Alabama
- 1 Jason Wetherald \$1,000
  - 2 Luke Lao \$550

- 3 Jose Centeno \$350
- 3 Mark Barba \$350
- 5 Abet Ng \$200
- 5 Derrick Cabrera \$200
- 5 Juan Carlos Cajina \$200
- 5 Omar Urquiza \$200
- 9 Isaac Pineda \$100
- 9 Ivan Tapia \$100
- 9 James Cabal \$100
- 9 Keegan Badour \$100
- 9 Mike Tran \$100
- 9 Nestor Hernandez \$100
- 9 Rocky Ortiz \$100
- 9 Shahdad Zand \$100

## Mar 05 - Mar 08

### US Open 8-Ball Championship 2025

#### Griff's

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- 1 Shane Van Boening \$9,200
  - 2 Oliver Szolnoki \$4,500
  - 3 Vitaliy Patsura \$2,750
  - 4 Alex Pagulayan \$1,650
  - 5 Jeffrey De Luna \$900
  - 5 Roberto Gomez \$900
  - 7 Jordan Holman \$550
  - 7 Oliver Ruuger \$550
  - 9 Billy Thorpe \$400
  - 9 Jesus Atencio \$400
  - 9 John Morra \$400
  - 9 Tony Chohan \$400

## Mar 08 - Mar 09

### Joss Tour 2024-2025 Stop 13

#### Utica Billiards On The Boulevard

- Utica, New York
- 1 Ron Casanzio \$1,000
  - 2 Bucky Souvanthong \$700
  - 3 Barry Hetherington \$550
  - 4 Eric Hildebrand \$400
  - 5 Brad Guthrie \$300
  - 5 Tim Davis \$300
  - 7 Frank Wolak \$200
  - 7 Paul Rozonewski \$200

9 Geoff Montgomery \$150  
9 Jake Jackson \$150  
9 JoAnn Mason Parker \$150  
9 Kiet Mieu \$150  
13 Dan Sharlow \$100  
13 Ed Saur \$100  
13 Jamie Garrett \$100  
13 Marc Ciappa \$100

## Mar 08 - Mar 11

### 2025 US Open Bank Pool Championship

#### Griff's

Las Vegas, Nevada  
1 Lee Vann Corteza \$8,700  
2 Evan Lunda \$4,700  
3 Oliver Ruuger \$2,300  
4 Marc Vidal Claramunt \$1,000  
5 John Morra \$650  
5 Sergio Rivas \$650  
7 Chip Compton \$500  
7 Tony Chohan \$500

## Mar 08 - Mar 09

### JPNEWT Tour 2025 Stop #1

#### Racks Billiards & Bar

Vernon, Connecticut  
1 Ashley Benoit \$750  
2 Briana Miller \$625  
3 Billie Billing \$450  
4 Christine Pross \$300  
5 Carol Clark \$150  
5 Emily Smith \$150  
7 Elise Vaillancourt \$75  
7 Krysten Swanger \$75

## Mar 08 - Mar 09

### Joss Tour 2025-2026 Stop 13 Second Chance

#### Utica Billiards On The Boulevard

Utica, New York  
1 Mark Creamer \$300  
2 Zach Robbins \$200  
3 Bruce Carroll \$160  
4 Jamie Garrett \$120  
5 Dan Sharlow \$80  
5 Robert Whalen \$80  
7 Andres Hernandez \$50  
7 John Dennis \$50

## Mar 08 - Mar 09

### Battle of the Barbox

#### Hot Shots Billiards

Byram, MS  
1 Thomas Haas \$2,590  
2 Shannon Spring \$1,300  
3 Ethan Richardson \$760  
3 Jacob Watson \$760  
5 Gary Armstrong \$440  
5 Michael Johnese \$440  
7 Mike Mounce \$260  
7 Robb Saez \$260  
9 John Fox \$180  
9 Roger Lawrence \$180  
9 Steven Miller \$180  
9 Walt Edmunson \$180  
13 Chris Mitchell \$120  
13 Dan Campbell \$120  
13 Nick Arcement \$120  
13 Victor Perez \$120  
17 Brian Rutland \$80  
17 Clarence Moore \$80  
17 Eddie Fortenberry \$80  
17 Eric Fountain \$80  
17 Kevin Bradley \$80  
17 Rick Roth \$80  
17 Ronald Holdness \$80  
17 Scott Campbell \$80

## Mar 08 - Mar 09

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Stop

#### Borderline Billiards

Bristol, TN  
1 Rife Hershel \$600  
2 Janet Atwell \$425  
3 Chad Morton \$225  
4 Bear Mullins \$150  
5 Brandon Helton \$50  
5 Gabe Lester \$50

## Mar 11 - Mar 16

### European Open 2025

#### Hotel Hills Sarajevo

Llidza, Sarajevo  
1 Joshua Filler \$40,000  
2 Naoyuki Oi \$16,000  
3 Daniel Maciol \$10,000  
3 Pijus Labutis \$10,000  
5 Lo Ho Sum \$7,000  
5 Quoc Hoang Duong \$7,000  
5 Tobias Bongers \$7,000

5 Wojciech Szewczyk \$7,000  
9 Aloysius Yapp \$4,000  
9 Francisco Sanchez-Ruiz \$4,000  
9 Jayson Shaw \$4,000  
9 Marc Bijsterbosch \$4,000  
9 Maximilian Lechner \$4,000  
9 Moritz Neuhausen \$4,000  
9 Pin-Yi Ko \$4,000  
9 Sanjin Pehlivanovic \$4,000  
17 Albin Ouschan \$2,000  
17 Alexandros Kazakis \$2,000  
17 Amil Andre Gangflot \$2,000  
17 Edward Koyongian \$2,000  
17 Eklent Kaci \$2,000  
17 Elliott Sanderson \$2,000  
17 Joao Grilo \$2,000  
17 Jose Alberto Delgado \$2,000  
17 Luong Duc Thien \$2,000  
17 Mohammad Soufi \$2,000  
17 Petri Makkonen \$2,000  
17 Ping-Chung Ko \$2,000  
17 Radoslaw Babica \$2,000  
17 Robbie Capito \$2,000  
17 Shane Van Boening \$2,000  
17 Yannick Pongers \$2,000  
33 Abdullah Al-Enezi \$1,000  
33 Aleksa Pecelj \$1,000  
33 Alvin Anggito \$1,000  
33 Andri Januarta \$1,000  
33 Ang Tuan Nguyen \$1,000  
33 Besar Spahiu \$1,000  
33 Carlo Biado \$1,000  
33 Ching Ting Tang \$1,000  
33 David Alcaide \$1,000  
33 Dimitris Loukatos \$1,000  
33 Ermal Dyli \$1,000  
33 Fitim Haradinaj \$1,000  
33 Gary Wilson \$1,000  
33 Georgi Georgiev \$1,000  
33 Hubert Lopotko \$1,000  
33 Johann Chua \$1,000  
33 Jonas Souto Comino \$1,000  
33 Kledio Kaci \$1,000  
33 Kostas Koukiadakis \$1,000  
33 Lukas Fracasso-Verner \$1,000  
33 Marcel Price \$1,000  
33 Mario He \$1,000  
33 Mateusz Sniegocki \$1,000  
33 Niels Feijen \$1,000  
33 Pham Phuong Nam \$1,000  
33 Ri Teng Liu \$1,000  
33 Riku Romppainen \$1,000  
33 Roberto Bartol \$1,000

33 Shane Wolford \$1,000  
33 Thorsten Hohmann \$1,000  
33 Wiktor Zielinski \$1,000  
33 Yu-Lung Chang \$1,000

## Mar 11 - Mar 14

### 2025 US Open One Pocket Championship

#### Griff's

Las Vegas, Nevada  
1 Evan Lunda \$8,700  
2 Roberto Gomez \$4,700  
3 Alex Pagulayan \$2,300  
4 Lee Vann Corteza \$1,000  
5 Tony Chohan \$650  
5 Tyrel Blowers \$650  
7 Kash Keaton \$500  
7 Louis Demarco \$500

## Mar 15 - Mar 16

### Joss Tour 2024-2025 Stop 14

#### Brickhouse Billiards

N. Syracuse, New York  
1 Ron Casanzio \$1,100  
2 Tommy Cayer \$800  
3 Dan Sharlow \$600  
4 Nick Coppola \$400  
5 Bucky Souvanthong \$275  
5 Jamie Garrett \$275  
7 Marko Clarke \$150  
7 Matt Vasilopoulos \$150

## Mar 15 - Mar 16

### Joss Tour 2024-2025 Stop 14 Second Chance

#### Brickhouse Billiards

N. Syracuse, New York  
1 Jordan Cayer \$300  
2 Marc Ciappa \$200  
3 Chrstine Cockrell \$140  
4 Tyler Arnold \$80  
5 Joe Wysocki \$40  
5 Rick Manzi \$40

## Mar 15 - Mar 16

### Lady Luck Open

#### Mel's Hideaway

Dothan, Alabama  
1 Terri Stovall \$1,200

2 Janelle Rodabaugh \$600  
3 Sarah Terry \$450  
4 Melissa Durkin \$300  
5 Jana Hoda \$165  
5 Jennifer Sweeney \$165  
7 Betty Lea \$60  
7 Danielle Driscoll \$60

## Mar 15 - Mar 16

### Rack Race Stop #5 - 9-Ball

#### The Rack & Grill III

Aiken, SC  
1 Gabriel Cindac Ciprian \$1,200  
2 Josh Roberts \$600  
3 Tobias Hoiss \$380  
4 Scott Rabon \$260  
5 Cody Sones \$160  
5 Michael Laney \$160  
7 Francisco Diaz-Pizarro \$100  
7 Johnny Archer \$100  
9 Charles Jones \$80  
9 Hunter White \$80  
9 Lloyd Phipps \$80  
9 Tracy Prescott \$80

## Mar 15 - Mar 16

### Rack Race Stop #5 - One Pocket

#### The Rack & Grill III

Aiken, SC  
1 Josh Roberts \$2,500  
2 Francisco Diaz-Pizarro \$1,340  
3 Richard Kilgore \$840  
4 Matt Collins \$580  
5 Larry Jackson \$300  
5 Scott Rabon \$300

## Mar 20 - Mar 27

### Premier League Pool 2025

#### Hotel Hills Sarajevo

Llidza, Sarajevo  
1 Moritz Neuhausen \$20,000  
2 Francisco Sanchez-Ruiz \$12,500  
3 Johann Chua \$8,000  
3 Robbie Capito \$8,000  
5 Aloysius Yapp \$7,000  
6 Jayson Shaw \$6,250  
7 Sanjin Pehlivanovic \$5,250  
8 Kledio Kaci \$5,000  
9 Quoc Hoang Duong \$4,750

10 Shane Van Boening \$4,500  
11 Pijus Labutis \$3,750  
12 Tyler Styer \$3,500  
13 Edward Koyongian \$3,250  
14 Eklent Kaci \$3,000  
15 AJ Manas \$2,750  
16 Bui Truong An \$2,500

## Mar 21 - Mar 23

### Andy Mercer Memorial 9-Ball Tournament 2025

#### Rum Runner

Las Vegas, NV  
1 Roberto Gomez \$6,000  
2 Corey Deuel \$3,000  
3 Brian Parks \$2,000  
4 Ian Costello \$1,250  
5 John Lalo \$950  
5 Mitch Ellerman \$950  
7 Nico Scalise \$675  
7 Sean Lane \$675  
9 Dave Datillo \$500  
9 John Morra \$500  
9 Max Eberle \$500  
9 Rodlin Bautista \$500  
13 Nelson Montierth \$400  
13 Oscar Guerrero \$400  
13 Paul Silva \$400  
13 Ronnie Wiseman \$400

## Mar 22 - Mar 23

### 2025 DFW 9-Ball Tour Stop 3

#### FWF Post 2772

Sherman, TX  
1 Jay White \$1,180  
2 Jeff Franklin \$820  
3 Gus Briseno \$630  
4 Don Bullard \$430  
5 Michelle Adams \$320  
5 Steve Langston \$320  
7 Bret Clifton \$240  
7 Payton Bernard \$240  
9 Doug Winnett \$170  
9 Eli Bomsburger \$170  
9 Muhammad Gohar \$170  
9 Robert Reighter \$170  
13 Eric Terry \$95  
13 John Rawlins \$95  
13 Tony Mathew \$95  
13 Trey Salisbury \$95

## Mar 22 - Mar 22

### Pool Series Stop #4

#### Fast Action Billiards

Statesville, NC

- 1 Francisco Diaz-Pizarro \$880
- 2 Josh Heeter \$550
- 3 David Anderson \$350
- 5 Jeff Howell \$100
- 5 Mike Davis \$100
- 7 Clint Clark \$50
- 7 Tim Nelson \$50

## Mar 22 - Mar 22

### 8th Annual Charlie Shootman Memorial

#### Rac'm

Colorado Springs, Colorado

- 1 Marc Vidal Claramunt \$4,200
- 2 Jonathan Sandoval \$2,100

- 3 Ruis Romero \$1,440
- 4 Ruben Silva \$1,040
- 5 Chris McDaniel \$760
- 5 Nico Rodriguez \$760
- 7 Gabe Owen \$550
- 7 Sharik Sayed \$550
- 9 Andrew Pettenger \$400
- 9 Lee Urbaniak \$400
- 9 Tom D'Alfonso \$400
- 9 Tony Piazza \$400
- 13 Jeremiah Gage \$300
- 13 Jose Loma \$300
- 13 Nick Tafoya \$300
- 13 Sam Cordova \$300
- 17 Brian Begay \$200
- 17 Cecil Monge \$200
- 17 Derald Salaz \$200
- 17 Gabe Ayala \$200
- 17 Jerry Pi \$200
- 17 Jose Avalos \$200
- 17 Matt Crispin \$200

- 17 Miguel Martinez \$200
- 25 Cory Smith \$120
- 25 Devin Schweer \$120
- 25 Don Swayne \$120
- 25 Isaac Jacquez \$120
- 25 John Sandifer \$120
- 25 Matt Valdez \$120
- 25 Randy Abernathy \$120
- 25 Seth Krafczik \$120

## Mar 22 - Mar 22

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Stop

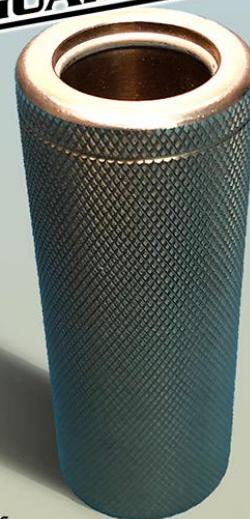
#### Sticks & Stones Family Billiards

Rock Hill, South Carolina

- 1 Bill Fowler \$600
- 2 Hunter Zayas \$400
- 3 Kris Brower \$200
- 4 Blade Best \$100
- 5 David Honeycutt \$55
- 5 Jon Jon Newman \$55

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# Upcoming Tournaments

Each month *Billiards Buzz* looks ahead at the events on our calendar to give both players and fans the information they may use to plan their activities.

## APRIL/MAY

### 2025 McDermott Open

**Apr 03 - Apr 06**

Yale Billiards  
Wallingford, Connecticut

### New England Junior American Billiard Championship Series Stop 3

**Apr 05 - Apr 05**

Concord, NH

### 2025 Super Billiards Expo Open NineBall Pro Players Championship

**Apr 10 - Apr 13**

Greater Philadelphia Expo Center at Oaks  
Oaks, PA

### Ultimate Pool USA Iowa Open

**Apr 18 - Apr 20**

The Rack Billiard Club  
Clive, IA

### TAOM V10 Open

**Apr 24 - Apr 27**

Biljardi 247  
Helsinki,

### Joss Tour 2024-2025 Stop 16

**Apr 26 - Apr 27**

Utica Billiards On The Boulevard  
Utica, New York

### SouthWest Youth Tour Stop 2

**Apr 26 - Apr 26**

Corner Pocket Sports Cafe  
Bakersfield, California

### Arizona Women's Billiards Tour 2025 Stop 2

**Apr 26 - Apr 27**

Skip and Jan's Sports Bar  
Gilbert, Arizona

### Joss Tour 2024-2025 Stop 17

**May 03 - May 04**

Fairway Billiards  
Fulton, NY

### 2025 UK Open

**May 06 - May 11**

Telford

### Joss Tour Junior 9 Ball Championship 2025

**May 10 - May 10**

Sharpshooters Billiards & Sports Pub  
Amsterdam, NY

### SouthWest Youth Tour Stop 3

**May 10 - May 10**

Rio Rancho, New Mexico

### Joss Tour 2024-2025 Stop 18

**May 17 - May 18**

Raxx Pool Room, Sports Bar & Grill  
West Hempstead, NY

### New England Junior American Billiard Championship Series Stop 4

**May 24 - May 24**

Forest City Billiards  
Portland, ME

### Arizona Women's Billiards Tour 2025 Stop 3

**May 31 - Jun 01**

Dozer's Grill  
Mesa, Arizona

# AZBILLIARDS MONEY LIST

	NAME	COUNTRY	\$ AMOUNT	
	Joshua Filler	 GER	95.981,00 US\$	↑
	Fedor Gorst	 USA	58.600,00 US\$	↓
	Shane Van Boening	 USA	51.100,00 US\$	↑
	Denis Grabe	 EST	38.594,00 US\$	↓
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