

# Billiards Buzz

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# EUROPE RETAINS CUP

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# FROM THE Head Rail

MIKE HOWERTON

I can not be more excited to welcome Phil Capelle to the pages of the Billiards Buzz. Phil has been a household name when it comes to billiards instruction, for as long as I can remember. I have had the pleasure of working with Phil many times over the years and when I found out that he was no longer writing for a magazine, I couldn't ask him to come on board fast enough. Phil will be writing instructional content for you to read every month, starting this month.



Another new addition to the pages of the magazine is "World Class Pool" from Accu-Stats. We have all heard Mark Wilson describe a shot on Accu-Stats video as "World Class Pool" and I was looking for a way to share some of those great shots with all of our readers. I proposed the idea of a new monthly column for the Buzz, and the new ownership over at Accu-Stats loved the idea too. This first shot, from John Gabriel, is a shot that has really helped to build my newfound interest in one pocket. I hope you all enjoy it.

I'm looking forward to trips to Turning Stone and Derby City this month. It's going to be a busy month.

Until next time  
Mike

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# COMING TO TERMS

## PART 1

### About Phil Capelle

#### Who Is Phil Capelle

I am so excited to announce that I am now writing a monthly instructional column for the Billiards Buzz, and that I am thrilled to be a part of Mike Howerton’s team at AZ Billiards.

The subject of this initial column will be Shadow Ball, a concept that can help you with planning and playing position. Before we begin, I want to acquaint those of you who are new to my work with a brief look at my life in pool because this will show you the confidence to consider layering my key concepts into your game.

I took up pool in 1968 while in college, and then spent the next 27 years competing in leagues, money games, and tournaments. I also logged countless hours practicing all facets

of the game. In late 1994 my passion for pool won out and I left the financial services industry to write, full time, about the game.

The following 28 years have been spent writing pool books (12 and counting), columns (300 for Pool & Billiard Magazine), and covering tournaments for various publications, and on my Facebook page. You can find samples of my work at billiardspress.com and at accu-stats.com, which recently added my two videos to their collection.

For the last seven years I have been conducting extensive research on pool and on a variety of subjects – ones that I have been able to put into the billiard context. Throughout these years I have been building my case for pool and why I feel that most people can benefit greatly from playing what I call Serious Pool.

#### Capelle: A Brand You Can Trust

In this product rich world of ours, brand names can serve as money and time saving shortcuts to our

decision making process. When it comes to pool instruction, the various media that you invest in need to be based on concepts and principles that work because, after all, your game is on the line! In sum, I want you to think of instruction by Capelle (the person and the brand) as that which you can trust your game as you strive to **Play Your Best Pool**. Besides, if you believe in my ideas, you will be motivated to spend the hours at the table that are needed to become a fine player.

## PART 2

### The Format

This format for this column includes text that more than adequately explains the key concepts. I will make liberal use of diagrams and I will put a special emphasis on introducing new terms that can help you to learn and play our great sport.

#### Diagrams

My love for pool diagrams is shown by the more than

4,000 of them that grace the pages of 10 of my 12 books. I make such liberal use of these pool pictures because pool is a highly visual game, and a student’s learning process can benefit from most if not all of them. While creating each diagram, I stick to Einstein’s Rule, which states that, “everything should be as simple as possible, but no simpler!” That means letting the balls, travel lines, position zones and other necessities do the talking. And, it is critical that the diagrams are drawn to scale, and that they show realistic views of shots and strategies. This leads to my maxim that **what you see in a diagram can actually be played at the table!**

#### New Pool Terms

Players of a super-detailed sport like pool can benefit from terms that give you short and memorable ways to learn, master, and retain key concepts. In most (if not all) of these columns I will 1) introduce new concepts, 2) build on existing ones, and 3) offer refreshers on the ones that are vital to your success.

These new concepts and terms will be introduced in the body of the text, and they will also be showcased in Pull Quotes. In this inaugural column I will be

featuring Shadow Balls, as I mentioned previously.

I like to dress up text by capitalizing key terms, and by employing a variety of graphic techniques – anything that help you in learning and remembering the key concepts that combine to make up your game. You can see examples of my use of graphics in my book, *Six Words to Pool Greatness*.

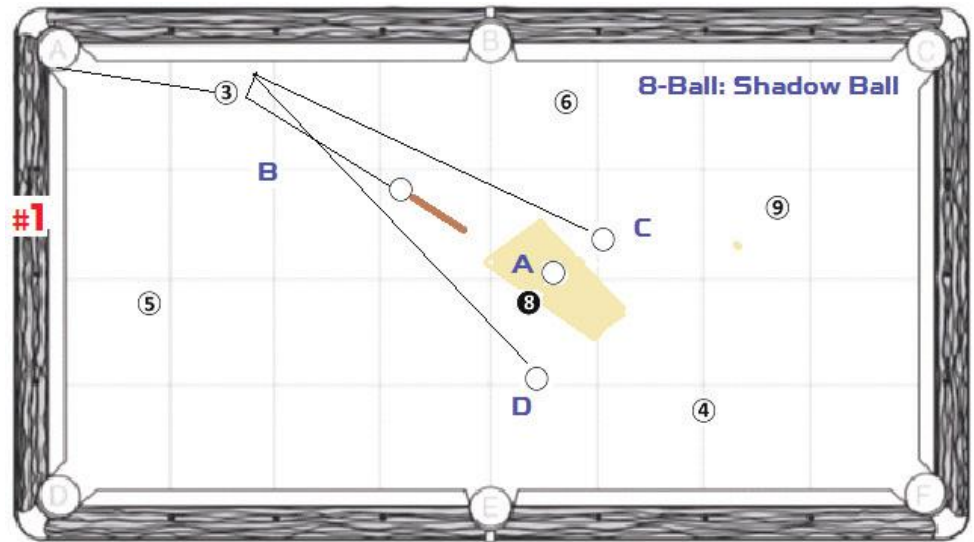
## PART 3

### Shadow Balls

Obstructers are balls that rest on or close to the cue ball's preferred path to your position zone. These troublemakers can force you to alter a position route, or even to abandon it in favor of another. You may even need to play your next shot into alternate pocket, if possible. Clusters are groups of two or more balls that make it difficult if not impossible to pocket the balls within them.

In between clusters and obstructers are what I call Shadow Balls. These balls rest within the boundaries of what would otherwise be an ideal position zone, if not for their presence.

**SHADOW BALLS – Shadow balls rest within the boundaries of what would otherwise be an ideal position zone.**



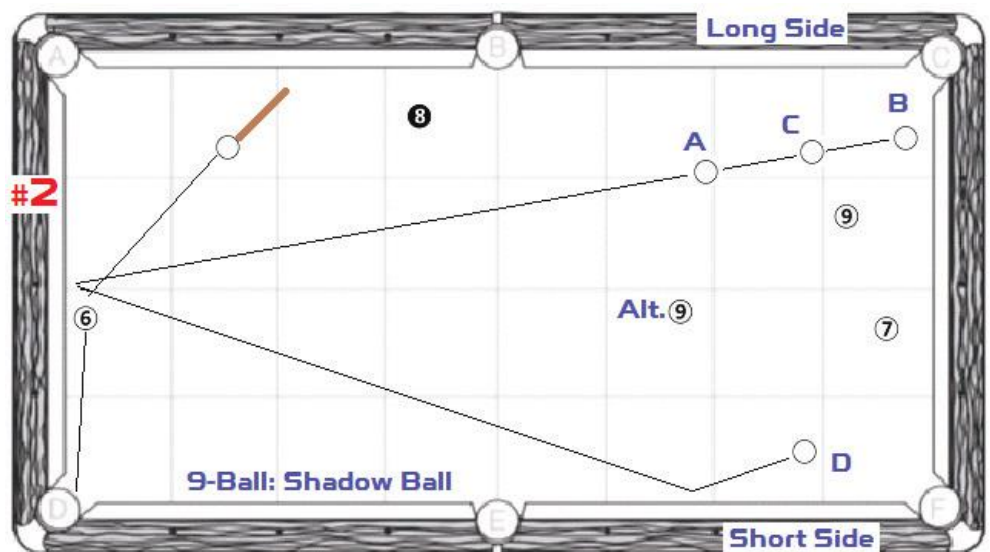
**Diagram #1** shows a layout from 9-Ball. Let's imagine, for a moment, that the 8-ball is not on the table. Without it, the goal is send the cue ball from the 3-ball to the shaded zone for shape on the 4-ball. Position A is the bulls-eye. With the cue ball at Position A, you can easily send the cue ball across the table, off the side rail, and out to Position B for excellent position on the long side of the 5-ball.

Now, let's examine the position with the 8-ball

where shown. As you may have guessed, the 8-ball is a Shadow Ball because it encroaches on the shallow-angled side of the position zone. With the 8-ball in this position you could still attempt to play for Position A, but if you do, you could easily end up behind the 8-ball. You can avoid this disasters by playing for a thinner cut on the 4-ball, as shown by the cue ball at Position C. Or, if you want to avoid that shot, you could send the cue ball to

the other side of the 8-ball, possibly to Position D. From this location, the best route to the 5-ball is a long and challenging follow shot to the right end rail, then six diamonds down the table to the vicinity of Position B.

To recap, without the Shadow Ball, the three ball sequence (3, 4, 5) is not difficult. With the Shadow Ball in place, you are now faced with a pattern that is fraught with danger. Now to come up with a feasible Plan B, and then elevate



your execution while performing your warm-up-strokes.

**Diagram #2** shows an end-of-rack layout in 9-Ball. This time, imagine that the 9-ball is in the alternative position as shown. Now getting position on the Long Side of the 7-ball is not hard – providing you steer clear of Pocket C! Getting on the 8-ball with the cue ball in Position A, B, or C is relatively simple.

Now let's consider the 9-ball in the original position, where it acts as a Shadow Ball. If your speed is a little bit off, which could easily happen given the cue ball's long journey down the table, you could end up hooked behind the 9.

In this case, the solution is to play shape on the Short Side by sending the cue ball to Position D. Normally the Long Side is better because you have a bigger zone. But when a Shadow Ball is lurking in the vicinity of your next shot, the wiser

course could be to play to the Short Side as shown. The key to sending the cue ball to Position D is directional control. You must avoid the point at Pocket E, and you want to play to the left side of the 7-ball. Once again, spend a little more time plotting the course and then preparing for your final stroke while you're over the shot.

**Diagram #3** shows an end-of-rack position, the kind that you routinely encounter in Straight Pool. Layout like this are featured in my book, *Break Shot Patterns*. (The book and companion video can be found at Accu-Stats.com.)

In this position, the 4-ball acts as a Shadow Ball, making it difficult to get on the 15-ball. This time, you can knock the Shadow Ball away from the 15-ball by sending the cue ball on a precise path off the rail and into the 4-ball. In one fell swoop you ridded yourself of that pesky Shadow Ball and got shape on the 15.

However, I would advise that you save the 15-ball because it is in excellent position to act as a key ball to the key ball. The connection is shown by the red line from the 15 to the 11-ball. In Break Shot Patterns I label this ball a K2. The key ball is simply a KB.

In some positions like this where you strip away the Shadow Ball, your best course of action is to play the ball you just liberated. But that's the beauty of 14.1 and Eight Ball because these games often enable you to change your plans on a moment's notice.

**Factors To Consider When Facing A Shadow Ball:**

- How close is the object ball to the Shadow Ball?"
- Is there a playable position route to good shape on the object ball?
- What impact does a cut that is less than ideal have on your route to

the next ball, and on the pattern?

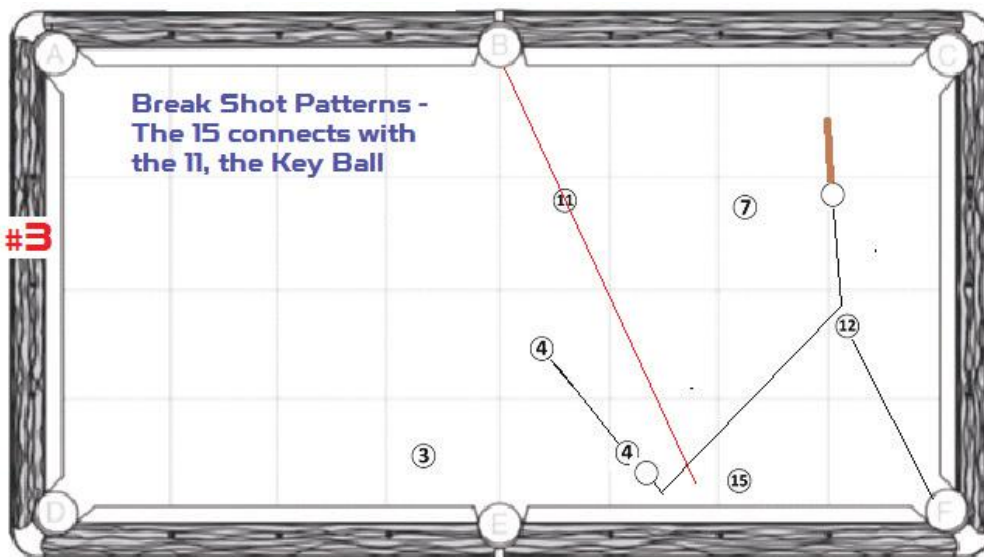
- Can you bump the Shadow Ball away from the ideal position zone?
- When playing 8-Ball or 14.1, what is the best time to rid yourself of the ball that is being shadowed?
- Does the Shadow Ball force you to choose or play to another pocket, such as on the short side (see Capelle's Principles of Position #4, page 131 of Play Your Best Pool).

**Incorporating Shadow Ball Thinking Into Your Game**

I advise that you go to Mike's Accu-Stats page, pick out one or more videos, and watch them with your newly acquired Shadow Ball Filter in place. Try to recognize Shadow Balls as they appear. Hit pause and make your plan for the shot. Then carefully observe how the pro deals with the problem, or if they fail to handle the situation, which in their defense, is not always so easy to do.

Next, practice one of more of your favorite games and be on the lookout for Shadow Balls. When you encounter them, plan accordingly and then go into your A Level Execution Mode!

I hope you enjoyed my maiden column for the Billiards Buzz, and that the ideas discussed above become a strong addition to your game!



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# FIVE MENTAL GAME TIPS

ANTHONY BEELER

Minnesota Fats once said: “Pool is mainly played on a five-and-a-half-inch slate... the space between your ears.” Pool is undoubtedly one of the most mentally challenging sports there is. It’s an individual pursuit and there’s nobody to help you when you have bad luck, or your opponent gets a good roll.



**A**lmost all the top players are students of sports psychology. They use mental game strategies to help them find the right frame of mind before a game, and to give them methods to stay in

a “happy place,” for the duration of their match.

There are some key psychological pointers that can help average players stay mentally tough on the table. Below are a few of the best, they

might seem obvious, but ask yourself whether you employ these simple mental game strategies during a match. If not, perhaps you should start.

## 1. LIVE IN THE PRESENT

All negativity stems from thinking about past mistakes or fearing the unknown. If your mind is ahead of you, how are you going to focus on the immediate task – the shot you are facing at that moment? You can’t control what will happen two games from now or what happened 30 seconds ago. All you can do is concentrate on your next shot.

## 2. EVERY SHOT IS A NEW CHALLENGE

Each time you come to the table your objective is to run out. Don’t think about what has gone before, or any possible worst-case scenarios, just focus on how to run the balls in the most efficient way possible.

If you play bad position that results in a difficult shot, try to think of it as a new challenge. Don’t just wallow



in self-pity; start over. Remember, your objective is to run out or pocket the money ball any way that you can.

### 3. DON'T DWELL ON PAST MISTAKES

Most pool players dwell on poor shots. What's the point? Once it's been hit, nothing can be done about it. The only thing you can affect is what happens next.

A great way to let off steam and forget the errors is the "chair rule." It's a psychological strategy employed by several top professionals. After a bad shot, you can vent your frustration (internally) until it's your turn again. After you get up from your chair to shoot again, that shot is history, it should be totally forgotten, and your mind should move on to the next stroke.

### 4. NEVER SURRENDER

League players are often guilty of giving up on their matches too early. Remember, your fortunes on the table can turn with one good stroke, or one decent break.

Amateurs who get the most out of their game tend to give it their all until the very last ball is pocketed. If you get to a point when you realize, there's no chance of winning – set different kinds of goals for yourself. You might try to get 2 to 3 games in a race to 9 rather than being white-washed 9-0.

### 5. MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

If you're having one of those days where the balls just don't seem to fall, don't get down on yourself. Fo-

cus on the positives. Eventually the law of averages will win out. Stay in the present! Don't dwell on the past or think about the future. A positive attitude goes a long way and is a key part of overcoming challenges you may encounter during match 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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# I Can't = I Won't

The Sports Doc - Dr. CHRISTOPHER STANKOVICH  
www.drstankovich.com

**Quick – what did you have for lunch yesterday? If you are like most people you probably took a moment to answer that question, and for some of you reading this you still can't remember! That's OK, I asked the question to prove a point: Our memory isn't always as quick and accurate as we would like.**

**T**he word “can’t is a very absolute word, meaning that when we believe that we can’t do something there is absolutely zero chance of it occurring. Sometimes in life it is appropriate and accurate to say, “I can’t,” like if someone asked you to jump 30 feet off the ground, or make yourself invisible. Obviously humans cannot do those things, so it makes sense to say I can’t in those situations. But how many times in life have you said “I can’t,” but really what you meant was *I don't know if I can do it or not?*

While it might seem like a small difference between “I can’t” and “I don’t know,” the difference is actually quite big. Remember, “can’t” is absolute; it means that under no condition whatsoever could you do something. Applying this to pool, sure there are tough shots on the table at any given time, but are they always *impossible*? Difficult is one thing, but impossible is another, and herein is the place

where words matter. Rather than being 100% confident that you can’t do something, why not instead say to yourself that *yes, this is a very difficult shot, but I have made tough shots in the past and if I hit this right I might do it again here.*

## Can't = Won't

A technique I use with clients at my office is to have them substitute “I won’t” every time they say “I can’t.” Why? Because saying I can’t actually result in the same outcome as I won’t, even if it is more difficult to say it that way – and that’s actually the point. As humans, we don’t usually like to say I won’t do something because it sounds as though it is a choice, whereas saying I can’t makes it seem like you simply do not have the ability, no matter how hard you think or try.

When we say I won’t do something, it makes us think more about why, as



well as conjures up self-pride prompting us to take more control of the situation. On the other hand saying I can’t relieves you of even trying – so why try?? The best pool players do he confidence, focus, and creativity trying to make the best out of every tough situation.

## Final thoughts

When we stop using words like “can’t” and instead say I can, it improves our focus and lets our creative mind take over and look for ways to solve the shot in question. Try to approach every shot with the same exciting energy and look for every way possible to be successful. Why tell yourself you can’t do something, and therefore eliminate any chance for success?

*Dr. Christopher Stankovich is a nationally acclaimed expert in Sport & Performance Psychology and the Founder of Advanced Human Performance Systems. For more information on performance-enhancement products, including the popular “Mind of Steel for Pool Success” DVD please visit [www.drstankovich.com](http://www.drstankovich.com)*





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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 shot comes from the 2022 Derby City One Pocket match between Alex Pagulayan and John Gabriel. The score was tied at 2-2 and Pagulayan lead two balls to one in the case game. The right hand pocket was Gabriel's pocket.

Gabriel studied the layout for nearly a minute and then came with this beauty. "I realize it looked crazy but the ball was dead. I honestly thought the cueball would come straight off the rail and kick the 5 ball to my hole" said Gabriel after the match. "I did take into consideration that I was playing Alex on his table! Sometimes you have to take the scary shot."



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# Gospel Trick Shot #35

## Blackball Gift

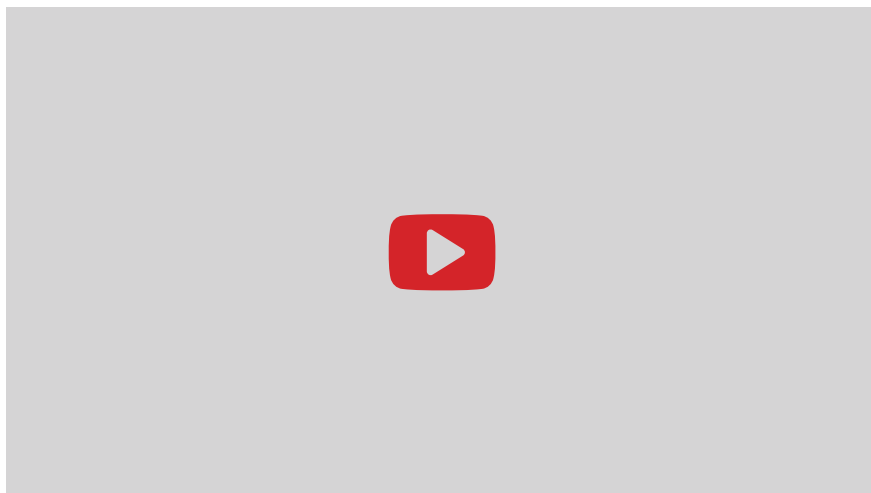
**History of the Trick Shot:** This shot was previously Gospel Trick Shot #10 entitled “The Parting of the Red Sea” which was featured on an American pool table in the October 2020 Buzz issue but now is reinvented on a Blackball pool table. This is a timeless shot that has been done by many trick shot artists through the years but not by an American pool player on a Blackball table during a professional Blackball event. The USA for the first time sent a team of pool players in October 2022 to Morocco to play in the 2022 Blackball International (BI) World Championships. While there yours truly Steve Lillis did this shot before a packed live audience in the main arena which was also live streamed to thousands of other people. For two consecutive nights the main arena was reserved for GTS Artistic Blackball shows with BCA Hall of Famers Mike Massey and Tom Rossman and with Steve Lillis leading the team as the first President of the newly formed USA Blackball Association.

**GTS Name and Why:** Gospel Trick Shot (GTS) is a sponsor of USA Blackball along with 22 other USA billiard industry friends and partners. In Zambia as in the rest of Africa Blackball is King! The Zambian Blackball team sponsored by their government took second place in the BI World Championships in Morocco behind perennial powerhouse England which is where the game originated. GTS has a special project going on in Zambia supporting an orphanage with 62 young people who have been abandoned. During the past year money has been donated to GTS to supply a water well, bunk beds, and proper bedding for the children. On Christmas Day a pizza party took place to celebrate all that God did in 2022 for the “God at Work for Kids” ministry in Lusaka, Zambia. The media requested a video greeting from GTS President Steve Lillis. Steve in collaboration with Mike Massey worked on producing a video that included a Gospel Trick Shot to be given as a gift to the people of Zambia. The main theme of the shot as you will see in the video is that God will make a way when there does not seem to be a way! God bless Zambia!

**Scripture Reference in ESV Translation: Isaiah 43:16** Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters..... From the verse above we see that God introduces Himself as the God who makes a way.

**Cue Ball Placement:** The cue ball on a Blackball table is 1 7/8 inches and is smaller and lighter than the 2-inch object balls. Place cue ball as shown in the diagram.

**Object Ball(s) Placement:** The 8-Ball is frozen to the side rail right at the edge of where the side pocket is rounded. All pockets on a blackball table are rounded just like a snooker table. A red object ball is placed frozen directly straight in front of the 8-Ball. Place two more object balls in



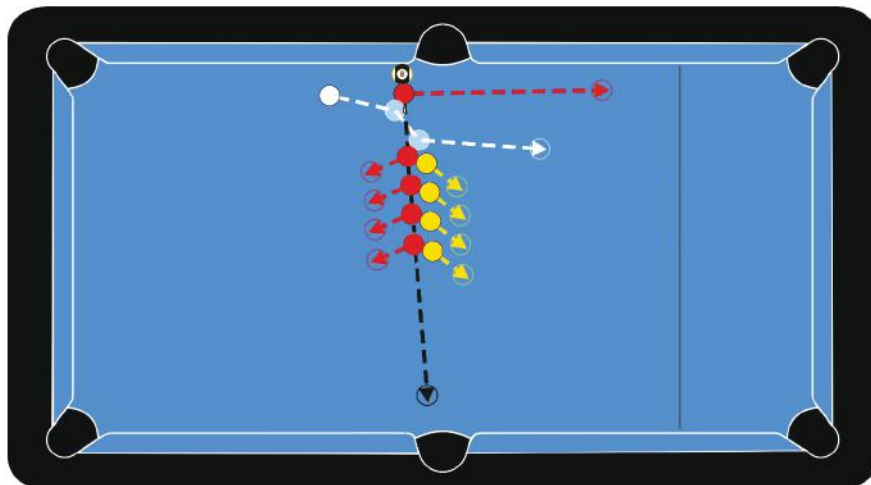
front to measure a two-ball length to start placing the other 4 red balls in a straight line about two thirds of an inch apart. Now place the four 4 yellow balls angled and frozen with an equal distance between them as shown in the diagram. Proper placement of the red and yellow balls will open at just the right angle to avoid a collision with the 8-Ball when it comes through.

**Objective:** Aim the cue ball to hit about half of the red ball in front of the 8-Ball. To ensure that the light cue ball goes through hit it firm and follow through! Once the cue ball is through the 4 reds and 4 yellows will open up and allow the 8-Ball to have a clear path safely through to the other side pocket.

**Special Notes:** Because the object balls are only 2 inches and lighter than American 2 1/4 inch balls,

adjustments might need to be made by moving the cue ball to different positions and the gap between the four pairs of red and yellow balls might need to be made smaller to ensure quick separation to make a path for the 8-Ball.

**Crowd Reactions Through the Years:** As said in the video, God will make a way when there does not seem to be a way! There were many people in the audience in Morocco that took this message to heart as all of us are fellow strugglers in this life. The players from Zambia after hearing this message in the main arena asked me to pray for them the next day as life is difficult in Zambia. Will you trust that God will make a way for you in your challenges. Jesus said in John 14:1 “Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in me.” God bless as you ponder these thoughts!



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# Team Europe Win 2022 Mosconi Cup In Las Vegas

Team Europe won the 2022 Mosconi Cup beating the USA 11-7 at Bally's Las Vegas as Cuetec MVP Joshua Filler sunk the winning balls in the fourth match of the day to secure the cup for a third straight year.

Going into the final day of play, Europe had a two-point buffer on the USA at 8-6 but that lead was soon cut to one as the World Cup of Pool winning duo of Francisco Sanchez Ruiz and David Alcaide struggled for mojo as the US's duo of vice-captain Skyler Woodward and world champion Shane Van Boening rallied to an important 5-3 win.

Alcaide had struggled with the table conditions and cue ball control in the opener but something seemed to click in his singles action with Woodward in red-hot form and gunning for an MVP crown. Woodward made light work of the early racks to lead 3-1. The turning point came in the next rack with Woodward missing a costly five and Alcaide finding a groove to run through to victory 5-3 and put Europe two away from the title.

Team USA 7-11 Team Europe	
Team USA 5-3	Team Europe
Oscar Dominguez/Earl Strickland 1-5	Francisco Sanchez Ruiz/David Alcaide
	Skyler Woodward 5-4 Joshua Filler
Shane Van Boening/Tyler Styer 5-4	Jayson Shaw/Albin Ouschan
Earl Strickland 3-5	Jayson Shaw
Shane Van Boening 3-5	Joshua Filler
Tyler Styer / Oscar Dominguez 3-5	Joshua Filler/Albin Ouschan
Francisco Sanchez-Ruiz 2-5	Skyler Woodward
Van Boening/Strickland 5-4	Shaw/Alcaide
Tyler Styer 2-5	David Alcaide
Woodward/Strickland 2-5	Filler/Sanchez Ruiz
Earl Strickland 2-5	Albin Ouschan
Van Boening/Woodward 5-0	Filler/Shaw
Oscar Dominguez 2-5	Jayson Shaw
Woodward/Van Boening 5-3	Alcaide/Sanchez Ruiz
Skyler Woodward 3-5	David Alcaide
Shane Van Boening 3-5	Jayson Shaw
Tyler Styer 3-5	Joshua Filler



The Mosconi Cup rivalry for the ages lived up to all expectations as Jayson Shaw clashed with Shane Van Boening to potentially put Europe on the hill, something he has done previously. Shaw and Van Boening looked nervy for large parts in the rowdy atmosphere in Sin City. Van Boening scratched in the third rack but managed to get back to the table from a Shaw error to be ahead at 2-1. It was the case of whoever settled first would come good and that did prove to be Shaw who did so to lead 4-2 after Van Boening slipped on the six. It was mission complete for Shaw who ran



MVP Joshua Filler

out a 5-3 winner. One away for Team Europe.

As it was in 2017 and 2021, it was left up to German superstar Joshua Filler to bring it home and sink the winning balls this time against Tyler Styer for a memorable win in Las Vegas, the first time Team Europe has achieved such a feat since 2017. Styer looked out of it for large parts but could've made it hill hill. It looked as if Styer would have a routine run out only to run aground on the eight to leave it in ample range for Filler to step up and seal the CueTec MVP title and the 2022 Mosconi Cup crown.

Filler said: "I am so overwhelmed right now but let's go, we did it again! I was so nervous but then I was something in between, relaxed and nervous. It's amazing to be MVP. It's incredible. I started always pretty good but this year, yesterday I wasn't 100% there. Being MVP is great, to win with this team and togetherness is a dream."

Captain Lely said: "It was some show. I want to thank the American fans. It was amazing There was a lot of heat. From now to the future, the home-court advantage is massive. Two years from now will be bigger crazier, and more intense than ever. I have a lot of appreciation for how the Americans handled themselves. They put them under a lot of heat. The team is special. It's a team of champions. Finding a way to get it together with all the egos in sync is quite a challenge but we've been working together for a few years. Jayson Shaw as the vice-captain was brilliant."

The 2023 Nineball Schedule will begin with the 2023 World Pool Championship set to take place from February 1-5. More news is to follow ahead of the next season getting underway in January with Diamond Billiards' Derby City Classic Nineball Division and the Turning Stone Classic.

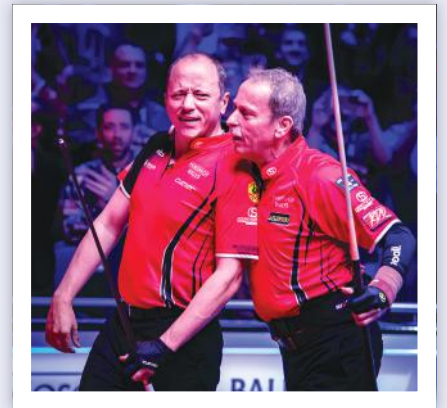
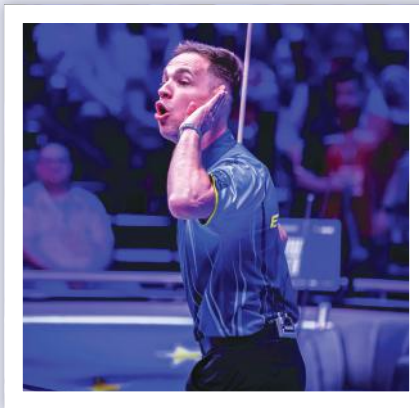
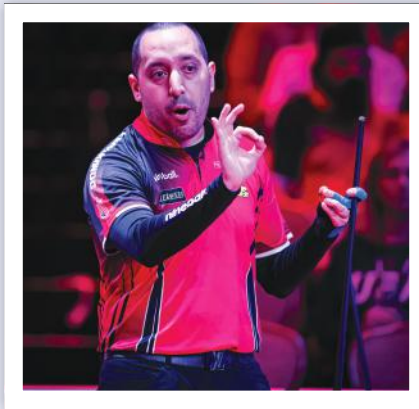
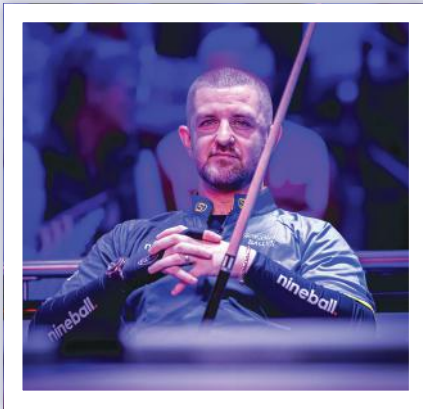
An advertisement for AZB Marketplace. At the top, three yellow billiard balls with the letters 'A', 'Z', and 'B' are shown. To their right, the text 'MARKETPLACE' is written in large, bold, yellow letters, with 'The Official Billiard Supply For AZBers' underneath in smaller white text. Below this, the 'P3 REVOLUTION' logo is displayed in a stylized font. The main image shows three pool cues with dark wood barrels and black ferrules. One cue has a white tiger logo on the ferrule. In the bottom right corner, there is a small logo for 'Powered By SEYBERTS.COM SEYBERTS BILLIARD SUPPLY' featuring a pool ball with the number 8.



# MOSCONI CUP

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# MOSCONI CUP

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# Mark Griffin

## Looks Back on a Legacy in Pool

Over his sixty plus years in the Billiards Industry, Mark Griffin has outran a lot of things. He underwent a double lung transplant in 2015. A year later, Griffin started having issues with his retina and lost the use of his right eye. From what Griffin's doctors tell him, he may have finally run into the obstacle that he can't outrun.

Griffin went to the doctor in October of this year, suffering with problems with his foot, and was diagnosed with stage four brain cancer. This situation has quickly gotten worse and Mark has recently been informed that he doesn't have much longer to live.

Griffin first got involved in the pool world during the 7th grade when his father purchased a table for their home. The table got so much use in the Griffin residence, that it needed to be recovered and Mark was the man for the job. Griffin started recovering more and more tables in the Alaska area, and he started becoming known



In 2010



In 2005

for his speed and precision at the task. "I used to keep track in a book of every table that I did, but I stopped doing that when I reached 1000 tables in the book" said Griffin.

In early 1969, Griffin opened his first pool room, the Q & 8 Billiards. Griffin fondly remembered that the room was known as "The Den of Iniquity" back then. A year later, he expanded to a second pool room, Lazy Cue Billiards Academy in Mountain View, Alaska. Griffin discovered that a love for the game sometimes isn't enough to make a living and found himself taking odd jobs to make ends meet. "I worked for Thrifty Rental Cars, wash-



*With Grady Mathews in 2007*

a part of it, along with Justin Collett, until the end. Mark got involved in the project, and provided the dedicated studio where they would record many of their matches. TAR helped create modern billiards streaming and we know it today.

2009 was a big year for Griffin. He was named the “Man of the Year” by Billiards Digest magazine and he also created the USAPL League System. The USAPL continues to grow today, and boasts over 10,000 players in its system. “I think the USAPL will eventually be the best league system in the game,” Griffin predicts.

With the large number of events that were being run by CSI all over the country, a system was needed to display brackets online and CTS on Demand was created. The decades worth of data that had been accumulated by CTS on Demand amounted to nearly a million matches and became the starting ground for the FargoRate system. Mark helped to financially support the business’s creation.

In 2016, a year after his double lung transplant, Mark opened Griff’s Bar & Billiards in Las Vegas, which has remained one of the premier pool rooms in the sport today.

ing cars for a year” Griffin remembered. “I couldn’t get a real job. They always told me I was overqualified”.

Griffin finally found himself involved in the bingo scene in Alaska and became one of the biggest sellers of bingo supplies in the state. He actually opened a Bingo Hall at the former location of one of the larger pool halls in Anchorage.

Griffin got back into pool in the late 80’s and hasn’t left the game since. He opened the Anchorage Billiard Palace in 1988, a room recognized by Billiards Digest as one of the best rooms in the game back then. In 1996, Griffin acquired College Billiards in San Diego and went on to purchase three other rooms in the San Diego area.

In 2001, Griffin became a major partner in Diamond Billiards Products, and provided the building that Diamond occupies to this day. In 2004, Griffin purchased the BCA Pool League from the Billiard Congress of America. The purchase of the BCA Leagues was the catalyst for creating Cue Sports International. “I was working twelve hour days, living in the offices, working on getting CSI going” said Griffin.

Griffin brought back the US Open Banks and One Pocket events in 2004,

and ran them under the CSI umbrella, along with the BCA Pool League World Championship. Three years later, Griffin started the US Open 10-Ball, 14.1 and 8-Ball events. He would later add the US Bar Table Championships to the list of events that were ran by CSI.

In 2007, Mark made a small contribution to help bring in commentators for a challenge match between Shane Van Boening and Corey Deuel. That challenge match would be the first match for the newly formed The Action Report (TAR) and Mark would be



*With Harry Platis in 2010*



With Mary Kenniston in 2011

Not everything that Griffin did in the industry was even seen by most fans of the game. For example, after a shortfall by the tournament director of the UPA Desert Shoot Out in 2008, Griffin stepped in and covered the deficit in prize money of over \$20,000 to make sure that the top pros were paid what they had won. He did this without fanfare or accolades. He did it to help take care of the game.

Through all of the projects that Griffin has been a part of, he has never been shy to express his opinion, and today is no different. Griffin still offers his opinion on the happenings in the game today. “The pro game is great for the players today, but the system is still broken” said Griffin. “It eats its young. The big players keep talking about working together, but it doesn’t happen.”

Griffin does see the positive things in the sport today though. “Savannah Easton is going to be another Jean Balukas” he says. “She has all

of the talent and a great team behind her”. Griff’s is the home of multiple top juniors, including Easton and Jin Powell.

With a list of accomplishments as long as Griffin’s, you would think that he had done everything he wanted to do

in the game. That would not be the case though. “I was never able to get the movers and shakers of the industry together for a consortium, like I had hoped to” Griffin explains. “The power brokers of the industry never seem to be able to put aside their differences and work together. There has always been an attitude in the game that in order to win, your competitor needs to lose. That needs to change.”

As Mark finds himself near the end of his journey, he is still hard at work every day on mapping out the future for the various interests that he has in the game. “Griff’s will stay open. To the average person, they won’t know anything has changed. I just won’t be there” he says. Griffin has a tournament director chosen to keep the pro events that he owns going long into the future. “The US Open 8-Ball and 10-Ball will be in March, and the One Pocket and Banks will be later in the year” he explains.

Griffin has been a major partner in OB Cues for the last five years, but his recent illness is going to force OB to either restructure or close their doors.

Mark was the proud owner of one of the largest Cue Stick collections in the country. He also owned one of the



With Greg Sullivan and Ralf Souquet in 2008

largest printed media collections and was involved in all facets of the industry. “

One of the things that Griffin is the most proud of is the fact that he always paid the players what they were owed. “I never did say I was going to do a lot of things. I just did them. “ Griffin proudly says.

It’s been a long road for Griffin. He has seen the billiards industry from just about every angle. He has been a major contributor in the creation of a number of important parts of today’s game. He’s been a player, table mechanic, room owner, league operator, tournament director, promoter and has helped to fund Diamond, Fargo Rate, The Action Report, OB CUES and much much more. While some people may not agree with everything Mark has said and done during his long illustrious career, no one can argue that he didn’t help this game to be better



At Derby City in 2009

than it was when he first got involved with it, so many years ago.

In respect for Mark and his current health conditions, please refrain from

calling him. Communication via email would be preferred. As the inevitable comes closer, there will be announcements for services and remembrances.

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# Tzu-Chien Wei

## Comes From The Loss Side To Capture Wpba Dr. Pool Classic II

The expression 'household name' implies that a given name is so well-known that common 'households' across a broad, geographic spectrum are aware of it. It is, by its nature, a culturally specific expression; a household in New York City is not likely to elicit the same 'recognition' responses as one in Taiwan.

This takes on added significance in the international pool community, because even the most well-known competitors in any country are only likely to be recognized as a 'household' name in very specific pool-interested households.

The winner (Tzu-Chien Wei, *aka* The Shadow Killer) and runner-up (Meng-Hsia Hung, *aka* Bean Hung) in the WPBA Dr. Pool Classic II event, held this past weekend (Dec. 7-11) might be considered 'household names' in pool-interested households on the island of Taipei, but aside from their fellow competitors at the event,

are not likely to be as well-known in pool-interested US households. In many cases neither are Kelly and/or Allison Fisher. The \$20,000-added WPBA Aramith Dr. Pool Classic II drew 77 total competitors to the Central Wisconsin Expo Center in Rothchild, Wisconsin this past weekend and even among many pool-interested US 'households,' the names of Tzu-Chien Wei and Meng-Hsia Hung (both from Taipei) are not likely to be recognized. The six opponents that Tzu-Chien Wei faced and the 10 that "Bean" Hung faced are likely to not just recognize the names, but remember them, well. Their names are also likely to be ele-

vated in the recognition department of the event's 59 other competitors.

The event was broken up into two stages. A First Stage that put 45 competitors against each other in a double-elimination bracket that would advance 16 of them (eight from each side of the bracket) to a Final Stage double-elimination bracket against 32 competitors, 16 of whom had been awarded opening round byes. Tzu-Chien Wei was one of the 16 competitors who was awarded an opening round bye in the Final Stage. Meng-Hsia Hung was one of the First-Stage 45 and advanced through three op-

Tzu-Chien Wei



ponents – Angie Londgren, Lisa Cossette and Emily Callado – to enter the event's Final Stage. They would meet twice, hot seat and finals.

Wei opened her campaign against Emilyn Callado, downing her 8-4 before dispatching two very formidable opponents – Canada's Brittany Bryant (8-2) and Russia's Kristina Tkach (8-5) – and then, drawing Allison Fisher in one of the winners' side semifinals. Hung, in the meantime, got by June Maiers 8-3 and Susan Williams 8-2, before locking up in a double hill battle versus Kelly Fisher, likely one of the WPBA competitors who was 'favored to win' (by any measure). Hung, if you'll excuse the expression, hung on to win, advancing to defeat Margarita Fefilova 8-4 and draw New Jersey's Dawn Hopkins in the other winners' side semifinal.

Wei sent Allison Fisher to the loss side 8-6. Hung met her in the hot seat match after sending Hopkins over 8-3. Hung sent Wei off to the semifinals 8-5 and sat in the hot seat, awaiting her return.

On the loss side, Fisher drew Kaylee McIntosh, who'd lost a winners' side quarterfinal versus Dawn Hopkins and then defeated Eleanor Callado

Meng-Hsia Hung



**“ WEI GOT OUT IN FRONT RELATIVELY EARLY AND IN THE END, ALLOWED HUNG ONLY FOUR RACKS BEFORE SHE CLAIMED THE DR. POOL CLASSIC II TITLE. ”**

8-2 and Brittany Bryant 8-6. Hopkins picked up Austria's Jasmin Ouschan, who'd lost her winners' side quarterfinal to Allison Fisher. Ouschan then defeated Kyoko Sone 8-3 and, in a hard-fought, double-hill battle, Kelly Fisher.

Fisher and Ouschan advanced to the quarterfinals, both by shutout over McIntosh and Hopkins, respectively. Ouschan defeated Allison Fisher 8-5 in those quarterfinals before being eliminated by Wei in the semifinals 8-5.

The final match between Wei and Hung was a single race to 10. A hoped-for *battle royale* did not emerge. Wei got out in front relatively early and in the end, allowed Hung only four racks before she claimed the Dr. Pool Classic II title.

WPBA tour representatives thanked the ownership and staff at the Central Wisconsin Expo Center, as well as all of the 77 participants at the event. The Dr. Pool Classic was the last WPBA event of the year. The next scheduled event, "pending signed contract," will be an event of the CSI Predator Pro Billiard Series, scheduled for Feb. 28-March 4, 2023 in Las Vegas, NV.



Jasmin Ouschan

# Alex Lely

## Steps Down After Three Years As European Mosconi Cup Captain

Story by BEN HUDD - [absolute.pool.wordpress.com](http://absolute.pool.wordpress.com)

**Alex Lely has announced his decision to step down as European captain for the annual Mosconi Cup after an undefeated three years in the role.**

Lely took over from predecessor Marcus Chamat almost three years ago following two successive wins for the American team, with the Dutchman restoring the European dominance during his tenure.

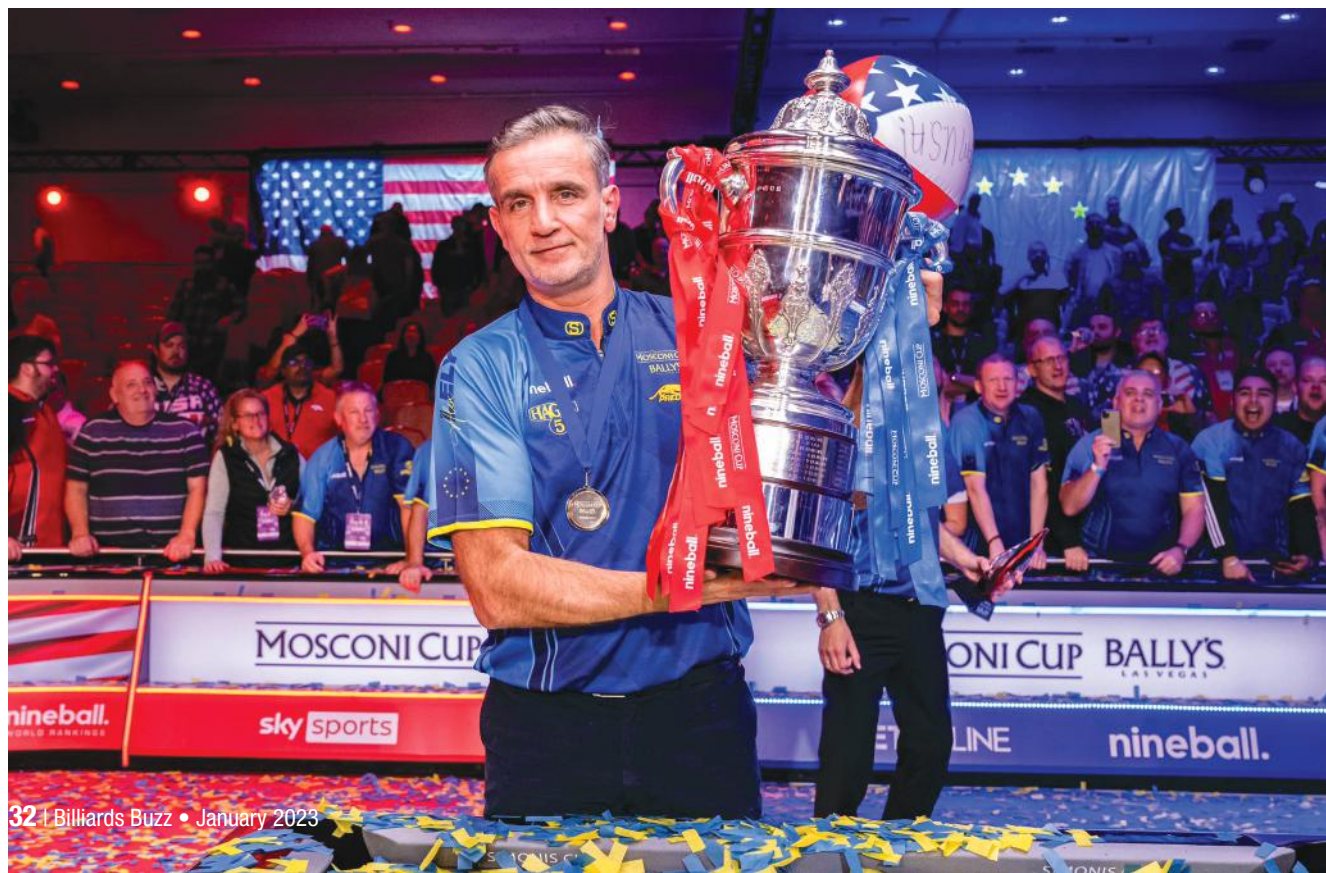
He has now taken the decision to step aside and allow someone else to take up the illustrious role, revealing his intentions to continue his coaching in the USA as well as commentary on both pool and snooker.

The 1999 World Pool Masters winner and former European champion posted on social media: "It's been a great run, finished with an amazing edition in Las Vegas.

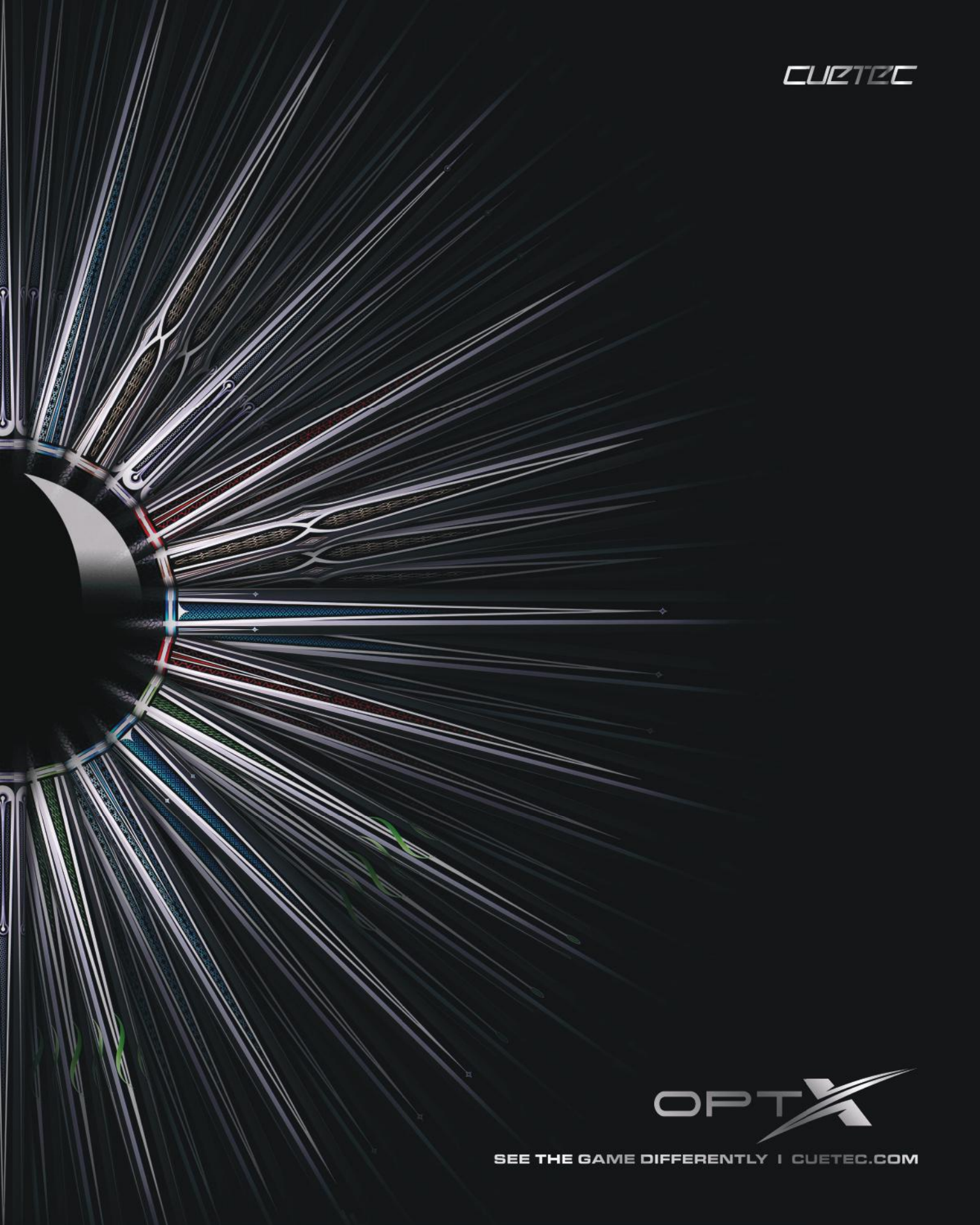
"The intensity I experienced in this one, I will probably never go through again. It was the best one for me. But it ends now. A three-year run is good I feel, the fans get to see a new face, the players get a new input.

"I am happy to have had this chance from Matchroom and feel honoured how these champions have trusted me with their technique and other challenges."

A new captain will take over the helm for the 2023 edition held on home soil, with former vice-captain Karl Boyes and three-time MVP Niels Feijen amongst the rumoured candidates.



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# Barry Hearn:

## 'Matchroom Will Invest Whatever It Takes To Make Nineball Pool Huge'

Story by BEN HUDD - [absolute.pool.wordpress.com](http://absolute.pool.wordpress.com)

**Matchroom have invested millions of dollars into the sport of nineball pool and sporting supremo Barry Hearn has further highlighted their intentions during the prestigious Mosconi Cup in Las Vegas.**

**M**atchroom increased their number of televised nineball events to eight this year, adding the hugely successful UK Open and European Open tournaments, and have teased that their portfolio will be extending to ten events in 2023.

They also launched the nineball world rankings under the stewardship of managing director Emily Frazer, and those now act as qualification towards tournaments such as the Mosconi Cup, the World Pool Championship and the World Pool Masters.

Hearn, who has already grown darts and snooker into multi-million dollar global sports watched by millions worldwide, has outlined his intentions of doing everything in his power to do the same for pool.

"Obviously we have a vision and we need everybody to share that vision and sometimes people don't, which is ok. Sometimes people lack a little bit of vision," Hearn told Sky Sports commentator Karl Boyes.

"We have asked the WPA time and time again to back us by making our

nineball world rankings the official rankings of nineball pool and they've decided not to.

"That's their call but it means that our events will continue without their sanction because we're going to out-grow the world that they live in.

"We need to have a vision. We need to have the blowing away of boundaries. We need to blow the whole thing up and create a mega sport.

"For that we need the players, the fans and the associations around the world. We will get that eventually – sometimes people are a little bit slow to jump onto something I know will be a huge success.

"Matchroom will invest whatever it takes to make this game huge and the nineball world rankings from January 1st will be ever players ambition to get as high up those rankings as they can."

The 2023 nineball calendar gets underway with the Turning Stone Classic and the Derby City Classic in January, before the first televised tournament takes place in the shape of the World Championship in early February.



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# Tate, Mast And “Jawz” Spain Head Up Winners Of “When The Smoke Clears” JUNIOR EVENTS

Story by SKIP MALONEY - AzB Staff / Photos courtesy RA HANNA

## CATCHY NAME.

Risky Shotz and S & T Billiards present . . . *When the Smoke Clears!*

**T**he only thing that comes logically and immediately to mind is ‘What happens when the smoke clears?’ which leads one to wonder and then, search for answers and the next thing you know, you’re looking at a poster telling you the who (junior competitors), the what (a \$1K-added set of four tournaments on a single weekend), the where (Center Pocket, Bowie, MD), the when (Dec. 17-18) and the why of it (cash prizes).

As the ‘name’ indicates, the tournaments were not held under the auspices of the Junior International Cham-

pionships series of tournaments, spearheaded by Ra Hanna and his On The Wire Creative Media organization, but you wouldn’t have known it from the roster of people who organized it or the junior competitors who competed in it.

Tournaments first. There were three ‘main’ events: A Boys 20U (16 entrants), a Girls 20U (8), and a 13U, either-gender tournament (13). The fourth, a Sunday Second Chance for the 13U mixed-gender crowd, drew 13, as well.

And when the smoke cleared, D’Angelo Spain (*aka* Jawz), riding the crest of a home-town advantage, won two of the four. He won both of the 13U events. One on Saturday, one on Sunday. He went undefeated, downing Sofia Mast in Saturday’s final, and came from the loss side to take down Cameron Hollingsworth on Sunday’s Second Chance final. He placed 5th/6th in the 20U Boys division, too. If they’d let him play with the 20U girls, he might have made it a four-fer. Spain is 11 years old.

## Sofia Mast

Joey Tate and Sofia Mast won their respective 20U divisions. Tate came from the loss side to take down perennial rival, Landon Hollingsworth in the finals of the 20U Boys division, while Mast went undefeated to take the girls’ title, with two Tate sisters (Noelle, 13 and Bethany, 16) in 2nd and 3rd place, respectively.

Recently, it was learned that Mast was among the country’s 100 top Fargo-rated female pool players, nestled in at #87 between Jennifer Baretta (#1) and Kia Burwell (#100). Mast is 13.

“It has been an amazing ride,” she posted on her FB page, of the four years since she first picked up a cue and the two years that she’s since been competing against fellow juniors and adult professionals. “There have been many ups and downs, long days and nights, many plane and car rides, many laughs, many tears.”



Sofia Mast



Joey Tate

came as a surprise to his younger siblings. They didn't know he was coming until he woke them up on Friday morning; an early Christmas gift.

"I think that gave Jawz all the boost and motivation he needed to compete at a high level in the tournament, which began the very next day," wrote their father, Frank. "It was great to see all of my kids competing in the same tournament together like they used to do."

That said, Childress faced Jawz in the other winners' side semifinal and defeated him 7-3. Hollingsworth grabbed the hot seat, downing Childress 7-5.

On the loss side, Jawz had the misfortune of drawing Joey Tate, who'd followed his loss to Cameron Hollingsworth with victories over two Tanners, Elliott and McKinney (7-4, 7-5) and then . . . well, Jawz would put it this way on his fan page – "Took my L's from Nathan Childress and Joey Tate took me out (7-4)."

Tate went on to defeat Cameron Hollingsworth in the quarterfinals 7-4 and Childress in the semifinals 7-5.

"I will get knocked down many times," she wrote, "but I will always go out fighting and I will come back stronger."

She wrote this *after* she'd gone undefeated in the 20U Girls division and after, a day later, she'd been sent to the loss side in the 13U Second Chance event (by Jawz 7-2), before fighting back through Lathan Elliott 7-3, Marlin Foster 7-2 and Tanner McKinney 7-3 to face Spain a second time, in the finals. She battled him to double hill and there, but for the fall of a single 9-ball, *she* might have been the one to claim half of the weekend's events.

The Tate sisters played each other in the opening round and semifinals of the 20U Girls division; Bethany took the opener 7-3 and Noelle, battling to double hill, won their semifinal matchup. Mast played them both; downing Bethany in the hot seat 7-4 and Noelle in the finals 7-2.

### Joey Tate

In the 20U Boys division, it was the Hollingsworth brothers who took a 'shot' at each other. Younger brother, Cameron, sent eventual winner, (the

Tate family's) "Big Brother" Joey to the loss side 7-4 in the second round and advanced to take a shot at his brother, Landon in one of the winners' side semifinals. Landon won 7-5. Nathan Childress, in the meantime, got a shot at both members of the Spain family, downing 20-year-old Marine, Snipper Spain 7-2 in the opening round. The presence of Snipper Spain



Noelle Tate

## When The Smoke Clears Junior Event

In a single race to 9, when the smoke cleared, Tate was champion of the 20U Boys, having eliminated his arch-rival, Landon Hollingsworth 9-2.

Jawz rallied to put on a bit of a show for his surprise-Christmas-gift, older brother Snipper, by going undefeated in the main event, mixed gender 13U, going undefeated and taking out Sofia Mast twice; once in a winners' side semifinal 7-4 and after claiming the hot seat from Tanner McKinney 7-4, again, in the finals in a double hill thriller.

"She is a BEAST," wrote Jawz on his fan page. "I've always respected her game but never had to play her. That was a different experience (and) I loved every minute of it."

Jawz went on to win the handicapped Second Chance Tournament on Sunday, but had to come from the loss side to claim that title. He advanced through the field to face Cameron Hollingsworth in the hot seat match. Cameron had just defeated his brother, Landon 7-7 in their winners' side semifinal (Landon racing to 9) and carried that momentum into the hot



seat match where he allowed Jawz only a single rack. In something of a surprise result, Landon Hollingsworth was eliminated by Tanner McKinney in the quarterfinals and Jawz eliminated McKinney 5-3 in the semifinals.

"Up to that point (the finals, Cameron), was untouched," wrote Jawz on his fan page. "Well, when you dig deep

and grind to the finish line, anything is possible. So that's what I did. I managed to double-dip him and claim the title."

With Hollingsworth racing to 7 and Jawz to 5, Jawz took the opening set 5-4. He let Cameron chalk up an extra rack in the second set, but won it and the title, 5-5.

"When the Smoke Clears was an independent event, in which I (as Risky Shotz, an apparel company and as a certified PBIA instructor, train students) partnered with S & T Billiards, a cue and accessories company," noted Frank Spain. "Based out of Center Pocket in Bowie, MD, we organized it with Ra Hanna doing the streaming and Kory Wolford as the tournament director."

Spain, Hanna and Wolford thanked Leia Burk and Taseen Abdalbarr and their Corner Pocket staff for their hospitality at which they are planning to 'make the smoke clear' on an annual basis. Spain also thanked Hanna for his streaming services, along with Madison Ortiz for a "generous donation" and his teaming with Hanna in the streaming booth for commentary.



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# World Pool Championship 2023

## To Be Hosted In Kielce, Poland February 1st-5th

Story by MATT LYNCH - Matchroom Multi Sport

**Matchroom Pool is pleased to announce the World Pool Championship 2023 will take place in Kielce, Poland in partnership with the Polish Billiard Association from February 1-5 as the world's best descend on Targi Kielce Exhibition & Congress Centre live on Viaplay in Poland, Scandinavia, the Baltics as well as on Sky Sports in the UK, DAZN in the USA, Canada, Spain, and Italy with further broadcasters to be announced.**

Kielce is no stranger to big Matchroom events and last hosted the 2012 World Pool Masters where it was Poland's own Karol Skowerski who came out on top. Since then, Poland has become a breeding ground for top Nineball players with 17 currently listed on the Live Nineball World Rankings. Of which, ten are inside the world's top 100 including World No. 7 Wiktor Zielinski, World No. 15 Konrad Juszczyszyn, World No. 16 Mieszko Fortunski, and Wojciech Szewczyk, Tomasz Kapłan, Karol Skowerski, Daniel Macioł, Sebastian Batkowski, Mateusz Śniegocki, Radosław Babica.

The Polish Billiard Association has worked closely with Matchroom to bring the World Pool Championship to Poland for the first time in the tournament's history. Partners in Poland include the Ministry of Sport and Tourism of the Republic of Poland, Marshal of Swietokrzyskie Province, Mayor of Kielce City, and Nosan Company.

Tickets are available soon from only 25 PLZ (€5) for a day ticket, and 100 PLZ (€20) for all five days of action in Kielce. Sign up for ticket alerts here.

Defending champion Shane Van Boening will head to the city looking to keep hold of his world crown that he claimed in April 2022 downing Albin Ouschan in the final in the 128 strong field taken from the Live Nineball World Rankings.

The tournament will be the opening Matchroom event on the Nineball World Ranking schedule with the Blue-Ribbon event offering \$325,000 in total prize money with the winner taking home \$60,000.

Last year saw the introduction of a new double-elimination format to improve the quality of the tournament which will remain in 2023. Fans will be able to sweat the action on three tables with one TV broadcast and two streaming tables available via the Matchroom YouTube channels. Those in Poland, Scandinavia, the Baltics, and Netherlands will be able to watch on Viaplay. Sky Sports will be the home of the World Pool Championship in the UK and Ireland whilst fans in the USA, Canada, Spain, and Italy will be able to watch live on DAZN. More broadcasters will be announced closer to the time. Matchroom.Live will be available to those without a broadcaster in their country.

Matchroom Multi Sport Managing Di-

rector Emily Frazer said: "We're so excited to take the World Pool Championship to Poland, a place that is a hot bed for Nineball. I am looking forward to welcoming the world's best to Kielce for what promises to be another breath-taking week of action. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Polish Billiard Association and partners for all their hard work already to bring the event to a new country. I believe the production will be the best to date for a multi-table event with exciting plans to extend our coverage further."





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# Nineball World Ranking

## Schedule Revolutionizes Pool With 30 Events In 2023

The 2023 Nineball World Ranking schedule is provisionally set and will feature a minimum of 30 ranking events globally including 12 events from Matchroom in ground-breaking news that sees the largest calendar of Nineball events with the aim to keep growing.

Ranking events will take place in all four corners of the world thanks to new and existing partnerships as Matchroom Pool continues to offer a transparent, ambitious, and unified plan for Nineball players.

2023 will begin with back-to-back events in the USA with the Turning Stone Classic XXXIV (January 5-8) in Verona, NY followed up by the Diamond Derby City Classic Nineball Division (25-28 January) in Indiana ahead of the first blue ribbon event on the schedule from Matchroom. The World Pool Championship 2023 is set to take place in Kielce, Poland from February 1-5 as the best 128 players on the Nineball World Rankings go toe-to-toe for a slice of the \$325,000 prize fund

and the chance to become champion of the world.

Matchroom's flagship events will be the backbone of 2023 alongside UK broadcast partner Sky Sports, the World Pool Masters set to take place from May 6-9 before the UK Open (May 30 to June 4). Spain will look to defend their World Cup of Pool crown June 20 - 25, whilst Premier League Pool will return as Albin Ouschan guns for the crown for a third straight year. The European Open gets underway at Hotel Esperanto, Fulda in Germany from August 8-13 ahead of the historic US Open Pool Championship at Harrah's Resort, Atlantic City (September 25-30). As ever, the schedule will build up to the big one, the 2023 Mosconi Cup

as the USA look to snatch the trophy back from Europe's hands for the first time since 2019.

For the first time, Matchroom will also launch an additional two new multi-table open events in 2023 including the inaugural Asian Open and the English Open, each boasting a total prize fund of \$200,000, 256 size player fields, and worldwide television exposure.

Two new Juniors events will be launched alongside the SVB Junior Open with more details to come in the new year.

Matchroom's commitment to offering opportunities to players world-

nineball. WORLD RANKINGS			nineball.			nineball. WORLD RANKINGS		
jan	5-8	Turning Stone Classic XXXIV	USA	jun	TBC	Philippines Open	Philippines	
jan	25-28	Derby City Classic Nineball Division	USA	jun	TBC	Chinese Taipei Open	Chinese Taipei	
feb	1-5	World Pool Championship	Poland	jun	TBC	Nineball Balkan Tour	TBC	
feb	18-20	Dynamic Billard Tallin Open	Estonia	jul	19-21	Dynamic Billard Slovenia Open	Slovenia	
mar	18-19	Nineball Balkan Tour	TBC	jul	TBC	Singapore Open	Singapore	
apr	14-17	Dynamic Billard St Johann I.P. Open	Austria	aug	TBC	APF Asian Championship	TBC	
apr	19-21	PRP Nineball Open	Spain	aug	8-13	European Open Pool Championship	Germany	
apr	TBC	Indonesia Open	Indonesia	aug	TBC	Omega 9-ball Tour	USA	
may	22-23	First Break Cafe Open	USA	aug	31-3	Turning Stone Classic XXXVIII	USA	
may	4-7	World Pool Masters	TBC	sep	14-17	Capital City Classic	USA	
may	TBC	Premier League Pool	TBC	sep	22-23	The Connecticut Open	USA	
may	TBC	Mezz Bucharest Open	Romania	sep	25-30	US Open Pool Championship	USA	
may	TBC	English Open Pool Championship	UK	oct	TBC	Asian Open Pool Championship	TBC	
may	TBC	Vietnam Open	Vietnam	oct	21-23	Dynamic Billard Lasko Open	Slovenia	
jun	27-29	Dynamic Billard Tampere Open	Finland	oct	TBC	International Open	USA	
jun	30-4	UK Open Pool Championship	UK	nov	3-6	Dynamic Billard Treviso Open	Italy	
jun	20-25	World Cup of Pool	TBC	nov	TBC	Mosconi Cup	UK	

**2023 NINEBALL WORLD RANKING SCHEDULE**



<b>17</b> COUNTRIES	<b>\$3</b> M.E.L. PRIZE MONEY OVER \$5 MILLION
<b>+30</b> EVENTS	<b>+3</b> JUNIOR EVENTS
<b>13</b> MATCHROOM EVENTS	<b>1</b> FAIR SYSTEM

**nineball** WORLD RANKINGS  
www.matchroompool.com

wide has been underlined with a new strategic partnership with Asian Pool Promotions which sees the launch of the Nineball Asian Tour. Working with Matchroom, the APP will offer players across Asia and beyond to compete for vital ranking points with events in Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Hong Kong-China, Thailand, and Chinese Taipei in 2023.

Six events from EuroTour will feature for the second year with the EPNF's plans including ranking events in Estonia from 18-20 February and St Johann in Austria from 14-17 April. Other stops include Tampere, Finland in

May before Slovenia in late July and October. Italy's Treviso will wrap up EuroTour tournaments for 2023.

Players in the USA will have more opportunities than ever before to earn Nineball World Ranking points with Omega Billiards set to run a minimum of two ranking events in 2023 whilst two-time Mosconi Cup MVP Jayson Shaw will host a ranking event for the first time from September 22-23 ahead of the US Open. The First Break Cafe Open in Virginia will also feature for the first time as a ranking event with more news set to come soon on additional ranking events in the USA. Mike Zulgan will host another Turning Stone Classic from August 31-3 September before Pat Flemming's International Open will run again in late 2023 as a Nineball World Ranking event.

Alongside the EuroTour, Matchroom is pleased to announce a strategic partnership with promoters in the Balkan

## Nineball World Rankings

region that sees the start of the Balkan Tour with tournaments across Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, and more.

Other European events include the return of the PRP Nineball Open in Zaragoza, Spain won by Mario He earlier this year.

Not only will Ranking Events in 2023 offer vital points for the Race to the Mosconi Cup for European and USA players but it will also offer pathways to the other huge invitational tournaments on the calendar including the World Pool Masters, World Cup of Pool, and Premier League Pool for the leading players worldwide on the Nineball World Rankings. Cut-off dates and the selection criteria for invitational events will be revealed at the beginning of 2023.

**THE NINEBALL WORLD RANKINGS WILL BE ON A 2-YEAR ROLLING LIST THAT STARTED 1, JANUARY 2022**



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## Matchroom Pool Launches

# **Nineball Asian Tour**

## **ALONGSIDE ASIAN POOL PROMOTIONS**

Story by MATT LYNCH - Matchroom Multi Sport

**Matchroom Pool and Asian Pool Promotions are excited to announce a new strategic partnership that will see the launch of the Nineball Asian Tour in 2023 presented by Matchroom and the APP.**

**T**he partnership will break new ground for the Nineball World Rankings with plans to feature new 9-ball events on the 2023 schedule in Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines, Hong Kong China, Thailand, and Chinese Taipei.

The highpoint of the Nineball Asian Tour will feature a new Major event by Matchroom with a \$200,000 total prize fund, the Asian Open to sit alongside Matchroom's other 9-ball multi-table open events: The US Open, UK Open, and European Open.

Also featuring in the Nineball Asian Tour will be the APP-promoted Asian Championship, a development from the earlier event that took place in Singapore this August with the first-ever (Asian 9-ball Open), where Nineball star Ko Pin Yi took the title – the tournament became the maiden Nineball World Ranking event in 2022 in the Southern hemisphere and was key to the launch of the new tour.

Due to the overwhelming success, Matchroom and the APP have worked closely to increase representation from Asia on the Nineball World Rankings by bringing more events to the Far East.

Both parties hold a common goal to improve opportunities for Asian pool

players, by promoting a competitive environment locally for players to compete in, with more prize money, ranking points, and exposure on offer.

It marks a huge moment in the growth of Nineball as Matchroom continues to create a professional, commercial platform as well as a ranking system based on transparency and a meritocracy for pool players.

Emily Frazer, Matchroom Multi Sport Managing Director said: "After watching the success of the Asian 9-ball Open earlier this year in Singapore, I was overwhelmed with the magnitude of players competing, live spectators watching and viewers watching the stream on their phones and tablets. There is a huge demand for more of these events in the Far East, the local players are hungry for an Asian Tour – a lot of the lower-ranked players are not able to participate in all the global events due to the length of travel and those who do, carry further strain both financially and mentally always having to travel the longest and adjust the quickest with jet lag.

Our Nineball World Rankings have only just begun, with our schedule growing every minute Asia was a huge market we wanted to reach, and I am pleased to be working alongside the professional and creative team at APP.



Every continent tour has a starting point, and this is ours but there is always something to expand on: whether that's launching a Matchroom event or creating a platform online for everyone to watch. This is a very exciting project and I encourage any local promoters to join us on this journey with us."

"APP is indeed honoured and privileged to partner with Matchroom in this unprecedented groundbreaking initiative to bring Nineball World Ranking events to Asia. The Nineball Asian Tour will undoubtedly boost Nineball in Asia as it will make the game more accessible and affordable for Asian pool players and provide a much-needed catalyst to spur the growth of the sport and raise the standards of play amongst Asian players. This can only augur well for the future of the sport." – Christopher Chuah, Director, Asian Pool Promotions.

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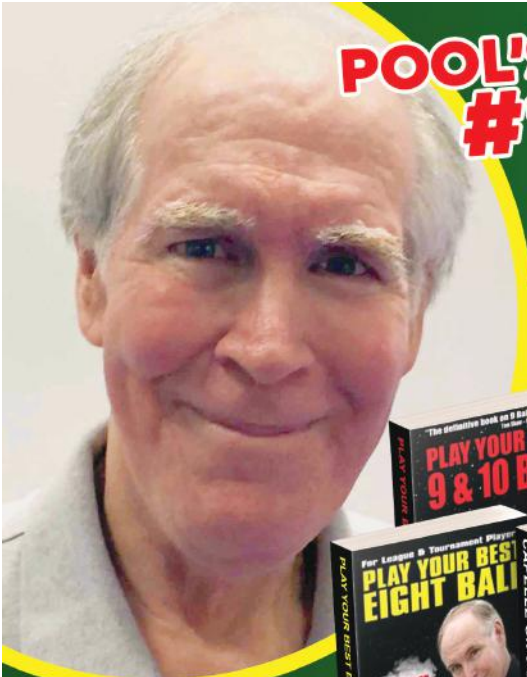
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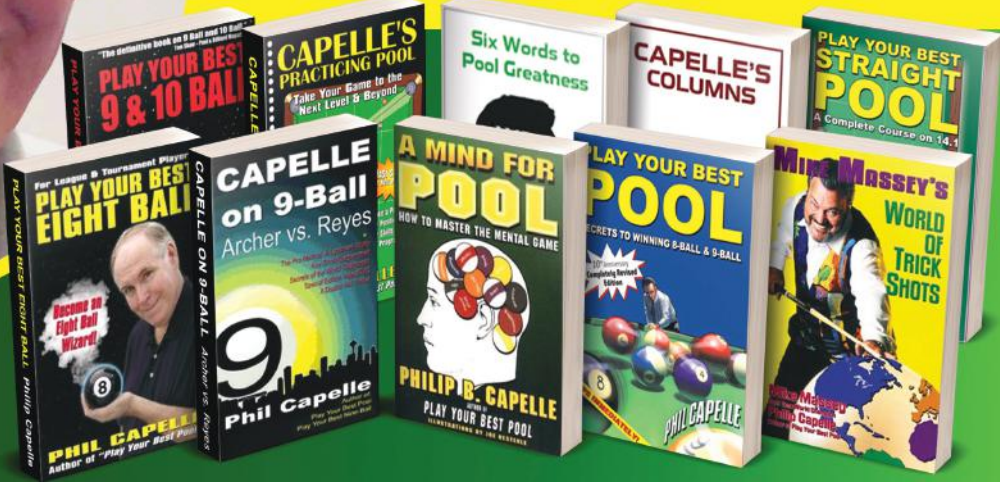
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# Tourney Results

## Dec 01 - Dec 04

### Space City Open X

#### Big Tyme Billiards

Spring, Texas

- 1 Roberto Gomez \$3,000
- 2 John Gabriel \$1,900
- 3 Ernesto Bayaua \$1,200
- 4 Robb Saez \$800
- 5 Blaine Barcus \$560
- 5 Ryan Robinson \$560
- 7 Alejandro Calderon \$380
- 7 Johnny Griffin \$380
- 9 Derek Fontenot \$250
- 9 Joey Torres \$250
- 9 Lazaro Martinez III \$250
- 9 Mark Nanashee \$250
- 13 Chase Rudder \$150
- 13 Joey Barnes \$150
- 13 Kenny Nguyen \$150
- 13 Raed Shabib \$150
- 17 Bobby Perez \$100
- 17 Cesar Arechiga \$100
- 17 CJ Holan \$100
- 17 Javier Alienas \$100
- 17 Jim McCrary \$100
- 17 John Lassek \$100
- 17 John Weeks \$100
- 17 Victor Rojas \$100

## Dec 01 - Dec 04

### Space City Open X 9-Ball Bank

#### Big Tyme Billiards

Spring, Texas

- 1 Robb Saez \$1,300
- 2 Alejandro Calderon \$750
- 3 Ernesto Bayaua \$455
- 3 Roberto Gomez \$455
- 5 Joey Torres \$150
- 5 Mark Lawson \$150
- 5 Mark Nanashee \$150
- 5 Raed Shabib \$150

## Dec 01 - Dec 04

### Space City Open X One Pocket

#### Big Tyme Billiards

Spring, Texas

- 1 John Gabriel \$1,300
- 2 Alejandro Calderon \$750
- 3 Marvin Diaz \$455
- 3 Roberto Gomez \$455
- 5 Ernesto Bayaua \$150
- 5 James Bulice \$150
- 5 Ryan Robinson \$150
- 5 Tommy Tokoph \$150

## Dec 01 - Dec 04

### Space City Open X Junior 9-Ball

#### Big Tyme Billiards

Spring, Texas

- 1 Lazaro Martinez III \$500
- 2 Kyle Yi \$300
- 3 Carlos Jinez \$150
- 4 Kailye Stevens \$100
- 5 Larissa Almandariz \$70
- 5 Tyler Smith \$70

## Dec 01 - Dec 04

### Space City Open X Ladies 9-Ball

#### Big Tyme Billiards

Spring, Texas

- 1 April Larson \$445
- 1 Ricki Lee Casper \$445
- 3 Ming Ng \$230
- 4 Robyn Petrosino \$160
- 5 Kelly Isaac \$100
- 5 Tam Trinh \$100
- 7 Christy Grigsby \$70
- 7 Michelle Yim \$70

## Dec 03 - Dec 04

### NWPA Tour 2022 Stop 5

Seattle, Washington

- 1 Suzanne Smith \$1,025
- 2 Kathie MacDonald \$735
- 3 Frances Tso \$490
- 4 Molina Ortiz \$310
- 5 Cindy Sliva \$205
- 5 Liz Cole \$205
- 7 Jing Liu \$145
- 7 Katherine Robertson \$145

## Dec 03 - Dec 03

### Predator Tri State Tour 2023 Stop

#### Shooter's Family Billiards

Wayne, NJ

- 1 Christine Pross \$1,350
- 2 James Cangialosi \$810
- 3 Steve Persaud \$535
- 4 Frank Kassetta \$320
- 5 Alfredo Altamarino \$110
- 5 Dennis Feliciano \$110
- 7 Dennis Feliciano III \$70
- 7 James Ehrig \$70

## Dec 03 - Dec 03

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Event

#### Mickey Milligan's Sports Bar

New Bern, NC

- 1 Mac Harrell \$500
- 2 Graham Swinson \$270
- 3 Jeff Underwood \$130
- 4 Michael Yamuni \$110

## Dec 03 - Dec 04

### JPNEWT Tour 2022 Stop #12

#### Triple 9 Bar & Billiards

Elkridge, MD

- 1 Briana Miller \$700
- 1 Karen Corr \$700
- 3 Bethany Sykes \$220
- 3 Ceci Strain \$220
- 5 Carol V. Clark \$80

- 5 Eugenia Gyftopoulos \$80
- 5 Kia Burwell \$80
- 5 Linda Haywood Shea \$80
- 9 Ada Lio \$55
- 9 June Prescop \$55

## Dec 06 - Dec 08

### Shane Van Boening vs Tony Chohan One Pocket Race to 24

#### Griff's

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- 1 Shane Van Boening \$160,000

## Dec 07 - Dec 11

### 2022 WPBA Aramith / Dr Pool Classic

#### Central Wisconsin Convention and Expo Center

- Rothschild, Wisconsin
- 1 Tzu-Chien Wei \$10,000
- 2 Meng-Hsia Hung \$6,000
- 3 Jasmin Ouschan \$4,000
- 4 Allison Fisher \$3,200
- 5 Dawn Hopkins \$2,400
- 5 Kaylee McIntosh \$2,400
- 7 Brittany Bryant \$1,500
- 7 Kelly Fisher \$1,500
- 9 Eleanor Callado \$1,000
- 9 Kristina Tkach \$1,000
- 9 Kyoko Sone \$1,000
- 9 Marharyta Fefilava \$1,000
- 13 Janet Atwell \$750
- 13 JoAnn Mason Parker \$750
- 13 Kristina Zlateva \$750
- 13 Sara Miller \$750
- 17 Angela Janic \$400
- 17 Caroline Pao \$400
- 17 Emily Duddy \$400
- 17 Joanne Ashton \$400
- 17 Melissa Morris \$400
- 17 Monica Webb \$400
- 17 Nicole Albergaria \$400
- 17 Savannah Easton \$400

## Dec 10 - Dec 11

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Event

## Gate City Billiards Club

- Greensboro, NC
- 1 Niko Konkel \$875
- 2 David Strum \$625
- 3 Matt Lucas \$330
- 4 Joey Tate \$200
- 5 Jas Makhni \$100
- 5 Runal Bhatt \$100
- 7 Noelle Tate \$60
- 7 Orlando Marcus \$60

## Dec 10 - Dec 11

### Garden State Pool Tour Amateur Championship

#### Players Billiards

- Eatontown, New Jersey
- 1 Julien Tierney \$650
- 2 Levy Lempaam \$300
- 3 Lysander Diaz \$200
- 4 Marc Lamberti \$160
- 5 Dave Juis \$120
- 5 Jesse Duetcher \$120
- 7 James Cangialosi \$100
- 7 Kevin Scalzitti \$100
- 9 Chris Weick \$65
- 9 Christian Jay Orque \$65
- 9 Gustavo Ardo Perdomo \$65
- 9 Rob Wetherhold \$65

## Dec 17 - Dec 18

### California State Women's 10-Ball Championship

#### Hard Times Billiards -

##### Sacramento

- Sacramento, CA
- 1 Eleanor Callado \$1,200
- 2 Savannah Easton \$840
- 3 Melissa Morris \$580
- 4 Bonnie Og \$400
- 5 Emilyn Callado \$275
- 5 Kamilah Morton \$275
- 7 Kat Guest \$190
- 7 Suzanne Smith \$190

## Dec 17 - Dec 18

### "When The Smoke Clears" 20 & Under Boys Div.

#### Center Pocket Billiards

- Bowie, Maryland
- 1 Joey Tate \$1,810
- 2 Landon Hollingsworth \$1,000
- 3 Nathan Childress \$500
- 4 Cameron Hollinsworth \$300

## Dec 17 - Dec 18

### "When The Smoke Clears" 20 & Under Girls Div.

#### Center Pocket Billiards

- Bowie, Maryland
- 1 Sofia Mast \$640
- 2 Noelle Tate \$335
- 3 Bethany Tate \$210

## Dec 17 - Dec 18

### "When The Smoke Clears" 13 & Under Division

#### Center Pocket Billiards

- Bowie, Maryland
- 1 D' Angelo Spain \$830
- 2 Sofia Mast \$440
- 3 Tanner McKinney \$240




















## Dec 17 - Dec 18

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Bar Box Championship

#### Rock House Tavern

- Gastonia, NC
- 1 Michael Robertson \$1,000
- 2 Jon Jon Newman \$650
- 3 Joshua Shultz \$400
- 4 Dustin Barkley \$280
- 5 Hank Powell \$150
- 5 Stevie McClinton \$150
- 7 Brian Ervin \$100
- 7 Jason Blackwell \$100
- 9 Chris Clary \$55
- 9 Chris Preacher \$55
- 9 Eric Stanton \$55
- 9 Greg Chapman \$55

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 Franciso Sanchez-Ruiz	 ESP	\$261,350
 Fedor Gorst	 RUS	\$253,672
 Joshua Filler	 GER	\$190,613
 Jayson Shaw	 SCO	\$185,257
 Shane Van Boening	 USA	\$140,597
 Wiktor Zielinski	 POL	\$134,892
 Albin Ouschan	 AUT	\$131,885
 Kelly Fisher	 GBR	\$119,174
 Roberto Gomez	 PHI	\$103,925
 Wojciech Szewczyk	 POL	\$102,273

## Upcoming Tournaments

### JANUARY

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.

#### Turning Stone Classic XXXVI

Jan 05 - Jan 08

Turning Stone Casino  
Verona, NY

#### Music City Classic

Jan 11 - Jan 15

JOB Billiards  
Madison, TN

#### New England 9-Ball Tour 2022 Season Finale

Jan 14 - Jan 15

Crow's Nest  
Plaistow, New Hampshire

#### Garden State Pool Tour Warriors Run Benefit

Jan 14 - Jan 15

Shooter's Family Billiards  
Wayne, NJ

#### Hohmann vs Reyes Exhibition Match

Jan 18 - Jan 18

Amsterdam Billiard Club  
New York, NY

#### 2023 Kamui Women's World 9-Ball Championship

Jan 19 - Jan 22

Harrah's Resort Atlantic City  
Atlantic City, NJ

#### Derby City Classic 2023

Jan 20 - Jan 28

Horseshoe Southern Indiana  
Elizabeth, IN

#### World Pool Championship 2023

Feb 01 - Feb 05

Targi Kielce Exhibition &  
Congress Centre  
Kielce, Poland

#### 6th Stella Artois Open

Feb 10 - Feb 14

Belgium

#### Skinny Bob's Nineball Classic

Feb 14 - Feb 20

Skinny Bob's Billiards  
Round Rock, Texas

#### Southwest Cactus Open

Feb 18 - Feb 19

Main Street Billiards  
Mesa, AZ

#### 2023 Alfa Las Vegas Open

Feb 22 - Feb 26

Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino  
Las Vegas, NV

#### Alfa Women's Las Vegas Open 2023

Feb 24 - Feb 27

Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino  
Las Vegas, NV

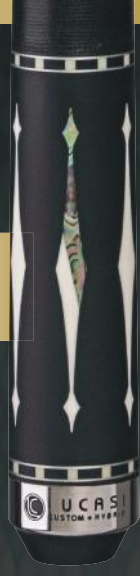
#### WPA World 10-Ball Championship 2023

Feb 28 - Mar 04


Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino  
Las Vegas, NV




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Thanks go out to Taka Wu from Matchroom Multi Sport for this month's "Mosconi Cup" themed photo. That winning caption was suggested by Jason Lu and Alan Longley on Facebook, as well as Patrick Johnson on the AzB Forums. Our choice for best caption is simply "Boop!"



Boop!

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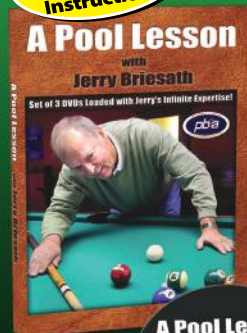
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