

# Billiard Buzz

an  publication

Issue September 2020

## THE PREDATOR PRO AM TOUR

*A look back, and forth at an iconic NYC pool tour*



Matthew Hartzman



Abel Rosario



Suzzie Wong



Chris Kelly



# BK RUSH

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# Billiards Buzz

Volume 5, Issue #47

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Courtesy Erwin Dionisio

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# FROM THE Head Rail

MIKE HOWERTON

**A**s the pool world slowly recovers from the pandemic, we felt it was about time that we got back to putting out issues of the Buzz for you. While we are starting to see tournament play resume across the country, the pool world is also seeing the permanent damage that six months in quarantine as caused. This issue sees cancellation or postponement announcements for over \$500,000 in prize money that players won't see in 2020. And when it seemed like we might be past the worst of it, in our feature story this issue we cover Tony and Gail Robles shuttering the Predator Pro Am Tour and relocating away from New York.

In less sobering news, the pool world came together and proved how well they support their own, as over \$10,000 was raised for US Open Champion Tommy Kennedy as he struggles with his health. In other positive news, Kelly Fisher is Hall of Fame bound (and she keeps winning WPBA Ghost Challenge events) & half of this year's Mosconi Cup rosters are now known.

It's all in this month's issue, as well as regularly scheduled contributions from Anthony Beeler, Jerry Briesath, Dr. Christopher Stankovich and Steve Lillis.

Since I like to keep readers informed here of goings on at AzBilliards, hopefully we will all see the latest and greatest iteration of the AzBilliards this month. We are very close to having it ready for everyone to see.

Until next time,  
Mike



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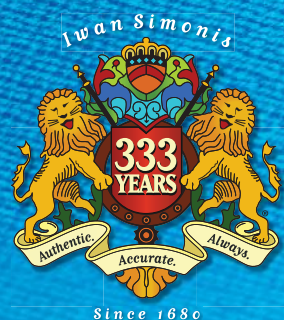
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# UNDERSTANDING THE TANGENT LINE



JERRY BRIESATH

First let's understand what the tangent line is. Let's use the engineers wording of the tangent line. The tangent line is a line 90 degrees to the line of the center of two balls at impact. Not let's say it so we can understand it.



**T**he tangent line is the line between the balls when they touch. Any shot you shoot with an angle, the cue ball always starts moving down the tangent line after it collides with the object ball. If there is any overspin on the cue ball when it arrives at the object ball, the cue ball will start out going down the tangent line and then the overspin will cause it to curve away from you and the tangent line, as in follow. If the cue ball has back spin on it when it arrives at the object ball, the opposite will happen, the cue ball will start out down the tangent line but then the backspin will cause it to curve towards you off the tangent line, as in draw. If you shoot either the follow or the draw with more power, the power will cause the cue ball to stay on the tan-

gent line longer before it curves away from or towards you.

Now let's talk about keeping the cue ball on the tangent line. Many amateur players think that the tangent line is where the cue ball goes on every shot. This is not true. The only way the cue ball can stay on the tangent line is if the cue ball arrives at the object ball sliding with no spin, as in a stop shot. Some people refer to these shots as stun shots, but I refer to them as "stop shots with an angle".

Probably the most important shot in pool is the stop shot, whether it's straight in or an angle shot. Place an object ball about 12 inches from the side pocket and straight out from the side pocket. Now place the cue ball

about 20 inches away from the object ball and instead of making it straight in, move the cue ball about 3 inches off line to the right or left and mark the balls. Now we know that the tangent line will be parallel with the long rail and the trick is to see if you can shoot a low slow stop shot so the cue ball only travels a few inches down the tangent line and then try to move the cue ball further and further down the table by shooting a little bit higher and a little harder to keep the cue ball on the tangent line.

This is a shot that must be mastered and is one of the most used shots by the professionals. If you have trouble — ask any instructor or top level player and they will shot you.

Good luck — Jerry

# “SEE” YOUR POOL SUCCESS

Dr. CHRISTOPHER STANKOVICH  
www.drstankovich.com

**Imagery is simply the creation of mental thoughts in your mind. Imagery can be used in a variety of ways, skill acquisition and mastery, increasing self-confidence, and even faster injury rehabilitation.**

**T**housands of elite-level athletes use imagery every day for athletic success, and in this month’s column I would like to show you how you can use imagery for success in pool.

First, it is important to say there is no *wrong* way to use imagery. If you can create an image in your mind, you are using imagery. When you stop to think about making your next shot and actually *see the ball roll toward the pocket and drop*, you are not only strengthening neural connections in your brain, but also eliminating your sensors to outside distracters (i.e. your opponent, the fans, etc). When your focus is entirely on the shot, it is impossible to also think about the “other things” around you that often get in the way and prevent you from playing your best.

For imagery to be most effective, consider the following tips for immediate success:

**Control & Vividness:** Try practicing taking *total control* over the shots you play in your mind – and always be sure to *make* your shots successfully while using imagery. Try closing your eyes as you rest at night and see yourself taking *total control* of the table and with each successful shot make the situation as *real as possible* in your mind. With a little practice, you will



be amazed at how quickly you will be able to imagine your local pool hall, the cue in your hands, and the sounds of the balls cracking off the break.

**Internal/External Imagery:** Internal imagery is as if you are looking at the pool table through your own eyes, using *your own* point of view. External imagery is as if you are *watching yourself* play through a camera sitting across the room. Both types of imagery can be effective, so try both and see which type best suits you. In my personal experience, internal imagery seems to work best for pool players,



but either type is far better than doing nothing at all.

**Use All Your Senses:** Imagery is more than just visualization. Think about what it feels like to hit the perfect draw shot (kinesthetic imagery), or feel the pool stick in your hand (tactile imagery), or even the smell of your local pool hall (olfactory imagery). Quite simply, the more you can incorporate all the sense the more real it will become in your mind – and the most confident you will be when playing in pressure situations (because in your mind you will have already been there a million times before.).

**Pre-shot and Pre-game Routines:** Use imagery the night before a tournament (pre-game routine) and briefly before each shot (pre-shot routine). Imagery will help you keep a good pace and block out unnecessary things (i.e. the crowd watching), while also helping with self-confidence.

Try using imagery and allow yourself time to get used to the experience. Remember, always keep your imagery positive and productive so that you can stay locked in and play your best.

*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)*

# MENTAL GAME IMPROVEMENT

ANTHONY BEELER

**For over 100 years it has been said that pool is a mental game. Grady Mathews told us long ago that the pool is at least 80% mental. Indeed, most of today's professional players embrace sound mental game strategies.**



**S**o if most players have already acknowledged the impact of the mental side of pool on our performance, why have many not taken the time to learn and improve this very important part of our game?

Pool has become a game of carbon fiber shafts and “\$20 chalk.” The billiards industry places huge emphasis on how the latest equipment will help your playing ability. But as we already know, most of these are false promises.

The game has seen huge technological advancement over the past hundred years – we can hit the cue ball with side-spin and less deflection than ever before, supposedly, modern day layered tips give players more control and the latest billiard balls are almost 100 percent round. But for some unexplained reason, players aren't much better than before. Despite all the innovation and hype about how much easier the game is, the latest cues, fast cloth and training aids, have not made much of an impact.

The fact remains, there is something else that we can do instead of buying the latest equipment. Practice time with goal setting will definitely help. Also, think about taking pool lessons

from a certified instructor who has the ability to train you on the finer points of the mental game. However, being given the physical tools alone is not enough to make us play at the professional level. We must embrace something else.

Developing the mental side of pocket billiards is the final frontier that remains unmastered to most students. One of the reasons we love pool is also one of the reasons we fail to get better. Lagging for break with no idea what to expect over the next hour or two



is one of the most alluring qualities of the game. Why is it, with the same pool stroke we are capable of winning the tournament one week and going two and out the next?

Pool has more ups and downs than most other sports and more time to think about them. But this can be changed. If we can embrace a solid mental approach to each match we will play a more consistent game of pool. Being able to control our emotions and get into the right state of mind before we stroke the cue ball is one key to playing well. We need to be disciplined and embrace a sound pre-shot routine to reduce inconsistency. This will also help players to remain focused on the "present moment".

So how do we improve control of our minds at the table? What we need is to relax when we are in between shots, and reach a state of intense focus when we are executing a shot. Through learning this process and

making it a sub-conscious action, we will get closer and closer to reaching our potential. If we are able to learn a structured pre-shot routine, which allows us to switch into a high state of focus during each shot, we can achieve the correct mindset for a quality game of pool.

Your new routine will positively reinforce your ability to analyze, visualize, and trust your abilities on each shot. Your practice routine on the table will involve seeing and hitting as many shots as possible, so that visualization becomes part of your instinct. Then on the table, all we have to think about is

what shot we want to hit without any technical thoughts. Negativity, such as fear of pocketing the nine, embarrassing yourself in front of your team and generally not playing up to your potential will, overtime, disappear as your new pre-shot routine becomes more automated.

There are no shortcuts or gimmicks to developing aptitude for the mental side of pool. However, enrolling at Virtual Billiard Academy and using it as a resource, along with applying the above mentioned principles into your game, you will be able to play a better game of pool than ever before.

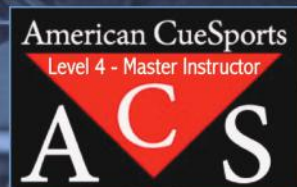
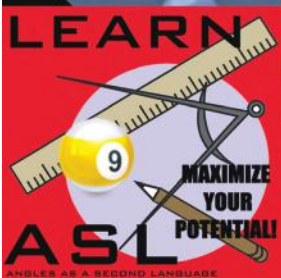
Anthony Beeler is the 2017 Pool Instructor of the Year and is a former BCAPL National 9-Ball Champion. He has numerous top 25 national finishes and is one of only 8 ACS Master Instructors in the world. He is the primary author of the *National Billiards Instructors Manual* and has also authored the book *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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# Gospel Trick Shot #9

## Joy

**History of the Trick Shot:** This is one of those oldies but goodies! A very simple 1, 2, 3 shot that I had seen BCA Hall of Fame players Nick Varner and Jimmy Caras use along with a few others.

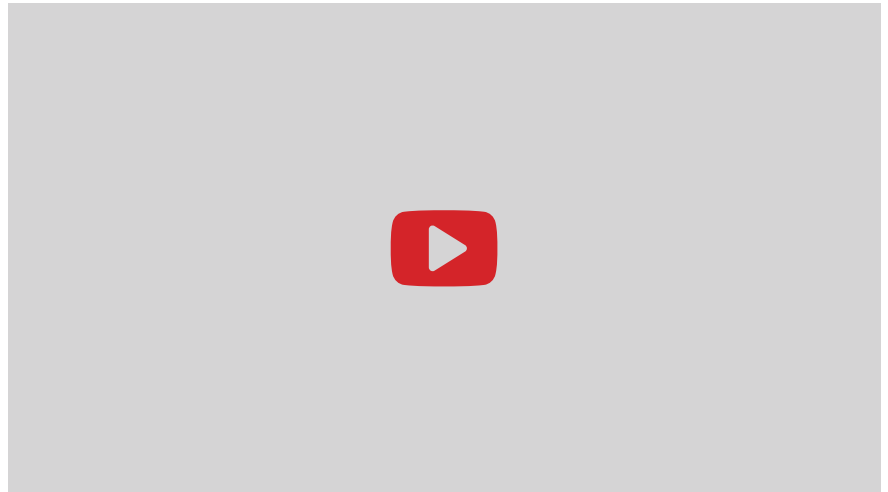
**GTS Name and Why:** After practicing the shot, the thought came to me that I can use the balls to represent the letters J, O, and Y spelling the word joy. I further thought about a Bible lesson I learned years before about putting Jesus first, others second, and yourself last if you want to have lasting JOY. Since I was an English professor, the letters in the right order form the acronym JOY.

**Scripture References in NIV Translation:** Nehemiah 8:10 and Psalm 73:26.

**Cue Ball Placement:** Place cue ball as shown but it can be adjusted to accommodate the shooter.

**Object Ball(s) Placement:** Place the one-ball frozen to the rail as shown. The two-ball is in front about one half ball width away from pocket A. The three-ball is set up for a combination into pocket D as shown allowing for directional throw.

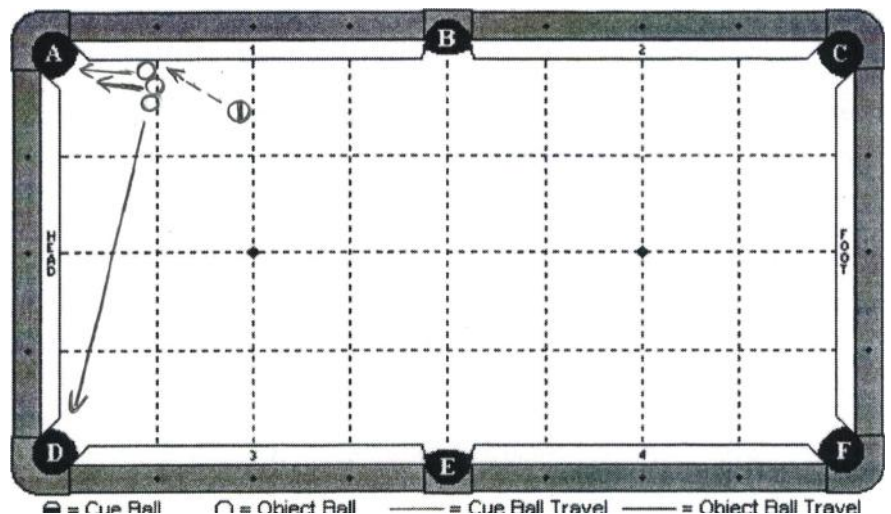
**Objective:** Hit the cue ball to pocket the one-ball with inside English hitting the rail and the ball at the same time. Ignore the other balls as if they were not there. All three balls will go in order with the one and two balls going in pocket A and the three-ball following across in pocket D.



**Special Notes:** This configuration can be adjusted by moving the one-ball slightly in either direction along side rail AB. The other balls will remain in approximately the same formation.

**Crowd Reactions Through the Years:** This is yet another shot that is so simple but yet profound. People see the shot and immediately understand

the principle. I usually share with the folks that years ago I had it backwards where I put myself first, others a distant second, and Jesus was not even on my radar screen. For years, I wondered why I had no joy! When I found Jesus, I found true joy. I challenge those in the audience that if they are not experiencing true joy, try putting Jesus first!



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# A Tradition of Excellence Comes to a Close

*The Robles' close down their Predator Pro Am Tour and look toward their future*

**After a dozen years of serving the pool community, preceded by even more years as a professional player in the New York Tri-State area, Tony Robles and his wife, Gail recently announced the end of their Predator Pro Am Tour and the dismantling of the National Pool League they had launched.**

**T**he announcement dropped into a pool community that was already devastated by a variety of competing concerns; players losing jobs, room owners unable to open their doors, and the central concern fueling the whole atmosphere from sea to shining sea - the fact and resultant consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

More striking than the announcement itself was the speed at which the tour went from thriving to devastated. In

January and February, turnout for the tour's first few stops gave Tony and Gail hopes that 2020 would be its best year, ever.

"The economy was booming," wrote Tony in the announcement that appeared on the tour's Web site, Facebook page and on the front page of AZBilliards. "Tours, leagues and lessons were in high demand."

"Then," he added, "March hit, and like everyone else, the rug was pulled out from under us."

"In February," said Gail, "we were talking about where our three-year-old son might be going to high school."

The 'jump' off of that moving rug will see the Robles family - Tony, Gail and the son, Antonio - land in Florida. With the possible exception of Antonio, it wasn't an easy decision for them. Gail had stunned her family when, within a year of graduating from college, in 2004, she moved lock, stock and barrel from her birth-and-growth city of Miami to New York. She "loved the

*Tony, Antonio and Gail*



2003 and 2004. In the years that followed, as the Predator Pro Am Tour took shape in the Tri-State area, Gail was flexing a few experienced player muscles of her own. She showed up in the AZBilliards database for the first time when she finished in the tie for 9<sup>th</sup> place at the 14<sup>th</sup> stop on the Predator Pro Am Tour's premiere season in 2008. The following year, she was part of a somewhat legendary "Kiss of Death" ladies team that won the BCA Nationals and was immortalized in a video series by NYC Grind's Jerry Tarantola (<https://gailglazebrook.wordpress.com/2010/03/30/poison-billiards-nycgrind-com-present-the-kiss-of-death-web-series/>). Two years later, she would chalk up her best recorded earnings year at the tables, finishing 'in the money' in nine events. She was runner-up at a stop on the Mezz Tour, 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Super Billiards Expo's Ladies Amateur event and 5<sup>th</sup> in the amateur event of the Empire State Championships in 2011. Together, they proved to be a formidable duo in a New York City landscape that was not without its competition in the pool tour arena.

"We'd been around in the New York area a lot longer," said Todd Fleitman, tour director of the Tri-State Tour.



Gail, Tony and Irene Kim

city; the energy, everything about it" and in the years that followed, as Gail moved into Tony's orbit, their destinies met at the crossroads of a new pool tour.

"When I first came on the scene," she said, "I didn't know anything about the pool world. Everything I learned, I learned from Tony."

Though they'd become acquainted in 2004, they didn't start their march toward being an item and later, husband and wife, until 2006. They married on October 12, 2013, a date that was selected because it coincided with the birth of his first son, Jonathan, from a previous relationship.

"I figured that as time went by and I got older," he said, "that I'd never forget my anniversary that way."

He'd be unlikely to forget though, because, among other things, he remembers what she was wearing the day he first laid eyes on her ("pink shirt and white pants," he recalled) and subsequently commented on what a "knockout" she was to the director of the league he was playing in. He asked to be introduced and was told to wait in line. Gail Glazebrook was with someone else at the time.

"In the beginning, I was working full time," she said, "and we didn't start

dating until 2006. The (Predator Pro Am) tour came about in some ways because Tony said he wanted to do it, but didn't have a lot of business experience."

Tony interrupted Gail's explanation to strongly clarify the point.

"There was absolutely no way that it would have happened without Gail," he said. "Without Gail, *none* of it would have happened."

Tony came to the 'tour' table with a lot of professional player experience behind him, including two appearances competing for the Mosconi Cup in



Tony and John Leyman



“Tony used to play on our tour when we held Open/Pro events and I was competing against him back in the early 90s.”

“In the 90s,” said John Leyman, one of Fleitman’s co-tour directors for years and now, Cue Sports International’s Director of Referees, “the Tri-State Tour was extremely popular, tons of events. Tony and Ginky (the late George Sansouci) were in the finals a lot of the time.”

While the Open/Pro events were part of the Tri-State Tour’s initial business plan, it was a hard one to sustain. It was becoming harder and harder to draw the funding necessary to draw Open/Pro players, looking for strong cash payouts that would make their participation worthwhile.

“We started having problems (related to) rooms having the money,” Leyman recalled, “and we started moving toward handicap events. When Tony came along, the Tri-State had discontinued its Open/Pro events and he was looking to initially fill the gap created by our inclination toward amateur events.”

“He had success at that,” Leyman added, “opened up that area, until the same thing happened to him.”

Almost from the start, the two tours coordinated their efforts. In addition to their initial inclinations toward attracting different participants, they gravitated toward different rooms and different time frames for the tournaments.

“We had moved away from two-day tournaments,” said Leyman. “We scaled down to 30 or so in one day, as he was doing 60 or so in two days. We also had different styles of rooms; Tony going into the bigger rooms, while we did our events in the smaller rooms like Shooter’s (in Wayne, NJ) and Clifton Billiards (in Clifton, NJ).”

To the best of their ability, the two tours also coordinated their schedules. In a pool world generally characterized by a *lack* of cooperation, and on occasion, accused of deliberate sabotage (one tour scheduling an event to deliberately compete against a rival tour in a given geographic area), this kind of cooperation was unheard of. One aspect of that cooperation allowed players to participate on both tours on any given weekend. Players would sign up for the Predator Pro Am Tour on Saturday, and if they were knocked out on Saturday, they’d travel to wherever the Tri-State Tour happened to be for a second shot at some cash.

“There were times when we stepped on each other’s toes, because there are only so many weekends and so many rooms,” said Leyman, “but we always managed to work together.”

“Tony and I used to get our heads together when there were storms coming,” said Fleitman. “Pool players are nuts. They’ll go out to a tournament with eight feet of snow on the ground.”

It’s hard to predict how the absence of the Predator Pro Am Tour will affect the Tri-State Tour. They initially catered to different audiences, but in the last few years, they were hosting basically the same rosters of amateur players. An upsurge in entrant numbers for the Tri-State seems inevitable.

“I’m not even thinking about that,” said Fleitman. “Our schedule is pretty full as it is and sometimes you need a break.”

“I just feel bad to see him go,” Fleitman added. “He was just generally a good guy (and) there are not a lot of lifers like us left in the sport.”

### An echo through generations

It is, of course, very premature to be writing anything resembling a eulogy. After all, Tony and Gail are not stepping off of the planet. They’ve reached a series of difficult decisions that will determine the arc of their lives going forward, and as friends and, in the pool community, business associates, everybody wishes them well. This is something of a ‘snapshot’ of the event and as the picture clarifies, we note the outpouring of support and encouragement from everyone who knew them and the even larger number of people who benefited from the work and care they put into the Predator Pro Am Tour over the past dozen years.

As former President Barack Obama noted recently at the Democratic National Convention, “what we do

echoes through generations” and on occasion, those echoes travel in opposite directions.

“I’ve known Tony since he was a kid,” said Danny Barouty, who became a member of the 14:1 (straight pool) Hall of Fame in the Unsung Hero category in 2015. “His father owned a little pool room in New York and he used to bring the kid to the Golden Cue in Queens.”

“He picked up the game very rapidly,” he added. “He was a student of the game and just very talented. Back in the 80s or so, he was the best player in New York, hands down.”

Speaking from his new residence, now in California, Barouty was monitoring the recently reported wildfires and awaiting information on whether he might have to evacuate. The fires were close – about ½ mile away, he said – as he thought back to his and Tony’s mutual respect and skill at the game of straight pool, the game that Robles identifies as his favorite.

“He was very methodical,” Barouty recalled. “Deliberate and very creative. He had all the ingredients that make a great player, and he was, and is.”

The two played in a straight pool league that operated out of Corner Billiards and later, Amsterdam Billiards in Manhattan. As part of the straight pool scene in New York, he inspired a lot of people.

“He kept me in the chair on a number of occasions,” Barouty recalled, “and he did the same to Johnny Archer, too. He was capable, at any time, against any one.”

Michael Yednak came to New York from Arizona in the first year of the new century. He came to be a jazz musician (saxophone) and composer. Shortly after his arrival, he began to actually play in local clubs and eventually create a jazz quartet (the Michael Yednak Quartet) that didn’t make him a lot of money, but helped to make a name for himself. A personal tragedy related to his jazz scene activities put

him in a frame of mind that eroded his musical ambitions and found him one day signing on to a pool tournament at Brownstone Billiards in Brooklyn. He finished in second place, re-igniting a previously-held interest in the sport.

Becoming a part of the NYC pool scene, Yednak met both George “Ginky” Sansouci and Tony Robles at more or less the same time at Amsterdam Billiards. “Ginky” became a mentor, and, with Yednak still suffering from the aftermath of the personal tragedy, a friend that Yednak desperately needed at the time. He opted, though, to take lessons first from Robles, informing Ginky that he’d sign up to learn from him later, after Robles worked on his fundamentals. He learned from them both, eventually, and at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual George “Ginky” Memorial Tournament, run by the Predator Pro Am, Tri-State and Mezz Tours in the NYC area, Yednak took great pride in winning the amateur event and in so doing, honoring his mentor.

“The thing about Tony is that he’s a good teacher, and mentor, especially for the fundamentals,” Yednak said recently. “He’s good at finding your weakness and working on it.”

“Ginky looked up to him, too,” he added. “Tony’s just one of the guys you want to be like in the pool scene. Everyone thinks highly of him. He has a well-deserved, good reputation and there’ll be a huge hole with him not in the New York area. It’s a huge loss to the pool community, especially the straight pool community because he’s been so much a part of why straight pool is so big in New York City.”

In fact, Tony’s a little concerned about maintaining his skills at that game, too, as he, Gail and Antonio plan their move to Florida, as soon as feasibly possible, perhaps by the end of this year.

Ara Shaw, Antonio and Tony



## Predator Pro Am Tour

“Yeah, I’m a little worried about that,” he said. “No one really plays it in Florida. I’ll have to be thinking of ways to get people interested in the game down there.”

“Rocket” Rodney Morris, a friend of Tony’s since the late 90s, and a teammate on the 2003 and 2004 Mosconi Cup teams, wasn’t surprised at the demise of the tour or Tony’s plans to move to Florida. He expects him to land on his feet and pick up something related to pool, in a hurry.

“New York’s like on an indefinite hold,” said the Rocket from his home in Wyoming. “You can’t just be sitting around and waiting for something to happen. You’re just wasting a lot of time. Tony’s decision seems like the right one.”

“The people up there are going to be sad, sure,” he added, “but it was basically out of everyone’s control. It’s moving on to new things; adapting to overcome.”

Their history dates back to the days when the Rocket was fresh off the boat (or plane, as it were) from Hawaii in the late 90s. Rocket was based out of Tom’s River in NJ and would play out of Castle Billiards, near the Meadowlands. The Rocket and the Silent Assassin initially met up in some exhibition matches for promotional purposes and ended up as close friends.

“I was just coming on to the scene,” said Morris, “and we played a lot!! We became really close, like brothers, and played against each other all the time.”

They became so closely associated with each other, that many people on site for their matches would often mistake them for each other. Fans would shout out “Hey, Tony” to Rodney, and “Hey, Rodney” to Tony.

“So we’d go along with that,” said Morris. “Call each other by each other’s name. I’d holler out “Hey, Rod-



Tony and Ada Lio

ney” to him and he’d holler back “Hey, Tony” to me.”

That personal relationship puts Morris in a position where he empathizes with the choices Robles is making. He can also be fairly certain about what’s likely to happen next.

“I don’t foresee him not picking things up again in Florida,” said Morris. “His name and honor are impeccable; like any pool room is only as good as its owner. He’s a great ambassador of the game and whatever he puts his name to, he’ll do it.”

***“WE ARE WHAT WE REPEATEDLY DO. EXCELLENCE, THEREFORE, IS NOT AN ACT, BUT A HABIT.”***

***Aristotle***

Ada Lio, who’s been climbing the dual ladders of the Tri-State and Predator Pro Am Tour for quite a while now was both the Predator Pro Am Tour’s #3 female and #3 competitor in the C+ ranking level in 2018 and just missed being the tour’s Player of the Year that

year. She’s currently at #8 among ladies on the Tri-State Tour and #9 on their C+ list, based on 9 appearances. She was a member of Tony’s local NAPL team and as her game has improved over the years has been able to play on WPBA events. Her ‘take’ on the legacy of the Robles and the Predator Pro Am Tour is about their professional ‘habits.’

“It’s about their professionalism in the conduct of amateur tournaments,” she said. “They were the only people that put class into tournament play with people dressing up, looking their best.”

She went on to note that with various peripheral events to the actual tournaments, like award ceremonies, the Predator Pro Am Tour and the Robles made even the lowest-ranked amateur players feel as though they could, at some point, play at a professional level.

“He made sure that the amateurs felt welcome,” she said, “and gave them the experience of what it’s like in a professional tournament.”

“He led by example and he was just the nicest guy, too,” she added. “I hated straight pool when I came on the scene, couldn’t stand the game, but he spent time giving me lessons. It’s a loss to the community at large that he’s leaving.”

In a contribution to the AZBilliards’ Forums, Stu Mattana (sjm) made note of the open letter that Tony and Gail posted to the Predator Pro Am Web site and on their Facebook page that echoed Lio’s thoughts.

“It was indeed, a superb letter from two very classy people,” he wrote, “one of genuine gratitude for all who helped them and all who participated in the journey. Their heartfelt comments and genuine introspection are admirable at a moment that is surely troubling.”

“Tony and Gail,” he added in conclusion, “are, quite simply, irreplaceable members of the NY City pool scene . . . wishing them well.”

Nobody would agree more than Manny Stamatakis, owner of Steinway Billiards in Queens, which, in consort with Amsterdam Billiards, Cue Bar and Raxx Billiards, have been a part of the tour since its inception and have hosted over half of all of the stops in the tour’s history, including the annual George “Ginky” Sansouci Memorial, which began in 2011, about three

months after “Ginky” passed away. After four years at Amsterdam Billiards, the event has been held at Steinway, since 2015.

“He did bring professionalism, especially the way the tournaments were run,” said Stamatakis. “I don’t think anybody else is going to accomplish what he and Gail did, behind the scenes at these tournaments.”

According to Stamatakis, the professionalism extended beyond the pool tables and the logistics of the tournaments. It was, too, about people, players wanting to be there.

“People would look forward to these stops,” he said. “It wasn’t just about the shooting pool, it was about hanging out and seeing friends, too.”

The incorporation of the varied aspects of running a pool tournament was born of a long-held belief that Tony acquired from a friend.

“From East Hampton,” he said of this friend. “He graduated from Wharton and told me that whenever you start a new business, you have to create an experience for people.”

Much of what he learned from that piece of advice had nothing to do with the game of pool.

“I made it my business to memorize people’s name,” he went on to explain.

“To treat them like human beings, at the same level. People loved us for that. A lot of the time when they’d get knocked out of a tournament, they’d just stick around to hang out and they became like an extension of our family.”

“Ours was a business that offered a quality product,” said Gail. “People knew that they were going to enjoy themselves and experience a high level of competition and it seemed to work.

“When people would ask us,” she added, “we would tell them we had three goals in mind – to make sure our business owners were happy; that was room owners and sponsors, to make sure the players were happy and that we were happy. We tried to eliminate the things that didn’t make us happy.”

And now, bag and baggage, they’ll move on to new ventures, as yet to be determined. It remains to be seen what will happen with some of the ventures that they launched and now, leave behind. There is some thought that Predator may launch a new tour in the NYC area and look to keep events like the annual Empire State Championships going. The Tri-State and Mezz Tours will likely pick up the reins of the “Ginky” Memorial. Tony will wait and see what local doctor Michael Fedak will do with the annual New York City 8-Ball Championships, but says if Dr. Fedak continues to support and organize the event and asks him to come back to the city for it, it’s something that he’ll consider. Tony and Gail do, however, have some expectations of what lies ahead for them on their new horizons.

“One thing that I’m looking forward to” said Tony, “is playing in as many events as I can.”

“And I,” said Gail, “am looking forward to watching him play in an event that he doesn’t have anything to do with but play.”



Tony, Thorsten Hohmann, Manny Stamatakis and John Leyman

# To the Players, Sponsors, Room Owners & Spectators

Never in our wildest dreams did we see 2020 ending up the way it has. January and February tournament turnouts brought big numbers and we had high hopes for the 2020 season being the best season yet. The economy was booming and tours, leagues & lessons were in high demand. Then March hit and like everyone else, the rug was pulled out from under us.

First and foremost, **we truly hope you and your loved ones have weathered these difficult times as best as possible.** Like so many, we have lost players, teammates, captains, mentors, friends, and even family. It's been a devastating turn of events.

With our health in tack, we count ourselves blessed despite the trying business times.

The pandemic has affected all of us in a variety of ways, and the Predator Pro/Am Tour is no exception. Now six months without a tournament and no real end in sight, Gail and I have asked ourselves some tough questions.

**Will the tour come back this year at all?** Will players feel safe playing in large participation events any time soon? Will 'WE' feel safe hosting large, indoor events? When will NYC even open pool rooms again, let alone to full capacity?

**Will we ever be the way we were before?**

After speaking with several local room owners and industry leaders, we feel **the timeline for being "back to normal" is years long and filled with uncertainty.**

And so, **it is with a very heavy heart that Gail & I have decided to no longer run the Predator Pro/Am Tour.** This was an incredibly hard decision for us to make. **We love our tour.** We love the players, the room owners and

sponsors, the atmosphere and the joy we felt seeing our contribution to the pool world. **We mourn the loss every day.**

Many tears and hard conversations led to this decision and we know it won't be easy for some to accept, but ethically, we don't feel comfortable hosting the large events we're known to run given the health risks. Economically, pool rooms cannot afford to host our events in lieu of recovering their own financial losses. Financially, we cannot afford to wait for New York to recover. We have begun the process of selling our home and will be moving out of state by year's end.

We have a lot of people to thank for the 12+ years we had the tour so bear with us.

**Predator Cues.** Thank you for trusting us since day one. Representing your brand helped propel our tour to one of the best in the country. Players from all over the world came to play in our events because you believed in us and they believed in you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being the backbone of all we do on the tour.

**Ozone Billiards, Blatt Billiards, The Devito Team, Pool on the Net, Billiard Press, & Delta-13.** Thank you for helping us grow and for supporting the tour all these years. You have

been an integral part in the success of our events.

**Our room owners.** *Amsterdam Billiards, Cue Bar, Gotham City Billiards, Raxx Pool Room, The Spot, Steinway Billiards.* And past rooms: *Boardwalk Billiards, BQE, Castle, Carom Café, Comet, Corner Pocket Café, Cue Nine, Eastside Billiards, Master Billiards, Mr. Cue, Park Slope, Rack n Roll, Sandcastle, Snookers, and Spin City.*

Thank you for hosting us and the players and helping grow the sport in our area. Thank you for sacrificing tables so players could compete comfortably. Thank you for offering table time so players could practice before matches. Thank you for funding these tournaments. Thank you to your staff for taking such good care of us and the players during long tournament days. Thank you for caring. **Amsterdam Billiards, Cue Bar, Steinway Billiards & Raxx Pool Room;** thank you for being with us from the beginning and hosting over half of all the events in the tour's history. We are eternally grateful for your belief in us and your generosity over the years.

To those that helped behind the scenes. **William Finnegan,** who started the tour with us back in 2008. You are, and always will be, an icon in the history of NYC pool tournaments. **Irene Kim,** who always kept us in line and organized from the day

Tony and Gail Robles



she came on board. **Julie Ha, Tommy Schreiber, Marisol Palacios, Ambi Estevez, Henry Chan, Mandy Wu, and Dan Faraguna**; thank you for all your help running the charts and assisting wherever you could to make the tour such a great success. **Rob Omen**, thank you for maintaining and revamping our website and charts over the years. **Erwin Dionisio**, who elevated the social reach of the tour by leaps and bounds with his beautiful photography work. Thank you. **Billiards Digest, AZ Billiards and all the media outlets**; thank you for advertising and reporting on all our events. **Skip Maloney**, you're one of a kind. And thank you to **Upstate Al, Joey & Chris Leon** for the countless hours of live-streaming and advertising you've done over the years. You truly are a blessing for the pool community.

To our fellow tours. **The Tri-State Tour, Mezz Tour, Ride the 9 & New**

**England 9-ball Series**. We wish you all the best and hope you continue promoting and supporting the sport in this area. Your work and dedication will always be revered by us. **John Leyman**, collaborating with you on so many different events was a true pleasure. Thank you.

Last, and perhaps the most important, **THE PLAYERS!** Your commitment to excel in the sport, your determination to achieve goals like winning a tour stop, winning Player of the Year, and for some, just having the guts to step up and play the strong players on the tour are qualities we have treasured witnessing. We cannot tell you the number of times we have looked over a packed room at one of our events and marveled at you. The friends, great conversations, life lessons, and learning to love each of you has brought us so much happiness. It is overwhelming and adds to the sadness of this decision. **We will miss**

**seeing you so often** and hope to see you at other competitions along the way.

Also, we recognize that most players paid a \$40 annual membership expecting a full 2020 season. While no one could have predicted the events that unfolded, we still wanted to offer a partial refund of these fees. Any player that paid the \$40 registration, we are offering a \$20 refund of dues. Please email [tonyroblesnyc@gmail.com](mailto:tonyroblesnyc@gmail.com) with your name and address and we will mail you a refund check.

We sincerely **thank everyone for the many memories we have had with our Predator Pro/Am Tour family**. We will miss you all very much and wish nothing but the best for yourselves, your families and your future pool goals.

With love and gratitude,  
Tony & Gail Robles

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# BERGMAN & GORST

## CONFIRMED FOR PARTYPOKER MOSCONI CUP

**Justin Bergman and Fedor Gorst will represent Team USA and Team Europe respectively at this December's partypoker Mosconi Cup as the top player on each team's current rankings.**

**D**ue to the Covid-19 pandemic, no ranking events have been staged since the Diamond Open in March. However, Matchroom Pool and team captains Jeremy Jones and Alex Lely wished to respect the achievements of players who had played the ranking events which had taken place. Therefore, it was agreed that the top player from each the USA and European ranking would auto-

matically qualify to play in the partypoker Mosconi Cup with the remaining four players selected as captain's wildcards.

That means a fifth appearance on Team USA for Bergman, who was part of last year's winning team. For Europe, 20-year-old World Champion Fedor Gorst will make his debut on Lely's team.

"I was very happy when I got the call from Alex," said Gorst. "I was thinking that I deserved to be on the team this year, not only because I won the World title but because I feel that I have progressed as well.

"It is every player's dream to be a part of the partypoker Mosconi Cup. Last year I tried very hard to be on the team and played all the qualification events. I missed one Euro Tour because I had a virus and I lost the very last match against Alex Kazakis to be on the team.

"I really don't know what it is like to play the partypoker Mosconi Cup. I am sure the pressure is very big because of the crowd and the atmosphere and the importance of the tournament. I have good coaches around me and I will practice hard and be prepared.

"I have had a few practice sessions with Alex already, through Skype. I have also spoken to [former European and American coach] Johan Ruijsink about it, so I am starting my preparation with four months to go."

European Captain Lely added: "I am happy to have Fedor on board. He is young, he is more than a talent; he is now a proven champion. He is a smart guy, he is a sociable guy, and he is very coachable, so for myself and [vice-captain] Karl Boyes it is perfect to have him on the team.

"As a person, and how he has grown as a player, he has learned to be open



Justin Bergman

mind and has competed at a high level in big tournaments since he was a junior. He always wants to play as well as the game will allow and last year sometimes didn't get the opportunities."

Jones and vice-captain Joey Gray will now work with a group of seven players, including Bergman, to select the final four players on the team. That will include video coaching sessions and limited-contact sessions with Jones and Gray, restricted to no more than two players each time. That wider group features Shane van Boening, Skyler Woodward, Billy Thorpe, Tyler Styer, Chris Robinson and Corey Deuel, and Jones will begin selecting his first wildcards later this month.

"It will be one-on-one training, with three guys coming in this month and four more in September. We have the five players from last year, of course Justin is already on the team, and then we add Corey Deuel and Chris Robinson. Corey is full of experience and was on a winning team just two years ago, and Chris has been trending in the right direction, and both were right up there on the rankings."

The partypoker Mosconi Cup will take place at Alexandra Palace, London, this December 1-4, live on Sky Sports and DAZN.

Matchroom Pool are still hopeful and determined the partypoker Mosconi Cup will take place this year and are in constant detailed discussions with the relevant organisations and personnel to stay up to date. Our highest priority is the safety of everyone connected with the event however we are working hard to explore every avenue to making this work and will continue to do so, if it is possible.

Follow Matchroom Pool on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. For all the latest event news please visit [www.mosconicup.com](http://www.mosconicup.com).



Fedor Gorst

for input and feedback. He is a stand-up guy and he is really mature for his age, on and off the table. I will always check and see with the players how receptive they are, but with Fedor he is always firing away many questions, he is so hungry for knowledge."

Lely and Boyes will now choose four wildcards to join the team, and those players will be announced over the coming weeks. However, with pool tournaments on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Lely's ability to assess the players is restricted.

"It is very difficult because we are limited to see the players in action, although many of the top players in Europe are entering these challenges online," he said.

"I have tried to keep in contact with some of the usual players you think

about when you think about Team Europe, but it is not the perfect scenario right now. I would rather see them in action in the States, in Asia, in Europe, and get a real feel for where their form is. But we will try and keep as good a contact with the players as we can."

Team USA captain Jones was pleased to see Bergman as his side's automatic qualifier and believes the Illinois man is a perfect fit for the roster.

"Bergman is one hell of a player, many have considered him one of the top three in the US for some time," said Jones. "It was good for me and good for Joey that he was at the top of the rankings, it worked out a good deal for USA.

"Some might say he is a quiet guy, but when he speaks it's exactly what needs to be said. He has an incredible

# TWO-TIME MVP WOODWARD PICKED FOR TEAM USA

Two-time partypoker Mosconi Cup MVP Skyler Woodward has been selected by captain Jeremy Jones to represent Team USA for a sixth consecutive time at this year's event.

**W**oodward made the winning 9-ball at Mandalay Bay Resort, Las Vegas last November as USA repeated their Mosconi Cup victory of twelve months earlier, and the Kentucky Kid achieved a repeat of his own, taking home the MVP trophy for a second successive year.

He now joins automatic qualifier Justin Bergman on the team for Alexandra Palace this December, with Jones to name three further wildcard picks before the end of September.

"He has been a winner for a long time, he is winning on bigger stages and trending in a great direction," said Jones. "I'm also leaning on him to bring a bit of a leadership role with his training and his personality.

"We expected him to be a part of the team. Last year, he had talked about

playing Joshua Filler all week and we put him in that spot for the final day. I was on several teams playing and we had a lot of good victories, but a lot of close ones. I was in some situations where it was almost hard to find a player who was looking for that moment sometimes, because it is a huge moment."

Woodward himself said: "It is an unbelievable feeling to make the Mosconi Cup. It is the greatest pool event of the year and just to make the team and represent my country is an amazing feeling.

"I like the environment and the crowd; it pumps me up and makes me want to play my best and make sure I am in top form.

"The first win, two years ago in London, it felt like the best win of my life. Winning it twice was sweet, but now if we can win it three times would be great. I have played five times and lost the first three and you wonder if we will ever win again, so winning that first one was the best feeling."

Matchroom Pool are still hopeful and determined the partypoker Mosconi Cup will take place this year and are in constant detailed discussions with the relevant organisations and personnel to stay up to date. Our highest priority is the safety of everyone connected with the event however we are working hard to explore every avenue to making this work and will continue to do so, if it is possible.

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# SHAW JOINS TEAM EUROPE

**Jayson Shaw will make his fifth consecutive appearance on Team Europe at this year's partypoker Mosconi Cup after being selected as captain Alex Lely's first wildcard pick for pool's showcase event, which will take place at Alexandra Palace, London, this December 1-4, live on Sky Sports and DAZN.**

Shaw joins automatic qualifier Fedor Gorst on the team, with Lely and vice-captain Karl Boyes to select three further wildcards over the coming weeks.

Former US Open champion Shaw made his partypoker Mosconi Cup debut in 2016 and made the winning 9-ball in front of a raucous Ally Pally crowd that year. Shaw was again a key contributor as Europe retained the Cup in 2017 and has become a senior member of the team despite defeats to Team USA in 2018 and 2019.

"I am delighted to be back on the team," said Shaw during his unveiling, which was broadcast on Matchroom Pool's YouTube channel and social media pages.

"It is what everybody plays for all season, to try and play in the Mosconi Cup and I feel honoured to be back on the team. I am praying now I am in that everything goes smoothly, and we can get back to a bit of normality for everyone. Then we can do what we do best, which is playing pool, and get out there and enjoy it.

"This will be my fifth time, so I have a lot of experience in the team. I know what is going on, I know how to try and push the players up and make sure everybody is ok. I think this year with the four wildcards it is going to be a little bit different for Team Europe. Not saying we weren't strong in the last couple of years, but I think with the wildcard picks for the captains it is going to be much stronger than it has been.

"Since the lockdown, I let it go for the first couple of months, but the last month and a half I have been really finding it difficult. Finding stuff to do all of the time is hard work but I'm trying to play as much golf as I can just to keep that competitive style going. I'm practicing at home every night but I need something else for that feeling of competing in something."

"He shoots amazingly good pool, he is a team player, he is a champion, and in particular he is a player who is growing into a leadership role," added captain Lely. "With the years, he is an experienced Mosconi Cup player and with that experience, away from the table he will have a big role to play as well to carry the team and to carry the ambience in the team."

Team USA captain Jeremy Jones will announce the second player to join his roster next week.

Matchroom Pool are still hopeful and determined the partypoker Mosconi Cup will take place this year and are in constant detailed discussions with the relevant organisations and personnel to stay up to date. Our highest priority is the safety of everyone connected with the event however we are working hard to explore every avenue to making this work and will continue to do so, if it is possible.

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# World Champion

# Kelly Fisher

## Elected to Billiard Congress of America Hall of Fame

**Superior, Colo., July, 13, 2020 – The Billiard Congress of America (BCA) Hall of Fame will welcome the most dominant woman player of the last 15 years to the class of 2020.**

**T**he United States Billiard Media Association (USBMA) today announced that England's Kelly Fisher has earned induction into the sport's most prestigious club.

Fisher, 41, who in her first year of eligibility in 2019 was edged out by Canadian Alex Pagulayan in a special run-off ballot, coasted to election in 2020. Fisher will enter the Greatest Players wing of the BCA Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony is tentatively scheduled for Friday, Oct. 30, at the Norfolk Sheraton Waterside in Norfolk, Va., although travel restrictions and health concerns may force the ceremony to be held in 2021.

Born in West Yorkshire, England, Fisher got her start in cue sports playing ladies professional snooker, much like fellow BCA Hall of Famers Allison Fisher (no relation) and Karen Corr. She captured five world titles be-



**“ AS I GOT OLDER, THE THOUGHT OF GETTING INTO THE HALL OF FAME BECAME MORE MEANINGFUL. ”**

tween 1998 and 2003. In 2004, Fisher moved to the U.S. to join the Women’s Professional Billiard Association Classic Tour. Her aggressive style was well-suited to American 9-ball, and Fisher quickly ascended to the WPBA top-10 rankings. Fisher captured her first WPBA title in 2005 and won five more events over the next two years. In 2008, Fisher reached the No. 1 ranking, winning three more WPBA titles over the next two years. She captured her first World Pool-Billiard Association (WPA) world title in 2011, when she won the World 10-Ball Championship. A year later, Fisher claimed the World 9-Ball Championship. A regular in large tournaments in Asia, Fisher won the China Open in 2012 and the Amway Cup in 2013. She also earned four International Tournament of Champions titles, winning in 2009, 2010, 2013 and 2014.

Shortly after returning to the United Kingdom in 2014, Fisher was forced to undergo heart surgery. A year later she underwent a double mastectomy. Fisher’s recoveries from the surgeries was astonishing, as she managed to win women’s pro events in 2016, 2017 and 2018. In 2019, Fisher completed her amazing comeback by winning the Women’s World 9-Ball Championship for the second time.

“I’m chuffed to bits,” Fisher exclaimed from the home in Dumfries, Scotland, when informed of her election into the BCA Hall of Fame. “It is the ultimate reward. You don’t think about it while playing in competition, but it becomes a dream along the way. I remember seeing players get into the Hall of Fame. They’d been playing for many years and won so many titles. I wondered whether I could get to that level. As I got older, the thought of

getting into the Hall of Fame become more meaningful.”

Reflecting, Fisher recalled the career highlights that paved the way for her eventual election.

“I landed in the U.S. in 2004,” she said. “My first win, San Diego in 2005, was very memorable. And then the U.S. Open, followed, of course, by my first two world titles. But winning the World 9-Ball Championship last year meant so much to me. It came out of the blue. I knew I was still capable, but I was over 40 and the quality of play is so high. I remember being very nervous before the final and that surprised me. I had been in many finals, but at that stage you just don’t know how many more chances you’re going to have.”

Despite being joined on the 2020 ballot by men’s stars Dennis Orcullo, Thorsten Hohman (both in their first year of eligibility), Niels Feijen and Corey Deuel, Fisher earned election by a comfortable margin. She was named on 70 percent of the ballots. Orcullo and Hohmann were both named on more than 50 percent of the ballots, receiving 23 votes from the 46 completed ballots. Deuel and Feijen were both named on more than 20 percent of the ballots. Shannon Daulton, Jer-

emy Jones, Stefano Pellinga, John Schmidt, Vivial Villarreal and Charlie Williams completed the 2020 ballot.

Voting for the 2020 BCA Hall of Fame was conducted by the USBMA Hall of Fame Board, which consists of USBMA members, elected At-Large members and living members of the Hall of Fame. To be eligible for consideration in the Greatest Players category, a player a) must be 40 years old by Jan. 1 of the year of their inclusion on the ballot; b) must have a professional playing career of at least 10 years; and c) must have recorded significant achievements in U.S.-based and international events recognized by the BCA.

**ABOUT UNITED STATES BILLIARD MEDIA ASSOCIATION**

Founded in 2007, the United States Billiard Media Association (USBMA) is a non-profit association dedicated to elevating the visibility and status of billiards in the media at large. The USBMA consists of professional print, radio, TV, public relations and Internet media persons who cover cue sports. One of the association’s main functions is electing of billiard media members to the Billiard Congress of America’s Hall of Fame Board for the purpose of nominating and electing players and notable figures to the Billiard Congress of America Hall of Fame.

**ABOUT BILLIARD CONGRESS OF AMERICA**

Founded in 1948, the Billiard Congress of America is a non-profit trade organization dedicated to growing a united, prosperous and highly regarded billiard industry through Billiard Congress of America leadership. The Billiard Congress of America seeks to enhance the success of its members and promote the game of billiards through educational, marketing and promotional efforts, annual industry trade shows and other programs designed to encourage billiards as a lifestyle and make pool everybody’s game. For more information, visit [bca-pool.com](http://bca-pool.com) or call 303.243.5070.

## **Fisher Comes From The Loss Side To Win Second WPBA Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenge**

**After a slow start in which she won two winners' side matches and was then moved to the loss side by Jeannie Seaver, UK's Kelly Fisher came back and won five in a row for a shot at Chinese Taipei's Wei Tzu Chien, waiting for her in the hot seat.**

**F**isher took full advantage of the opportunity she'd created for herself and won her second straight WPBA Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenge, held from June 1-6, primarily in the US, but also from the UK (Kelly), Norway (Line Kjorsvik) and Chinese Taipei (Wei Tzu-Chien).

In addition to winning the event for the second time, Fisher also had the

highest individual score in both events (120). Each rack, if run from the break, can represent either 10 or 15 points, depending on whether you take BIH after the break (10) or you don't (15). If you fail to run the rack, you score the number of balls you did pocket in that rack. In this second event, the field of 16 averaged 64.43 points per rack (3,737 total points over 29 matches

featuring 58 players). Though she'd fail to score above 90 points in her first two matches (85, 81) Fisher would finish the event (eight matches, 83 racks) with an average of 94.6 per match, which was achieved, in part, by scoring over 100 in two of her last three matches and 99 in a fourth.

Fisher seemed to be headed in the wrong scoring direction at the outset,



*Kelly Fisher*

as she defeated Kristie Bacon 85-46 in the opening round and was then defeated by Jeannie Seaver 87-81. Wei Tzu-Chien moved into the hot seat match with a 93-59 win over Seaver and was met by Webb, who'd sent Little to the loss side 88-28. In one of only three matches (Fisher scored the other two) that saw either competitor score over 100 points, Chien claimed the hot seat over Webb 107-74.

Over on the loss side, Seaver ran into Line Kjorsvik, who'd been sent to the loss side by Jennifer Barretta in a 74-73 nail biter in the opening round and was working on a three-match, loss-side winning streak that saw her send Dawn Hopkins (97-76), Ashley Burrows (73-63) and Kristie Bacon (61-45) home; check that, they were already home. It was Little who had the misfortune of running into Fisher, working on her (eventual) five-match, loss-side streak, having eliminated Kia Sidbury 86-36, and in a rematch featuring the winner and runner-up of the first event's hot seat and finals, Jennifer Barretta 93-62.

Seaver advanced into the quarterfinals with a 70-66 win over Kjorsvik. Fisher joined her after eliminating Little 99-34. Seaver ended up as the unfortunate competitor on the other side of the event's highest score (120-81) in those quarterfinals.

Fisher slipped a little in the semifinals that followed. Her loss side average dropped from 99.5 down to 95.6 when she defeated Webb 80-57 in those semifinals. Though she'd not maintained her high average, she'd prevailed for a chance to win it all.

"I feel good," said Fisher at the conclusion of her match against Webb. "I

**“ I HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE IN THE LAST COUPLE OF MATCHES, BUT SO IT GOES; A COUPLE OF AWKWARD LAYOUTS, A COUPLE OF UNFORCED ERRORS AND A COUPLE OF SILLY ERRORS.**

**– Kelly Fisher ”**

had a little trouble in the last couple of matches, but so it goes; a couple of awkward layouts, a couple of unforced errors and a couple of silly errors.

Fisher's reputation, as represented by her nickname (Kwikfire), was enhanced by her work in the finals. In the extended race to 13 racks, she was done, with a score of 113, as Tzu-Chien was preparing to break her 9th rack, having already scored 68 points. The dynamic of this created something of a nail-biter for Fisher, as she watched Tzu-Chien draw closer in the final racks. Those watching the stream watched Fisher, watching Tzu-Chien.

Tzu-Chien took ball-in-hand at the start of rack #9 and ran the table to bring her score to 78; 35 points away from Fisher with four racks to go and needing to score an average of 9 points per remaining rack to defeat Fisher. Tzu-Chien snookered herself shooting at the 6-ball in rack #10, and missed the shot, giving her 83 points total; 30 points away with three racks to go. If she were to use the ball-in-hand option for the remaining three racks and assuming a successful runout of each of them, she'd tie Fisher at 113 and the event would move to a rack-by-rack tie breaker.

Tzu-Chien took BIH in the 11th rack, but missed a shot after dropping four. Now at 87 points, Tzu-Chien would need to run the final two racks without BIH. Running one rack with and

one rack without BIH would net her 112 points, one shy of a tie.

She broke the 12th rack and as it was her only option, she began her run without BIH. With Fisher watching anxiously, she ran to the 9-ball and then missed it. She scored only eight points, for a total of 95, which put the win out of reach. She broke the 13th rack anyway, dropped a single ball and missed the next one to finish the match.

For the second time, Fisher had nothing but praise for the WPBA and the individuals who organized and coordinated this and the previous ghost challenge events.

"I know it's a tough schedule for you," Fisher told event organizer Angela Janic and fellow stream commentator, Dawn Hopkins at the conclusion of the week-long event. "We really do appreciate all your hard work. It allows us to play, to do what we enjoy doing, and what we do for a living. Without you guys we couldn't do that, so we really do appreciate it."

Fisher and runner-up Wei Tzu-Chien are long-time opponents and friends and noting this friend's frustration at the end of the match, Fisher suggested to the woman she knows as "Wei-Wei" to not say what she was thinking.

"I can't speak English, right now," said Tzu-Chien. "There is an appropriate Chinese term for what just happened."

"Aiyee ya!," she added.

**“ I CAN'T SPEAK ENGLISH, RIGHT NOW. THERE IS AN APPROPRIATE CHINESE TERM FOR WHAT JUST HAPPENED - AIYEE YA!!**

**– Tzu-Chien ”**

1st Kelly Fisher \$655  
2nd Wei Tzu-Chien \$395  
3rd Monica Webb \$240  
4th Jeannie Seaver \$150

# Fisher, Going Undefeated, Wins Third Straight WPBA Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenge

The Dragon Boat Festival may have been in progress in Taiwan during the event, but the 'beast' on display at the WPBA's third Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenge (June 21-June 26) was the UK's Kelly Fisher.

As they'd done in the second Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenge (June 1-6), Fisher and Taiwan's Wei Tzu-Chien met in the finals of this one and for the third straight time, Fisher emerged as the event

champion. Fisher had to win five on the loss side to face her in the finals of the previous event, but this time, she and Tzu-Chien battled twice; once, vying for the hot seat and then, in the finals. Fisher won both times, chalking up the second- and third-highest scores of the event (126, 125) while Tzu-Chien chalked up the event's highest score (130) in the semifinals.

As the two played in the hot seat match on Thursday (June 25), Tzu-Chien was reportedly dealing with a highly distracting scenario in Taiwan, which was celebrating its annual Dragon Boat Festival, featuring all sorts of costumed mythical beasts and spectators having a grand time in the local bars. While the camera focused on the table showed no evidence of the gathered crowd, Tzu-Chien was competing in the midst of a lot of distractions. Fisher, not to be outdone in the distraction department, was playing in an un-air-conditioned room, where the temperature was hovering just above the 80s; a circumstance that played itself out on her brow occasionally.

As with previous events, each rack bore the poten-

tial for a player to earn either 10 points (for a runout with ball-in-hand after the break) or 15 points (for a runout played without ball-in-hand after the break). A miss in a rack would score the number of balls pocketed prior to the miss. All matches, until the finals, featured 10 racks. Until the semifinals, Fisher was the only player among the event's 16, to score over 100 points for a single rack. There were 24 total matches played and only six scores over 100; four of them by Fisher and two by Tzu-Chien. Prior to the finals, Fisher averaged 109.75 points per 10 racks. Tzu-Chien, who was awarded a bye in the opening round, reached the semifinals with an average of 88.6 points per rack, but upped that percentage to 99, when she scored 130 points in those semifinals.

Fisher's path to the hot seat went through LaLe 111-19, Dawn Hopkins 90-81 and in a winners' side semifinal, Monica Webb 113-98. After her opening round bye, Tzu-Chien defeated Mary Rakin Tam 97-93 and then, in their first of two, she downed Jennifer Barretta 88-76, in the other winners' side semifinal. Fisher claimed the hot seat with what was, at the time, the event's highest score 125-81. She ran all 10 racks; five of them with ball-in-hand after the break and five, including the last two, without.

On the loss side, Baretta picked up Hopkins, who, after her defeat at the hands of Fisher in the second round,

Kelly Fisher

had defeated Kia Burwell 53-47 and Kris Bacon 75-26. Monica Webb drew event director Angela Janic, who'd been sent to the loss side by Baretta in the second round, and had gone on to eliminate Cheryl Baglin 53-26 and Mary Rakin Tam 67-64.

Baretta, who still sits atop the WPBA's year-to-date seeding and ranking list (where Wei-Tzu Chien is #3 and Kelly Fisher is #5), defeated Hopkins 87-57, as Webb was busy eliminating Janic 89-48. Baretta and Webb locked up in a nail-biting quarterfinal that eventually sent Baretta (96-93) to the semifinals against Tzu-Chien.

Tzu-Chien found some kind of second, or possibly third gear in those semifinals. She went on to score what would prove to be the event's highest single score, downing Baretta 130-27 for a second and (including the previous event) third shot against Fisher.

To no avail as it turned out. Together, they chalked up the event's second and fourth highest score; Fisher checking in with her fourth 100-plus score and the event's second highest, downing Tzu-Chien 126-103. Fisher ran 10 racks of the 13 in the final, seven of them with ball-in-hand after the break and three, without. Unlike their previous match in the finals of the second event, Wei Tzu-Chien actually finished ahead of Fisher (generally known as "Kwikfire") in the finals of this one.

"You were faster than me," Fisher said, chatting after the match. "How come?"

"Because you're slow," said Tzu-Chien.

"Slowfire," commented Fisher.

"You did it again," said event director, Angela Janic, congratulating Fisher

after the finals. "There's no question that you dominate this format. This thing is made for you."

"That's because I'm not any good at safety play, or getting out, or kicking," said Fisher with a laugh.

The WPBA's 4th Virtual 9-ball Ghost Challenge will take place July 19-23 and be followed on the weekend of July 31-August 2 with a Tournament of Champions, featuring the top eight players from the four events.

The WPBA thanked all of its fans for watching and supporting this event over the past week, its tournament director, Angela Janic, its behind-the-scenes technical guru Jennifer Hamilton (who celebrated her birthday on the day of this event's final), its players, scorekeepers and guest commentators.



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## ***Tzu-Chien Spoils Fisher Bid For Four In A Row On WPBA Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenge***

**In all, they've played against each other five times in the four WPBA Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenges. In the opening event of this four-event series, Kelly Fisher and Jennifer Barretta played against each other in the hot seat and finals. In the second event, Fisher won five on the loss side and faced Wei Tzu-Chien in the finals.**

**T**hey squared off again in the third event in the hot seat and finals and this past week, July 20-25, they repeated their hot seat and final routine. This time, though, for the first time, it was Tzu-Chien who came out on top, breaking Fisher's run of three event wins in a row at this competition format.

The two were (are) clearly the best competitors at this 'ghost' game they play, thousands of miles apart. Each player in a match faces 10 racks and can score either 10 or 15 points per rack, depending on whether or not they opt to take ball in hand following the break. If they do take ball in hand, a runout will earn them 10 points (a point for every ball and two for the 9-ball). If they choose not to take ball in hand after the break, a runout will earn them 15 points. A miss in a rack is a win for the 'ghost' and the player receives a point for each of the balls they dropped in that loss to the 'ghost.' If you run 10 racks, taking ball in hand on the break every time, you'd score 100 points. If you ran 10 racks and did not take ball in hand, ever, you'd score 150 points. There were 12 entrants for this 4th Ghost Challenge and they played a total of 22 matches; 44 different scores (two per match). In the 12 winners' side matches (24 scores), the average score per player was 73. On the loss side (10 matches, 20 different scores), the average was 63.65. making the overall for the entire event 69.04. The average for a win was slightly higher at 78.59.

Wei Tzu-Chien's average over her six games was 94.33. Kelly Fisher's av-

erage over her five games was 103.2. There were only four individual scores



*Wei Tzu Chien*

“

**THE FOURTH HIGHEST SCORE  
IN THE EVENT WENT TO  
TZU-CHIEN IN HER 101-70  
VICTORY OVER TAM.**

”

over 100 among the 44 total scores. Wei Tzu-Chien chalked up the highest of those four (136) in the final against Fisher and the lowest (101) in her winners' side semifinal match against Mary Rakin Tam. Fisher scored the other two – 122 in her winners' side semifinal match against Dawn Hopkins and 111 in the finals against Tzu-Chien's 136.

The lowest score in a win (55) went to Mary Rakin Tam in her second round victory over Sonya Chbeeb (41). The highest score in a loss was Fisher's (111) in her loss to Tzu-Chien (136) in the finals.

Tzu-Chien opened her campaign with an 83-51 victory over event organizer Angela Janic and downed Jennifer Barretta 84-77 to pick up Mary Rakin Tam in a winners' side semifinal. Fisher opened with a 93-47 victory over Jeanne Seaver and sent Monica Webb to the loss side 92-67 to draw Hopkins in the other winners' side semifinal. The second highest score in the event went to Fisher in her 122-62 win over Hopkins. The fourth highest score in the event went to Tzu-Chien in her 101-70 victory over Tam. Fisher claimed the hot seat 98-76.

On the loss side, Hopkins picked up Seaver, who'd eliminated Chbeeb 89-22 and then won the event's closest individual match by defeating Line Kjorsvik 63-62. Tam drew Monica Webb, who, after being defeated by Fisher, went on to defeat Heather Lakatos 63-32 and then, Angela Janic 69-57. In an unlikely coincidence, both Webb and Janic had defeated their first loss-side opponents by the identical 63-32 score.

Seaver defeated Hopkins 56-53 (second closest match), as Webb downed Tam 80-64. Seaver then eliminated Webb 86-70 in the quarterfinals.

Tzu-Chien, no doubt invested in getting a second shot at Fisher, waiting for her in the hot seat, downed Seaver 86-46 in the semifinals and then, chalked up her and the event's best individual performance at the 'ghost' game with a 136-111 victory over Fisher.

The WPBA's highly successful series of Ghost Challenge events will get back underway this Wednesday (July 29) with a Virtual 9-Ball Ghost Challenge Tournament of Champions, featuring the top eight players from the recently-completed series of four events.



**ROOM INFORMATION  
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# CHARITY WEEKEND NETS OVER \$10K FOR TK

As a community, pool players can be, to put it mildly, aggressive about their competition. Trash talk is common. Rivalries are legend. And when was the last time any of us watched an important match with a lot of money at stake where the two players actually appeared to be having a good time?

That would probably have been a match in which Tommy Kennedy was one of the competitors. It's hard to find someone in the worldwide pool community who doesn't have anything but good things to say about Tommy Kennedy and as a result, when he fell, hit his head and suffered a concussion in March, which led to some healing issues that were predicted to take as long as a year, the community came out to support him.

It began with a GoFundMe campaign, which launched in June and was organized by a member in long-standing

of the pool community at large, and long-time friend of Kennedy, as well, Roger Long. Last weekend (Aug. 7-9), Rocco-Rocky McElroy, owner of Capone's Billiards in Spring Hill, FL and Carrie Vetrone, who moved into Kennedy's neighborhood (Florida) only four years ago, held a charity weekend of pool to benefit Kennedy and his family. There was a series of mini-events on Friday, featuring eight-person, single elimination boards, called, in honor of one of Kennedy's favorite expressions, "Ahh, come on!" boards, that drew 70 entrants. Between that evening and the two-day main event

that drew 85, over \$10,000 was raised to supplement the \$28,000 that had been raised on the GoFundMe initiative by the time the weekend had begun.

All you really need to know about the \$1,250-added main event is that Nathan Rose won seven straight to win it. Rose downed Ken Black, Marcus Murillo, Nick Fiore and Van Phan to face and defeat Kyle Bova in a winners' side semifinal and then, got by John Gore to claim the hot seat. In the finals, Rose faced Tony Crosby, who'd been defeated in a winners' side quarterfinal by Bova, won five on the loss side (including his quarterfinal rematch versus Bova) to earn a spot in the finals. Rose completed his undefeated run with a 7-4 victory over Crosby in those finals.

In his introduction to the GoFundMe campaign, Roger Long noted that



Tony Crosby, Carrie Vetrone, Rocky McElroy and Nathan Rose

“Tommy has used his talent as one of the world’s greatest pool players to meet and minister to hurting people all over this country (and others).”

“Now,” said Long, “Tommy needs help and since I know he’s too humble to ask, I’m going to do the asking for him.”

The community responded. Nearly 400 donors, both known and anonymous, contributed in amounts ranging from \$10 to \$1,000 and the campaign is ongoing. The campaign, on behalf of Tommy’s wife, Denise, has a goal of \$75k. Contributions can be made on the GoFundMe Web site.

Carrie Vetrone was frankly surprised at the charity weekend and its eventual \$10,800 to the cause.

“I didn’t think we were going to make as much as we did,” she said. “I was hoping \$5k to \$6k, so it blew me away when I figured out the final amount.”

In addition to \$25 out of each main event entry fee, the event collected funds from the Friday night mini-events, straightforward donations, contributions by players of their winning prize money, and the proceeds from a 50-50 raffle, which included some eye-catching items.

“Tony Robles donated his two Mosconi Cup jackets (2003/2004),” said Vetrone, “and 100% of that money is going to Tommy.”

On August 5, Roger Long added a note to the front end of ongoing comments on the GoFundMe Page, indicating that Kennedy, though not completely

out of the proverbial ‘woods’ yet had been making some progress.

“Tommy is up to 100 lbs.,” he wrote. “That may not sound like much to get excited about, but it does represent a 23-lb gain since June 28, when he was admitted to the hospital. Tommy was near death that day.

“He is home now,” Long added, “and slowly making progress, while he awaits an EEG test scheduled for October. And it’s your love, prayers, and support that have made the difference. We look forward to the day when Tommy can personally thank each and every one of you.”

Vetrone wanted to thank a lot of people herself for the support she received in organizing the benefit weekend. She thanked Rocco-Rocky McElroy, owner of Capone’s Billiards, for “opening up his pool hall all weekend and helping make the event great.” She also thanked Tony Crosby for his help, as she was congratulating him for his runner-up finish.

“Thank you to my sweet ladies for helping all weekend,” she said of Stacey Allen, Liny Nesmer, Gia Fiore and Brittany Ann, “and a thank you to Louis Smith (for) running around helping all day selling 50/50 tickets and helping with the auction.”

She also thanked TSPN’s Allan Hendrickson and Tanya Maples-Stremler for allowing their Web site to receive online donations and Mike Demarco (and Raymond McNamara) at Ship the

Cash for streaming the event throughout the weekend and Ed Peterson from Buy a Home with Ed for being the event’s “#1 sponsor” and for technical help with the stream.

Vetrone also gave a special shout out to the players who showed up to play.

“This could not have been possible without you all,” she said. “I am overwhelmed with how you all helped me make the weekend great in order to help a great friend.”

Vetrone and Capone’s will be teaming up again in a few weeks, when the room will be hosting its annual Labor Day Classic on the weekend of August 5-6. The proceedings will get underway on Saturday, Aug. 5, with a \$200-added (with 40 entrants) Amateur 9-Ball event for competitors with Fargo rates of 640 and under. Participation in the Amateur event will be cut off at the first 64 paid players. It’ll play out on 7’ Diamond tables; race to 7 on the winners’ side, 5 on the loss side. True double elimination, alternate break.

On Sunday, a \$400-added Open/Pro 10-Ball event will commence, limited to 16 players, who’ll play on the room’s 9’ Diamonds with winners’ side races to 8 and loss-side races to 7. True double elimination, Texas Express rules. For further information on the event, reach Vetrone at Capone’s or on her cell phone at 631-901-9898.



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# BCA Trade Show CHANGED COURSE DUE TO VIRUS

**Sometimes you just have to do whatever you can do. Perhaps the most important function of the BCA is to host the annual Trade Show.**

**T**he members of the BCA are comprised mostly of manufacturers and retailers and it is the annual job of the BCA to bring those two groups together once a year in order to facilitate trade within the industry.

The Trade Show is designed so that manufacturers may show off their modifications to existing lines and unveil their brand-new products. And it is timed to allow retailers to order in their Christmas inventory and to allow manufacturers to know what their order load is in time to satisfy the Christmas rush.

This year Covid-19 put a stop to doing all of that the way it has been done for decades. Normally the Trade Show is a crowded and bustling shindig that is also the once-per-year social event for the entire industry. None of that would be allowed this year and the news that Las Vegas casinos had shut down in the spring meant that the BCA had to dig deep and come up with an alternative plan so that business could continue despite the virus.

No one will claim that the solution did a perfect job of replicating the show. All the BCA could do was to provide an online forum where their vendors could provide videos of their new items and then urge customers to call



## VirtuALL

them at the numbers listed on the WHOVA app.

We spoke with Kyle Nolan of Imperial. He told us that they had reserved several 'rooms' in the online show so that customers who just wanted cues could go directly to the Cuetec room and those who wanted tables could go directly to the Rasson room and that this helped ease any confusion in navigating to where they needed to be in order to do business. "No, it isn't like the normal show but it does allow us to have the right salespeople in the right places to answer the phones dedicated to their product."

Tony Kalamdaryan of Tiger Products told us: "It was really pretty easy. All I had to do was put in the basic info

I needed like phone numbers to call and it comes out in the app. And the BCA is providing this as a free service so that is nice as the Trade Show is normally quite an expense."

When it was over no one wanted to say that their orders were as vibrant as normal. As Mr. Nolan told us: "This is not a business as usual type of year. The virus means we all have to spend more time on the phone letting our clients know what is going on and what we have to offer this year. Sales is going to require a lot more work this year. But we all know that and most of those I know have adjusted."

What is perhaps missed the most is the social aspect of the show. This was the time when friends who have not seen each other for a year are able to reconnect and share meals. And while that will have to wait until next year at least your loved one will still be able to get that new cue or table for Christmas!

**“ NO, IT ISN'T LIKE THE NORMAL SHOW BUT IT DOES ALLOW US TO HAVE THE RIGHT SALESPEOPLE IN THE RIGHT PLACES TO ANSWER THE PHONES DEDICATED TO THEIR PRODUCT. ”**

# “JAWZ” JOINS TEAM BREAK OUT

**BreakOut Apparel would like to welcome our newest member to the family, D’Angelo “Jawz” Spain! We can’t say enough about this young man. At only 9 years old, he is an absolute beast on the table.**

**H**e not only competes against other juniors but adults as well. He learned how to play pool at the young age of 4 years old. He is currently coached by his father, Frank Spain, and we are excited to see what the young man can do. He’s poised, confident, respectful, and a fierce competitor on the table. Check out his list of accomplishments at only 9 years old.

## **TOURNAMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**2020 – Brews and Cues 9 Ball Tournament (Glen Burnie, MD)**

- 1st Place

**2020- TAP Short Stack 8 Ball Tournament (Glen Burnie, MD)**

- 1st Place

**2020 – Joss North East 9 Ball Juniors Event (Amsterdam, NY)**

- 1st Place 12 & Under

**2019 – APA Junior Nationals Tournament Skill Level 5’s (St. Louis, MO)**

- 49th place out of 101 players

**2019 – Summer Classic Scotch Doubles Tournament (Baltimore, MD)**

- 1st Place

**2019 – APA Juniors National Qualifier (Laurel, MD)**

- 1st place – Advanced to Nationals in St. Louis in July

**2019 – Maryland State Juniors BEF 9ball Tournament 12&U (Laurel, MD)**

- 3rd Place

**2019 – Billiards Education Foundation Nationals Qualifier (Greenville, SC)**

- 5th Place



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Please welcome “Jawz” to the #BreakOutFamily. Jawz is the second junior player to join the Break Out Family, joining Skylar Hess. The complete roster of Break Out players is Allison Fisher, Loree Jon Hasson, James Aranas, Shaun Wilkie, Del Sim, James

Blackburn, Ashley Burrows, Manny Perez, Clint Palaci, Steve Fleming, Tina Malm, Chuck Sampson, Dylan Spohr, Shanna Lewis, Skylar Hess and D’Angelo Spain.

We have more exciting news in the works, so stay tuned to your news feed!

You can follow Jawz on Facebook & Instagram: @JawzSpain

# McDermott and Okinawa Slim Celebrate Anniversary

McDermott Cue and Nathaniel “Okinawa Slim” Bryant are proud to celebrate 38 years of promoting the sport of pool together.

In June, 1982, after meeting Okinawa Slim at the Miller Lite Beer World Series of Tavern Pool Tournament in Las Vegas, Jim McDermott agreed to sponsor Bryant in his pool career. Since that Handshake, McDermott Cue has been Bryant’s sole cue sponsor and the provider of his main playing cue.

Born in Sanford, Florida, Nathaniel learned to play pool at the age of seven (7) from his Father who was the owner of a pool hall and restaurant. He gained notoriety, and his nickname, while stationed at the U.S. military base in Okinawa, Japan as a

United States Marine during the late 1970s. There he began entering competitions, winning sixteen consecutive tournaments and appearing in newspaper and television interviews.

Bryant has gone on to win countless tournaments, receive multiple awards, head the World Pool Billiard Association’s Artistic Pool Division, mentor hundreds of young players, and much, much more.

“The contribution Okinawa Slim has provided for the sport over his life is commendable. It’s important to me that we stand behind individuals

whose commitment and loyalty to the sport is such a good match for the commitment we have to the quality of our cues,” said Greg Knight, owner of McDermott.

## About McDermott Cue

Since its founding in 1975 by the legendary cuemaker Jim McDermott, McDermott Pool Cues has consistently produced handcrafted cues that look as good as they play. Produced in a state of the art manufacturing facility located in the United States, McDermott cues combine groundbreaking technologies with high-quality materials and exquisite artwork. They have become a favorite of players the world over. The company also produces cues under the Star Cues, Lucky Cues, Sledgehammer Break Cues, and Stinger Jump/Break Cues brands.

# Okinawa Slim

Billiards Hall of Fame Nominee



For more information about McDermott Cue, contact Andrew Bullis at [andrew@mcdermottcue.com](mailto:andrew@mcdermottcue.com) or call (262) 345-6503.

# Predator Arcos II Balls by Aramith

## Become the Official Balls of CueSports International, the BCA Pool League, and USA Pool League

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (August 25, 2020) - Predator Group is proud to announce a new partnership that makes Predator Arcos II by Aramith the official balls of CueSports International (CSI), the BCA Pool League and the USA Pool League.**

### **PREDATOR ARCOS II BALLS WILL BE USED IN CSI'S MAJOR EVENTS**

Predator's new revolutionary ball set will now be used in all the CSI, BCA Pool League and USA Pool League events. In addition to being the official balls of the Predator World 10-Ball Championship, Diamond Las Vegas Open, and Predator World Billiard Series events, the CSI events will be using the Arcos II balls sets during the

CueSports International Expo, which showcases the BCA Pool League World Championships, USA Pool League National Championships, as well as the regional CSI organized tournaments taking place all around the United States.

Ozzy Reynolds, CueSports International CEO, says that "CSI is thrilled about this new partnership. We have always put an emphasis on quality

and using balls designed and manufactured by industry titans like Predator and Aramith is definitely in line with our 'quality first' philosophy. We are confident that our league members and event participants will agree."

### **THE QUEST FOR INNOVATION**

Predator, the world's most innovative and trusted cue manufacturer, has teamed up with legendary ball maker Aramith to unleash the all-new, highly accurate and durable Predator Arcos II billiard balls. By applying the signature Predator style to Aramith's flawless technology and production, they've created balls like no other. The higher phenolic resin composition and meticulous curing and inspection processes make Predator Arcos II more accurate, more responsive, more consistent and more durable.

Yves Bilquin, COO of Saluc S.A., who is also supporting the initiative said "We share Predator's vision and commitment of increasing billiards equipment quality and performance, to bring higher value to the players. This is exactly what we have done with the new Predator Arcos II ball set".

When Predator teamed up with Aramith, it combined two industry leaders to use state-of-the-art technology to eliminate the rogue variables that could be the difference between victory and defeat. The consistency and highest phenolic composition of the



# ARCOS II™

## PREDATOR X aramith®

Arcos II balls delivers a more efficient energy transfer between the cue and the balls, and reduces the static electricity between ball and table. That means more control, less out-of-control kicks and smoother, and faster play.

### PREDATOR'S COMMITMENT TO GROW THE SPORT

Predator Group sees this as the natural evolution of their partnership with CueSports International to bring amateur and professional pool together and grow the sport. "Improving the game's performance and inspiring new fans to play has always been our passion" said Karim Belhaj, CEO of

Predator Group. "Being the Official ball of the CSI leagues is another way to improve the playing experience of pool fans, and we hope it will also help us re-invest in professional pool, so we can inspire more fans to join and take our sport to the next level".

Predator continues to focus on the future by making the world a better place, one pool game at a time.

For more information about the Predator Arcos II balls, click here or watch the Arcos II video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwM8XIUjIGE>

CueSports International (CSI) is an international pool league and event leader and is currently comprised

of three divisions: CSI Leagues, CSI Events and CSI Media. CSI Leagues manages the BCA Pool League and USA Pool League, CSI Events produces numerous amateur and professional events around the globe and CSI Media creates live streaming and digital content. Through its vision and strategic alliances, CSI is "shaping the future of pool." For more information about CSI or any of its divisions, visit [www.playcspool.com](http://www.playcspool.com) or find CueSports International on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter.

Predator Group's mission is to inspire billiard fans by providing innovative experiences and products that deliver high-performance, with unsurpassed class and style. Predator, Poison and Uni-Loc are Predator Group brands that focus on performance pool cues, billiard accessories and precision components. For more information regarding Predator Group's products, visit [www.predatorcues.com](http://www.predatorcues.com), [www.poisoncues.com](http://www.poisoncues.com) and [www.uni-loc.com](http://www.uni-loc.com).



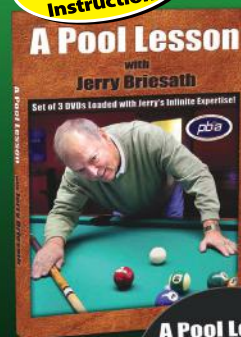
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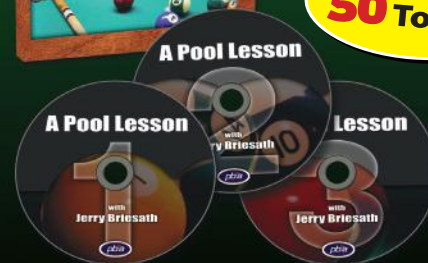
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- Jeanette "The Black Widow" Lee

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# THE 2020 INTERNATIONAL IS NOT GOING AWAY, BUT . . .

**NORFOLK, July 17, 2020: Just as the MLB, NBA, NHL, Formula 1, NASCAR and other sports have made moves to bring back their sports to their fans, the 2020 INTERNATIONAL has also made every effort to bring their event to you.**

The 2020 INT'L was placed in a unique position of being the first major professional pool tournament since April when the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of all pro events. This brought unique challenges in adapting to today's COVID-19 world. Unfortunately, with the health and safety of the contestants, vendors, hotel staff, and spectators being paramount, and with the ever-changing data coming in daily, it has been decided that the 2020 INT'L will be postponed.

New dates for the 2020 International Open will be forthcoming. This does not change our plans for the 2021 International Open which is scheduled for October, 2021.



Upon its return, the 2020 INTERNATIONAL OPEN will be a 160-player 9-BALL OPEN field with a reduced entry fee of \$500 and \$50,000 in added prize money.



The inaugural 32-player INTERNATIONAL ONE-POCKET INVITATIONAL will have an entry fee of \$300 and \$5,000 in added prize money.

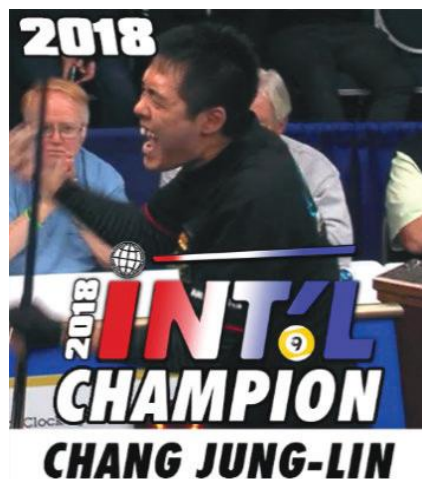


In partnership with Diamond Billiard Products, we will stage the first INTERNATIONAL BIG FOOT CHALLENGE. This 16-player event will have a \$500 entry fee and \$8,000 in added prize money.



Ra Hanna, owner of On The Wire Creative Media, will be bringing back the Junior's Championship. The 2020 Junior Invitational Championship will have both a Junior Men's AND a Junior Women's division.

Accu-Stats Video Productions will once again be providing recording and streaming from the Simonis-Aramith Arena. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.



[www.accu-stats.com](http://www.accu-stats.com)

[www.facebook.com/accustats/](https://www.facebook.com/accustats/)

[www.youtube.com/c/AccuStatsVideoProductionsTV](https://www.youtube.com/c/AccuStatsVideoProductionsTV)

For up to date information on the 2020 INTL, visit both the INTL website and Facebook page.

[www.international9ballopen.com](http://www.international9ballopen.com)

[www.facebook.com/theinternational9ballopen/](https://www.facebook.com/theinternational9ballopen/)





# US OPEN POOL CHAMPIONSHIP 2020



**The 2020 US Open Pool Championship, originally scheduled for April 13-18, 2020 and postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, has now been cancelled.**

**M**atchroom Pool, together with MGM Resorts, has taken this decision after considering the current global government and travel advice around the Covid-19 pandemic.

The US Open Pool Championship will return in 2021. Matchroom Pool and MGM Resorts will continue to monitor the global situation and will make an announcement regarding dates for the 2021 US Open Pool Championship in due course.

## TICKET REFUNDS

Orders purchased with a credit card will be refunded automatically to the credit card used for purchase. Please allow up to 30 days for this refund to reflect with your financial institution.

For guests who utilized a Third Party to secure tickets, please reach out to your original point of purchase for information regarding a credit.

Those who purchased tickets with cash may present tickets at the original point of sale for a refund. Visit <https://www.mgmresorts.com/en/entertainment/cancellation-and-postponement.html>

Matchroom Pool, Mandalay Bay, MGM Resorts and AXS are not responsible for hotel, travel or other expenses related to the cancellation of these events and apologize to ticket holders for any inconvenience this may cause.

## FUTURE EVENTS

Ticket holders of the cancelled event will receive a pre-sale opportunity for first access to purchase tickets for newly scheduled event dates when they are announced.

Tickets to future performances may be purchased at <http://www.mandalaybay.com/> or <http://www.axs.com/>.

## PLAYER ENTRIES

All players who entered the 2020 US Open Pool Championship will receive a full refund of their entry fee.

*For any queries relating to the cancellation of the 2020 US Open Pool Championship, please contact [pool@matchroom.com](mailto:pool@matchroom.com).*



# WORLD POOL MASTERS 2020 CANCELLED, 2021 DATES CONFIRMED

The 2020 World Pool Masters, originally scheduled to take place in Gibraltar from March 26-29, has now been cancelled. The World Pool Masters will return from March 25-28, 2021.

The event was postponed earlier this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic however, with the health and safety of players and staff as the foremost concern, and given the current travel and government restrictions in place around the world, the decision has now been taken to cancel this year's event, rather than postpone.

The World Pool Masters will return to Gibraltar in 2021 with a new qualification and invitation process. The 2021 World Pool Masters will take place at Europa Point Sports Complex from Thursday, March 25 until Sunday, March 28, 2021.

Emily Frazer, Managing Director of Matchroom Multi Sport, said: "Despite a recent surge in live sport; we still face a lot of uncertainty within the events industry. Pool is a worldwide mass-participation sport that does

## matchroom.

not get the credit it fully deserves. Our ongoing aim and passion at Matchroom Pool is to drive and propel the sport to the next level of professional exposure it has never reached.

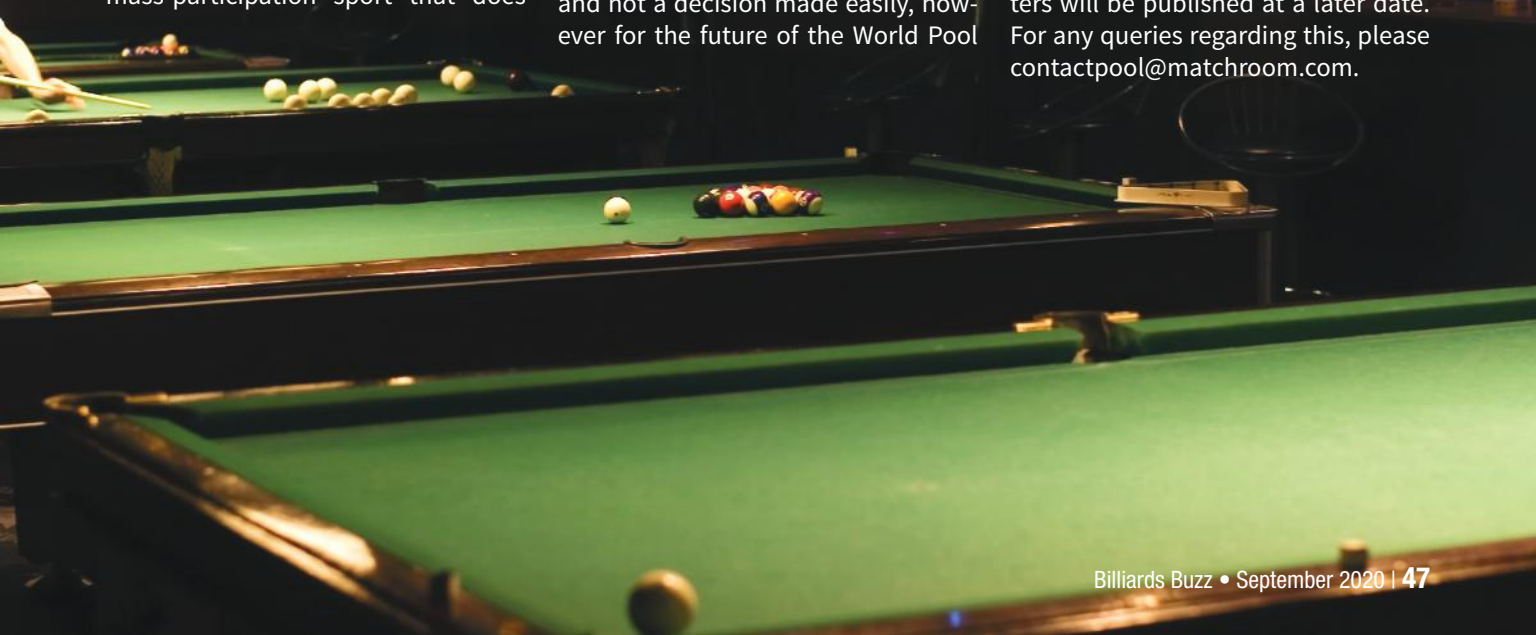
"Due to the recent difficulties of COVID-19 and the challenges it has presented, it is important we look at the bigger picture and establish what is best for the event and the players. Broadcaster schedules are packed with live sport, limited numbers on-site and scale of production, international travel is a roadblock and live spectatorship is an ongoing unknown factor.

"It is a first for us to cancel an event and not a decision made easily, however for the future of the World Pool

Masters and to maintain the changes implemented in recent years to evolve the event; we must ensure we put on a great show that is competitive, available and enjoyable to our viewers at home as well as our live spectators.

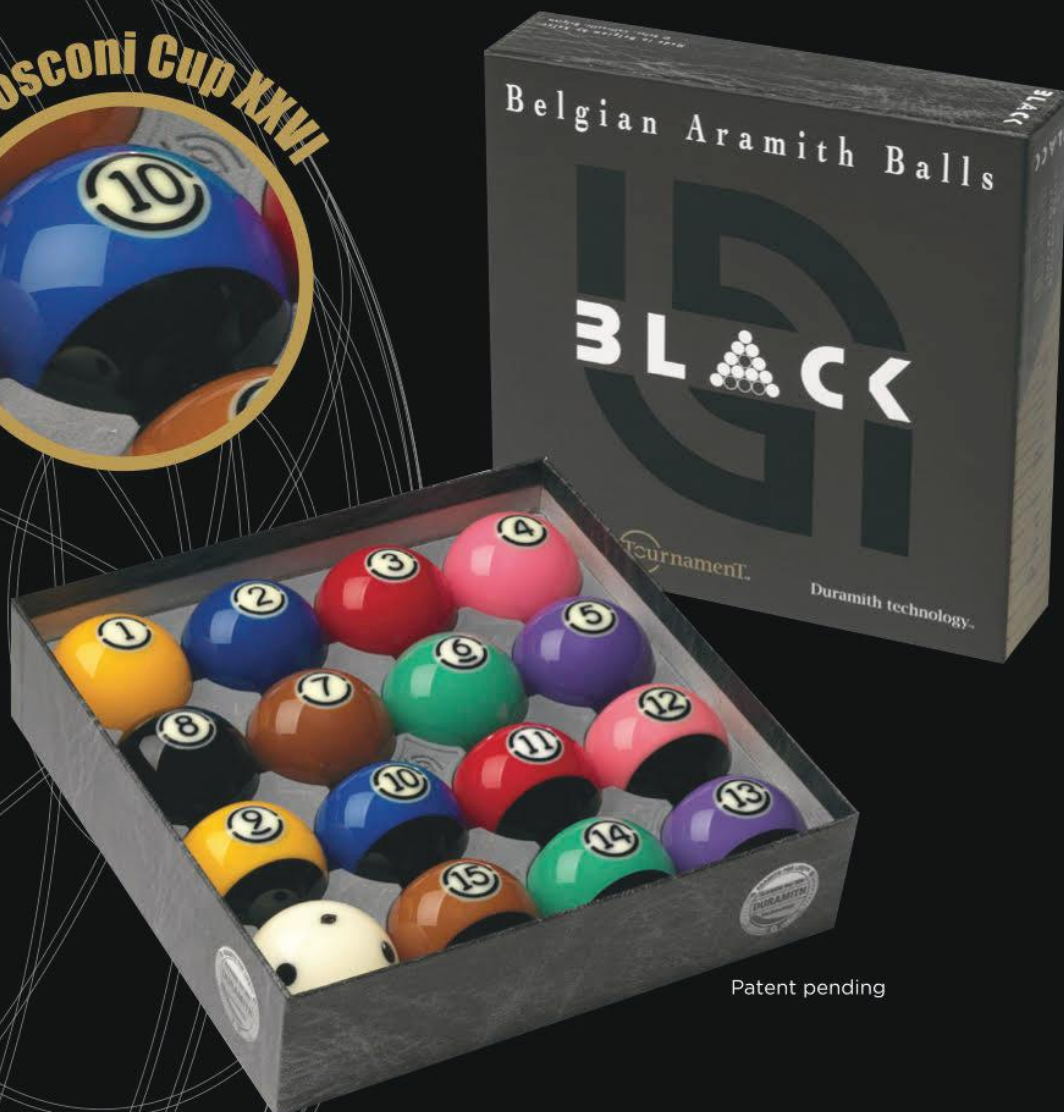
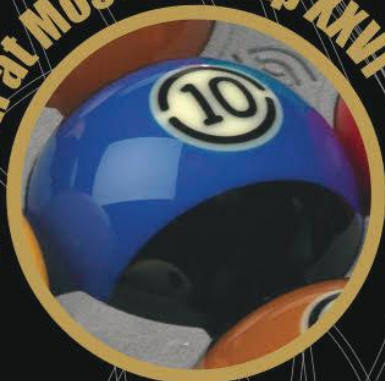
"Despite this set back in 2020, together with HM Government of Gibraltar, we are committed to returning on March 25, 2021 with the most successful World Pool Masters to date."

All ticket holders for the 2020 World Pool Masters will have their tickets automatically refunded this week and will see this return to their original payment card with 14 days. Ticket details for the 2021 World Pool Masters will be published at a later date. For any queries regarding this, please contact [contactpool@matchroom.com](mailto:contactpool@matchroom.com).



# aramith® Tournament

As seen at Mosconi Cup XXVII



Patent pending

Aramith has created the new Tournament BLACK set to combine the very best of pool ball quality with an innovative, trendy and groundbreaking "black" design.

Anticipating the need to better discern the balls on TV but also on small screen devices, we have teamed up with Matchroom Multisport to develop new colors.

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