

# Billiards Buzz

an  publication

vol.4, Issue September 2019



# SIBLING RIVALRY



OUR NEWEST MEMBER



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Courtesy JP Parmentier - CSI

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# FROM THE Head Rail

MIKE HOWERTON

**A**lthough the story didn't make it into this issue, Shane Van Boening won an exciting final match over Earl Strickland to win his fifth Turning Stone Classic title. I had the great fortune to be able to commentate the final match and I know I was pulling for Earl the whole way. An Earl Strickland that is playing like he did at Turning Stone is a great thing for the game. Love him or hate him, Earl draws a crowd, and the game needs all of the crowds that it can get.

I would like to welcome Melinda Bailey back to the pages of the Buzz this month. The magazine is always missing something when she doesn't have an interview ready for the new issue.

You will also find an article from the Arizona Billiard Hall of Fame in the pages this month. I want to thank everyone for their congratulations for being one of the inductees this year. I wouldn't be where I am if it weren't for Arizona pool.

Until next time.



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# ***The Difference Between Novice and Advanced Players***



**JERRY BRIESATH**

**There are many systems around the country for rating the skill level of players.**

**O**ne league system may rate players as A,B,C or D, while another system may rate it's players numerically from 1 through 7 and still another may rate it's players on the scale of 1 through 10. These rating systems are used primarily as a tool for handicapping players during league or tournament play.

For the purpose of this article, let's use a rating system of 1 through 10 with one being a beginner and ten being a very advanced player. When a beginner joins a league as a novice player, you will often hear that play-

er talk about the difficult shots that he or she made and how many easy shots he or she missed. As the player advances in skill level to a three or four level, he or she starts to realize what making difficult shots is not what wins matches, but rather missing easy shots loses most matches. They start to realize what when they miss easy shots, it gives their opponents a free turn at the table, which becomes most costly as the skill level increases.

When I am coaching a player that has a six or seven rating, I give them

a challenge of what is expected of them at that skill level. Here is the challenge: whenever the cue ball is on the same end of the table with the object ball and the angle of the shot is 45 degrees or less, they must make the shot. If you miss one of these shots, be sure to practice it during the week so it does not happen again. What is important here is that you understand that missing one of these shots gives your opponent that free shot at the table which causes more of the loss in league player.

Good luck — Jerry



# SEE THE GAME YOU WANT TO PLAY TODAY

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

**Imagery is a powerful psychological tool pool players can use to help improve their game. Imagery consists of using different bodily senses to create real experiences in the mind, and can include the sense of sight, sound, feel, and even bodily movement and motion (known as kinesthetic imagery).**

**W**hile experiencing imagery using all the senses is great, pool players may benefit from really honing in on visual imagery by seeing their future success before it even occurs.

## **SEE success**

Developing a pre-shot routine is a big part of pool success as these routines can help players regulate emotions, discriminate shots, and chain shots together to run a table. When you see shots being made in your mind even

before attempting the shots, you create neural pathways that, over time, can improve muscle-memory (which allows your mind and body to work in synchrony for fluid shots). Also, by rehearsing future success, anxiety decreases as you have told your brain I will make this shot, and there's nothing to be worried about. The more normal, comfortable, and confident you feel playing pool, the better your chances for playing to your potential.

The opposite of seeing success is to either see nothing at all, or even failure. When you don't have a pre-shot routine and go into every shot with a blank slate, you allow other unnecessary distraction to fill your empty canvass - including thoughts about the other player, who is watching, and what will happen if you lose? Similarly, if you see failure in your future, you can almost be certain that's exactly what will happen.

## **See what YOU want to see**

Your pre-shot routine is entirely, 100% up to you, so choose wisely with what you see! When I work with athletes it's amazing to me how much of their



failure is due to their own thinking, meaning they are their own worst critics. When you consider the fact that YOU get to think about what YOU want ton think about, it's problematic to self-program bad thoughts. While it might not be easy to extinguish negative thoughts, it is possible, and it's very worthwhile if you want to reach your full potential.

Prime your neural connections and develop important muscle memory so you begin to look at even the most difficult pool shots with great confidence. Like the old saying goes, *what the mind believes the body achieves!*

*Dr. Chris Stankovich, known as "The Sports Doc," is a national expert in the field of sport & performance psychology and has been featured on ESPN for his work with elite athletes. His #1 best selling pool video "Mind of Steel: Mental Toughness for Pool Success" has been used by thousands of players to improve focus, increase confidence, and eliminate anxiety. You can learn more about Dr. Stankovich and Mind of Steel by visiting [drstankovich.com](http://drstankovich.com)*



# A BALANCING ACT

ANTHONY BEELER

**Very few pool players understand that their performance will reach a stalemate after they master many of the mental and physical aspects of the game. This “lack of improvement” occurs because they have not developed the ability to balance both their conscious and subconscious mind.**

**T**he fact remains that you cannot play pool completely subconsciously. This is a common problem that needs to be addressed—if you can't clearly define where the problem lies in your mind, how can you go about solving it? It is like driving a bicycle through an obstacle course while wearing a blindfold. You just can't do it!

Furthermore, it takes many years to develop the physical skills necessary to become a good player. However, during this period of time we get defeated over and over again and it is quite possible that many of us have the physical abilities to play on a pro-

fessional level but do not have the belief system necessary to maintain a consistent high-level of play.

A steady diet of hypnotherapy, positive affirmations, subliminal messages, and EFT can positively affect your game. They are all great ways to reprogram the way that you think and talk to yourself.

After all, your subconscious mind controls your physical game. It controls the way you move your muscles and also controls the various elements of your pool stroke. This part of your mind also manages most of your day-to-day functions. It is what you use

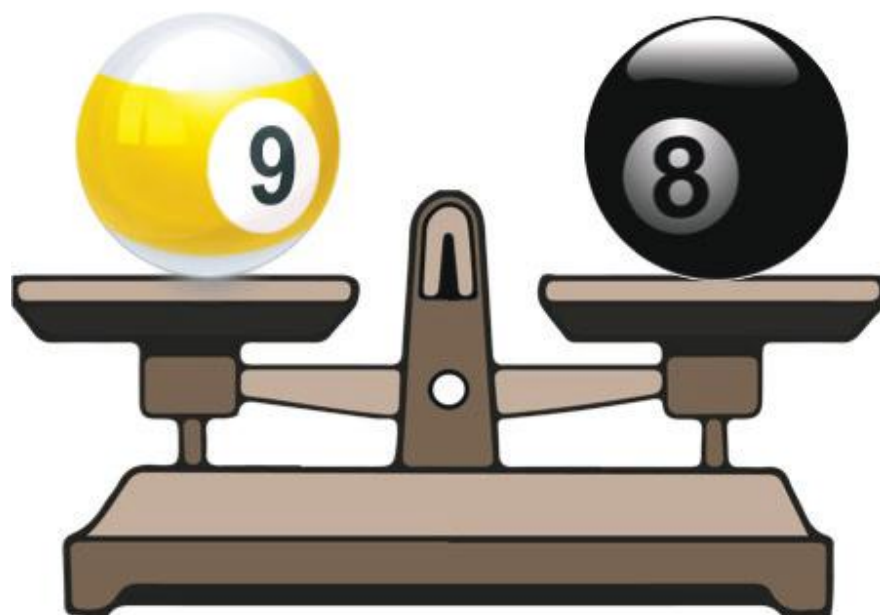


to drive to work or brew some coffee. This part of your brain also manages your physical abilities, which are sometimes referred to as your gross motor skills.

In reality, this is capable of controlling your pool stroke too, but it should not. Pool players could spend most of their life trying to consciously guide their pool cue. However, the same players would also wonder why their performance is so poor. It is like a person trying to emulate the performance of a computer using a calculator. It just doesn't work that way.

The conscious mind is what we use to determine what path the cue ball will take, what speed the ball needs to be struck with, and what spin we need to put on the cue ball to get us to where we need to be for our next shot.

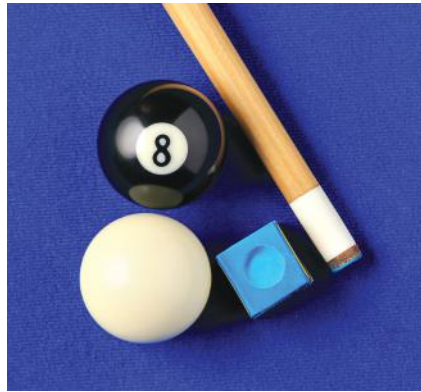
Sometimes you may choose to think about a possible scratch, and you may direct your attention to that pitfall in an attempt to prevent some type of mistake. At the same time, when you are down on the shot you should only be concentrating on aiming your cue through the cue ball at the contact point on the object ball. Therefore, when dealing with both the physical and mental layers of the game you have to decide what specifically that



you are going to focus on, and when. When you learn how to control your focus, you are guiding your conscious mind.

The alternative is to leave your mind open to negative thoughts that are unrealistic. This may result in your attention being divided between two or more things. Believing you cannot control your ability to focus could make you feel like you are playing a slot machine or buying a Powerball lottery ticket. In either case, you never know exactly what might happen, but in reality you know that the results more than likely won't be good.

In the pool world, your game can be limited by lots of clutter including troublesome thoughts and expectations. You should use your subconscious mind to control your stroke and keep your conscious mind engaged with all of the decisions you need to make. These are decisions



and thought processes such as "What angle do you have on the current shot?" or "What speed and spin does

the cue ball need to be struck with in order for you to reach position on your next shot?"

When you learn how to balance both your conscious and subconscious mind, you will start to experience what it feels like to play your best pool consistently. You can rest assured that you will never master the game of pool or conquer your mind, but taking the time to learn how to play the game with a positive attitude will certainly yield high gains. It makes playing more enjoyable and your game will become more consistent.

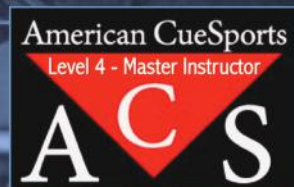
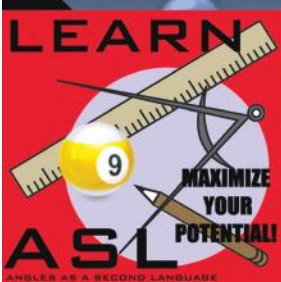
Anthony Beeler is the 2017 Pool Instructor of the Year and is a former BCAPL National 9-Ball Champion. He has numerous top 25 national finishes and is one of only 8 ACS Master Instructors in the world. He is the primary author of the *National Billiards Instructors Manual* and has also authored the book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

Steve Lipsky is a very talented pool player, well-known in the Northeast and in big tournaments, and is a member of an elite group of pool players (you'll find out exactly why soon).

I enjoyed this interview so much and am delighted for you all to get to find out more about not just his pool journey, but also his thinking process of so many things related to pool and our life. You will enjoy this so much!

Before we begin with the questions for Steve, wanted to share that I asked professional pool player Tony Robles his thoughts about Steve Lipsky. This is what he said: "I've always had the utmost respect for Steve and his game.

*He's without a doubt one of the greatest players to come out of NYC and I've always felt like he's never been recognized for it, so I'm excited and thank you for doing this interview! Steve is a gentleman and an ambassador of the*



*game and has as much knowledge as anyone in the game! Especially 8-Ball, 9-Ball and Straight Pool!"*

Now, on to the interview questions!

**Q:** Steve, where did you grow up?

I grew up in Long Island, NY and had your basic suburban childhood. Lots and lots of wiffleball.

**Q:** How and when did you start playing pool?

We had an 8-footer in the basement, and though it had a brutally-placed wall on one end and never saw a cloth replacement, it allowed me to learn to pocket balls at an early age, which I think is important.

I played with my dad, who, being a product of 1950s Brooklyn, knew his way around a pool table. He played with me a lot until I started beating him, at which point he stopped. To this day I love him for that – beating your dad at anything is pretty horrible. Plus, I was probably really annoying about it.

**Q:** What do you mean exactly by: ‘... was probably pretty annoying about it.’

I mean, you have no self-awareness at that age, right? I’m sure I didn’t realize that it might have been a tough thing for him to lose to his kid, especially when I was so young (probably around 12, if I had to guess). Or maybe I’m imagining it all. I think I’m going to ask him.

**Q:** Hmm, that’s a very interesting realization about a father/son relationship. Where do you work and how long have you been there?

I work for a population-health company. We partner with really large organizations to help their employees improve their health and wellness outcomes. I work in the Business



Intelligence division, which means I play with data all day to help determine what is and isn’t working in that space. It’s tremendously satisfying working for a company which helps people lead better, healthier lives. I’ve been there for almost 9 years, and I get to learn new things all the time. I love it.

**Q:** Can you come to my job? ;) That’s really fantastic you help people like that, which helps you love your job; not many people love their jobs. What is your degree in and where did you get it?

I have an undergraduate business degree from Cornell University. I... played a lot of pool while I was there and really should have taken my classes more seriously. When I graduated, I moved back in with my folks and started verrrry casually looking for a job. This went on for about six months, which was really just me sending out somewhere between 1 and 0 resumes during the day, then playing Chicago at Leisure Time Billiards until 3am every night – until one night I walked into an unusually bright house at that hour, and my dad was sitting at the kitchen table. He told me playtime was over. I could tell from his face he was serious, in

that serious way between fathers and sons. I got the message, and I started my career quickly thereafter. It was the kick in the pants that I desperately needed.

This was a really precarious time for me. A few different decisions at that age, and I easily could have fooled myself into thinking I’d have a solid monetary future in the game. Which, looking back, I definitely, definitely would not have. And I think I probably innately knew it, but when you’re not confident in your other options, you can make yourself believe some pretty crazy things. There’s an alternate universe out there where I’m living in a car and making negative six hundred dollars a year, for sure.

**Q:** I applaud that you recognize how instrumental your dad was about what could have turned into a tough life. BTW, is Chicago a person?

Ha, sorry, Chicago is 15-ball rotation, but with some weird rules to make it a partner money game. It might only be played in the northeast; I’m not sure. I actually consider it to be the greatest test of a player’s skill, mostly because there’s always a push rule in effect. Knowing how to effectively push brings in some strong elements

of game theory, which I really enjoy – and it likely gave me an advantage over similarly-skilled players.

**Q:** Oh, glad I asked! What did you do to elevate your game?

The biggest problem I had in developing as a player was that, with a few fleeting exceptions, I was the best player I knew until I was about 19 or 20. And I was empirically not good. At that age, I was an excellent pocketeer and probably a decent position player. But I had very little understanding of pattern play, in rotation or straight, so I was basically just bouncing from ball to ball. And there was certainly no concept of how to control a stretch of 4 or 5 games. I had no polish whatsoever, and nowhere to learn it.

So I think to some degree I could have been a stronger player had I been exposed to a different level of the game earlier, but I just didn't have the opportunity. And those were important years I missed.

A gamechanger for me, when I was really hungry to learn, was Accu-Stats. It was not only a chance to watch stellar play, but at least as importantly, to listen to some of the most knowledgeable commentators the game has ever known. There is a whole generation of players who owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to Grady Matthews.

**Q:** I 100% agree, and guess what? I'm one of those players! Who introduced you to Accu-Stats?

Hey, great question. Hmm, I must've learned about Accu-Stats from *Billiards Digest*. I was an avid reader of that magazine, starting in college when one of the local bookstores always stocked the latest issue.

**Q:** Okay, back to what elevated your game:

The catalyst for it all was moving to NYC in 1998, which was mostly to be



closer to work but at least partially for pool. I found an apartment close to the east-side Amsterdam Billiards, and once I entered that world, everything changed. It was the first time I absolutely knew, without a shred of doubt, that I was a very little fish in the big pond where I wanted to compete. I started playing against people who actually knew what they were doing, some of whom having championship levels of talent. One of the first nights I was in the room, there was an exhibition between Tony Robles and George SanSouci. It was all so exciting.

Tony wasn't playing at the east-side too much yet, but George and I became fast friends, and we'd gamble cheap. I was just donating, as the saying goes, but they were inexpensive lessons. At some point, he pulled me aside and told me we wouldn't have to gamble anymore; he was just going to help me with my game. I'll remember that forever. He went further and spoke on my behalf to Greg Hunt, who owns Amsterdam to this day, and Greg was kind enough to start sponsoring me. This is a relationship that I have coveted for over 20 years now, and I can't overstate how much Amsterdam has done for the game, and for me personally, over that time. They've given me an opportunity to play and

learn from a tremendously talented crew of players; too many to name, but they know who they are.

**Q:** That was very kind of George – he was such a great player and person! For those that don't know, he passed away way too young. Tony Robles started the Ginky (George's nickname) Memorial tournament and hosts it every year.

George's loss hit NY hard, and nobody felt it more than Tony. And Tony holding that tournament every year is a beautiful honor in George's name – and huge props to him, Gail, John Leyman, Todd Fleitman, Jose Burgos, and more for their selfless work. When we were all kind of lost after George left us, Tony helped lead us through the sadness. I really mean that.

I've only played that event once, and I feel awfully guilty about that. It's generally held on a tough weekend for me, but that's a terrible excuse. I'll just say that we all deal with loss differently, and I think of George quite often. We shared a lot of great years together. When he died, I wrote a deeply personal eulogy for him. It ended with the highest honor I could give to one of my mentors, that there is a part of him in every ball I'll ever make.



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**Q:** That's deep, revealing, and heartwarming – appreciate you sharing all of that about George. What has been your most coveted title or accomplishment?

This sounds sadder than it is, but 15 years ago I came to terms with the fact I would likely never win another tournament. I was too strong to play local amateur events, and to win local pro events, I'd have to beat some combination of George, Tony, Mika, and Frankie. I knew that wasn't happening, so I made my peace.

That said, I've had some incredible experiences in the game. I won the Pennsylvania State 14.1, running 140 balls out of the gate in the finals. I came in 2<sup>nd</sup> in the ~800 player field at the 2000 Super Billiards Expo (then 9<sup>th</sup> the year after). I have a couple of 2<sup>nd</sup> places in the NJ and Maryland 14.1 State Championships. And I finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the 2011 World 14.1 Championships (which, due to a Hurricane-abbreviated format, was really just winning 2 tough matches after the round robin stage – but still!).

**Q:** Wow, that's an impressive list! What is your most memorable match?

There's a lot! This is the name-dropping portion of the program, so apologies in advance for how shameless this is going to be. Beating Nick Varner 11-10 in front of a hometown crowd, after being up 7-2 and then down 9-7, was wonderful. I remember a long, tough shot on the 1 ball at hill-hill and being kind of amazed I didn't dog it.

Eliminating Johnny Archer from a World 14.1 was a highlight. I had played him earlier in the event and my friends, in an inexplicable break from sanity, asked him to gamble on the match. I've never seen a bet taken so quickly (as of course it should've been), and naturally he trounced me. But I must've lulled him into some sort of this-guy-stinks complacency,

because later in the tournament when we played again, I ran 33-and-out to win 150-135. No bet that time, as I forbade my friends from losing any more money in such a sad fashion. Oops. And as an aside, Johnny has always been super nice to me over the years. I'm usually happy when I'm in a room with Johnny.

**Q:** I agree, Johnny is a great guy. What do you mean by, "I'm usually happy when I'm in a room with Johnny"?

I don't know; it's just something I noticed and became very cognizant of at one point. As a kid growing up, Johnny was the pinnacle of a top player. I had no idea I'd one day be playing in some of the same tournaments with him. So anytime we're in a room together, it's sort of the culmination of a lot of the dreams I once had, at least respective to the game.

**Q:** OMGosh that's really cool! Okay, continue with the memorable matches, please:

Well, one of the strangest matches I ever played was in a Maryland 14.1 State Championship – I was playing an absolute champion, who shall remain nameless, and it was early in the game. He had just broken a rack, and he had 14 open balls. No hangers, but he had 5 legitimately reasonable shots, and on fairly loose equipment to boot. This is a spot that I'm normally expecting to sit for 20-30 minutes, minimum. Out of nowhere, he... calls a bank? My eyes get wide, and sure enough, he misses it. I exchange a look with my road partner and pool brother, Danny Barouty, as if to say, "is this real life? did that just happen?", and I went on to a super-lopsided win. Seeing a decision that strange, at that level of the game, was really quite memorable.

But the match I'll never forget was a loss to Thorsten in the 2011 World

14.1. I was already guaranteed 5<sup>th</sup> place, after having beaten Stefan Cohen in the first round of the single-elimination stage, and then a hometown hero of mine in the next round (after getting ludicrously lucky against him – I opened with a 56 or 70, missed a breakshot by 3 diamonds, and left him dead safe with a wide open table. Ugh.).

Anyway, so here I am, tired as hell (it was my 3<sup>rd</sup> 200 point match of the day), unbelievably happy of what I had already accomplished but also completely drained, and trying to somehow mentally prepare to play the best 14.1 tournament player of at least the current era.

Thorsten opened with a 116, because he just doesn't have off games this deep in a tournament. I could've given up, told myself I was too tired, that I had a great run in this tournament but I ran into a buzzsaw and it's obviously at an end... but I reached deep, in a way I didn't really know I was capable. Man – I fought through that match. Every safe, every ball, every rack, and eventually caught an awful scratch on a break shot when I was all the way up at about 130. To his credit, Thorsten ran out from about 165. I'd have loved to have won that match, but even the loss was worth it for what it taught me about myself.

**Q:** How exhilarating – my hope is every pool player has a similar experience to learn about themselves. So, what is your favorite event to play in?

No contest – the World 14.1 or the American 14.1. The round-robin format in the early stages guarantees a chance to get in stroke. And it's always great to see the guys. Straight pool attracts a good class of people.

**Q:** I hadn't heard that stated that way before – excellent point. Go



Steve with Danny Barouty

ahead and tell us, what is your highest run in straight pool?

207, run on great friend and great player Jim Gottier. He was rooting for me all the way. Since then, I've run another 200, but quite lamely didn't break my record.

**Q:** How did you get interested in straight pool?

As a kid in my basement, I was literally learning from library books. And those books were ancient, so they wrote almost exclusively about straight pool.

To describe how little I knew about 9-ball, when I was trying to learn the game I didn't know how to rack the balls. I knew the diamond shape, but other than the 1-9, I didn't know how to place the balls, and I had no idea it didn't matter. So I taped *The Color of Money* the next time it aired on HBO and literally freeze-framed on a scene where they showed an unbroken rack. I memorized the order, and for about 2 years I racked the balls exactly like this, thinking this was the only legal pattern. Just first-degree nonsense.

**Q:** OK, so straight pool. What don't we know that we should?

Ah! Great question! One thing I adamantly believe is that running 90 and

missing is a hell of a lot more effective than running 30 and playing safe. The old notion of always leaving the table on a safe has been romanticized, but in my opinion can be overapplied. You're not going to beat Mika running 30s; I don't care how you leave the table when you're done. Even the idea that leaving safe is somehow a guarantee of *anything* is silly – you still have to win the safe battle! You'd have to win 2 out of 3 safe battles for 30-and-safe to just *break even* against 90-and-miss. Against top-flight competition, this is a horrendously bad bet to make.

So the math suggests you're often far better off playing aggressively, especially against quality players. This doesn't translate into taking flyers, but it does mean taking some shots in the 40%-50% range under certain circumstances.

**Q:** Oooh, anymore tips you care to share?

Well, remember that you're never forced to sell out in 14.1. If you legitimately have no reasonable shot/safe, you can always take three fouls. You've only lost a net sixteen points (your opponent loses two to your eighteen), and you get to rebreak with your opponent on two fouls, poten-

tially putting him/her into a brutal position. Against certain competition, that's almost always better than leaving an open table after flailing at some zero-chance safe. [in straight pool, you lose a point if you foul, but if you foul 3 times in a row, you lose 15 points and also your opponent has the option to rebreak].

A real-world scenario which comes up all the time is when you accidentally get to a really bad spot. There's no safe, but only a shot somewhere in the 25%-30% range. This is where game theory can be utilized to your advantage in a really fun way. *As long as your opponent cannot foul and move your cueball to a worse spot, take two intentionals [two intentional fouls].* Your opponent really has no choice but to take the fouls back, even as he figures out what you're doing. (His only other choice is to shoot the shot himself – which, if he does, is great for you. You've just gotten him to shoot a shot he'll make less than 1 in 3 times.) So, when you're both on two, go ahead and shoot that tough shot. If you make it, you're now off to the races – and with an opponent on two fouls, which is a tremendous advantage. If you don't, you're no worse off than where you were had you shot it immediately. This is even better when the shot you have to shoot is a kick to a ball near a pocket. If you make it, great. If you miss, you might miss the whole ball and commit the third foul. Now, you don't even sell out – it's just a mandatory rebreak. Ha!

**Q:** Game Theory (making a mental note). Most people I interview have overcome something. Is there anything you'd like to share that we all can learn from? Or a difficulty you overcame?

Oh, a straight-up and debilitating lack of confidence, which has affected me in both pool and in the business world. It manifested itself in my feel-

ing undeserving of any success I've experienced. This is a really toxic way to think and I wasted a lot of years in my career not being nearly as vocal, and willing to take risks, as I am now. Similarly, in pool, it's sad the number of matches I've gone into thinking I had no chance – it's just a terrible thought process that only towards the end of my truly competitive days did I begin to overcome.

Before my nice finish in 2011, I had an impactful conversation with one of my playing idols. Before the tournament even began, I was speaking with Thorsten – who I really can't say enough about, he's truly such a giving person – and I told him of my frustration at never really having a high finish in that event. He told me to make a plan to **win** the tournament that year. I nervously laughed, but he kept saying it, and asked me to visualize myself winning. I started playing around with that. And as it turned out, you could almost make the case that I came one bad scratch and two good matches away from winning the world championship that year. It sounds bizarre, and believe me, I have no illusions about my place in the game, but shooting that break shot at 130 against Thorsten that I mentioned earlier, I might have only been about 10-1 to win the tournament from that spot. I'll never forget it.

**Q:** Thank you for sharing with us about your confidence. In 1998 you moved to NYC. When did you move to New Jersey (where you currently live) and why?

We moved in 2007 to become grown-ups and start a family. NYC is a really difficult place to raise a kid; it presents a great opportunity culturally, but at a big financial sacrifice. And it brings with it all kinds of craziness, like having your kid interview for kindergarten and test into middle school. We knew that wasn't for us, so we had to get out.



Steve and Gina with their daughter

I still love the city. It's where I work and play pool, so I'm lucky that I get to spend a lot of time there.

**Q:** Speaking of NYC, do you realize that the pool scene there is more active than in other big cities? Or is not obvious because you live there? Or – it that what *our* impression is from what we see going on in NYC?

It's a great question you ask, because it's easy to become desensitized to how lucky we have it here. I play in two leagues at Amsterdam in NYC – 9-ball and 14.1 – and they're both wildly competitive. I know it's not like that everywhere, and I don't take that for granted.

I think we're all lucky as pool players, because we have an enormous subculture where as long as you're not a jerk, you're likely to be welcomed by your fellow players anywhere you go. If I ever got stranded somewhere, I'd head right for the nearest poolroom and I'm sure I'd be fine.

**Q:** Hmm, that's a really great point; hadn't thought of that – and very true! Those in NYC know of your close connection to poker pro Nick Schulman, but many of the readers likely don't. It's a great story!

Absolutely. I met Nicky at the east-side Amsterdam not long after I moved to NYC. He was 14 and his dad used to bring him in the room a lot. He was really looking to improve, and we started playing almost every day; it was just very obvious there was something special about him. He was wildly bright and surrounded by street-smart adults all day, so he developed an awareness and maturity not very common at that age. We became really close.

I wouldn't play with him unless he kept up his grades, and for a while I was helping him in math too. And his parents, who basically became my surrogate NYC parents, really trusted me. They knew I'd always look out for him, and that's a tough thing to beat in a poolroom. By the time he was 15 we were all family.

**Q:** Wow, you are tough! Making him keep his grades up before you would play pool with him! I'm just kidding, lol. I think that's actually really awesome of you. And I can see the influence your Dad had, as you carry that on to help others.

Did Nick improve?

Oh yeah - his game progressed quicker than I'd ever seen. He went from

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a low-C to Open speed in maybe 3 years, and it definitely didn't hurt that, in addition to all the time I was teaching him, he was learning from George, Danny, and Jon Smith as well. Improving at that clip is about the only time in someone's life that pool can be profitable, because very few people understand how strong you're getting. The handicaps are almost always wrong.

And this is the danger point, and it's one reason I don't want my kid playing – at that age, making an easy \$300 a week seems like really good money. And of course it's not – but even worse, it's also not going to last. Because people will eventually understand how good you are, and that gravy train is over. By that time, if you're not careful and if you didn't have some really positive influences in your life, you've likely already made some horrific decisions about your education and future, and things can get really tough. I've seen that scenario a couple times, and it's really sad.

**Q:** Ugh, many of us have for sure. So, then what happened?

When he was around 18 or 19, Nicky's parents moved upstate – but he wanted to stay in the city, and by then he was practically living with Gina and me anyway. So we kind of made it official; got him his own key and everything.

It was at this point that we started playing poker, at first fairly casually. I distinctly remember explaining to him that a flush beat a straight. Ha! But we were soon playing online, as this was right around when Chris Money-maker, the amateur, won the WSOP and poker absolutely popped.

We were having a blast – we were playing all the time, and we were becoming quite good. The general level of play online was atrocious, and the money was all of a sudden not trivial.



Steve and Gina

Still, as with all things in his life, he studied *hard*. (As an aside, it has always bothered me when some in the poolroom would talk about him and glibly say how nice it would be to just win all kinds of money at cards, as if it wasn't work. Believe me, he worked intensely at becoming an expert at this – the hours and focus he put in, and still does, is truly difficult to convey.)

Anyway, so we were sharing an online poker account at that time and he'd play all night, then leave me notes in the morning about how he fared and what he learned.

It was around this time that he made a pivotal decision, which was to start playing live in some of the underground NY poker clubs. He met some great people who helped him navigate the scene, and are still some of his best friends to this day. At that point he really just exploded, tearing up that local scene in the same way he did NY pool.

**Q:** Sounds like he studies and learns quickly in anything he puts his mind to.

For sure. And two months after he turned 21, he was really excited to play his first World Poker Tour event, at Foxwoods in Connecticut. He's texting me throughout – he's getting pretty deep, and he's got a good stack going. When he made the final table,

Gina and I made plans to take off work and go to the taping.

There was a lot of traffic, and it was becoming clear we wouldn't make it on time. The producer apparently told him he'd have to give up the front-row seats he reserved for us, because they didn't want to go to air with the seats unfilled. But Nicky wouldn't let them start, and said he wouldn't play unless they waited for us. As his mother eloquently later put it, it was likely his first bluff of the evening. But it worked! We finally got there, he ran to give us a hug, we sat in those front seats, and then he won the whole damned thing. The youngest player ever to win that event, a record that's likely never to be broken.

Fast forward to today, he's even more successful. He just won his third World Series of Poker (WSOP) bracelet this summer, and he's also become the most respected TV poker commentator in the community (Daniel Negreanu recently tweeted that he *mates* everyone else!). I couldn't be prouder.

He lives in Vegas now, and of course we're not as close as we once were – we both have families and lead pretty different lives than we did back in those carefree days. But when we talk it's like no time has passed at all, and we know we share a bond and a history that's really shaped who we each are today.

**Q:** That is seriously an amazing story about Nick, wow! And you have mentioned this “Gina” person a few times. Let’s get to know her better. How long have you two been married?

18 years! We’re old, but life keeps getting better. She is my partner in every way.

**Q:** How did you two meet?

Gina played at the west-side Amsterdam, and one day her friend told her there was a new lefty playing pretty sporty at the east-side. They went down to watch me play George, and apparently I was losing so badly that Gina’s first impression of me was that I was certainly on drugs. She didn’t realize that’s just how you look when you haven’t seen an open shot in two hours.

The first time we actually met was when Stu Mattana introduced us and asked me to play with her to see what I thought of her game. Afterwards I told her she wasn’t bad. But of course she was horrible, which I told her years after. All the more reason I’m so impressed with how she developed as a player.

**Q:** Do you and Gina play on the same team and/or league?

Yep, same team! Works wonderfully except that when we’re on vacation, it’s a double-whammy for the rest of our team (sorry team).

**Q:** I love Gina’s game! She plays smart, top notch pool. So I can see the impact you both not playing would hurt the team, lol. Do you two ever practice together?

Almost never! We finally have a home table so very occasionally now we’ll play together, but before that, not for years. For a while we experimented with me giving her ‘lessons,’ but trying to learn from your significant other is kind of awful for both parties and not very productive.

That said, I’m really proud of how far Gina has come in her game. She barely practices anymore and still puts together the occasional pretty strong set.

And we’re really perfect for each other – we’re alike in so many ways, and have the best time together. She cracks me up and works really hard. We’ve always put our careers in front of pool, and at the same time know how important a place the game holds for each of us. And I love watching her as a mother to our child. It’s the greatest.

**Q:** That’s very touching. Did you always know you wanted to be a Dad?

For sure. It’s just the most wonderful thing ever, and the actual experience is better than I even imagined. Watching and helping this tiny person learn the world has been a joy that I can’t explain. She’s 8, and she hasn’t given

us a day’s worth of trouble yet, so I’m hoping she doesn’t make up for that during her teenage years. Either way, I feel like the luckiest guy in the world.

**Q:** That whole response is really beautiful! Do you two plan on having more kids?

Nope. We’ve seen some really... challenging... kids, and we’re not pushing our luck. Ha!

**Q:** I noticed you seem to make it a point to not share a lot of photos of your daughter on social media. I admire that. Why did you and Gina decide this?

It’s a little bit of a safety thing, but honestly it’s more that I just feel the decision to be broadcast online should be up to the person in the picture, and if she’s too young to make that choice rationally, then it’s not right for me to make that choice for her. I don’t mean that to be an indictment of anyone who feels differently, because I have no idea if I’m right. And we’ve definitely posted some, so it’s not even a hard-and-fast rule. In fact, I think there may even be one in this article!

**Q:** Wow, that’s said in a way I hadn’t thought of before about photos of others. Btw, what’s your favorite quote or words you live by?

“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.” I think there is so much truth in that, across many different facets of life.

Oh, also, I believe Bruce Springsteen is responsible for the majority of good in the universe.

**Q:** Uh, why is that?

Oh, I could go on and on, and nobody wants to hear it. So the quick version is that for 40 years, his work has measured the difference between the



American Dream and the American Reality, which I think is an immensely important conversation for us all to be having these days. There are a lot of people who have been left behind during America's good years, and he has given a voice to many of these people. But even with that sometimes brutal framework, there is inherent hope in his lyrics. It's impossible to see him perform and not come away feeling there is value to all life, and that we all have a responsibility to the larger community in which we live.

**Q:** Is straight pool your favorite game?

Straight pool is the most beautiful game, and I really don't think that's arguable. But, and I think I might surprise some people here, it is far from the most fair game, and in many important ways I consider it to be the luckiest game. In today's 14.1 tournaments, you might average three truly open chances in a game to 150. You'll sometimes get fewer. This is a terrible way to judge a contest. The fairest game/format I ever played was Tony and Gail's Predator call-shot 10-ball tour. Even against top competition, most games I saw had at least one inning for each player. You can't beat that.

As to the luck factor in straight pool, it's brutal. Against top players, every time your opponent almost-but-not-quite leaves himself safe, or has a ball pop out to give him his only shot, or has a ball hang by a pocket when he accidentally leaves himself down table after a break – these things are very often 100 ball swings. Luck in rotation games, at least when you're not using gimmick racks, is often only a single game difference. The comparison isn't even close in my eyes.

**Q:** What goals do you have (on and off the table)?



Steve with his 2007 team NYPT

Professionally, I'm right where I want to be. I'm really proud of the work I do and the team I get to work with every day. It's a privilege working with smart people.

On the table, all I ever wanted was to run 200 – lots of guys run 100, but really, the list gets considerably smaller when you make it to 200. It was a really special moment when I finally did it. When I was on about 170 Gina walked in the room from work, and I saw out of the corner of my eye that Danny kind of stopped her and told her what was going on, and they just watched in the background. When I made ball 200, I laid my cue on the table and just took a moment to compose myself. It was an albatross around my neck for a long time and knowing that nobody would ever be able to take this away from me... it was a great feeling.

I'm hoping to run 250 at some point. I think 300 is probably off the table for me.

**Q:** I have to say, to not be sharked or distracted by Gina walking in on what could be a potentially life-changing moment shows how

strong your mental game is! And you are *definitely* in an elite group - not many have run over 200! Congrats! Speaking of high runs, what did you think of John Schmidt beating Mosconi's record? (for those not aware, after trying weeks on end, John ran 626 balls on May 27th of this year, beating the long-standing 526 ball run record by Willie Mosconi)

Mosconi's record has always meant a lot to me. Straight pool is in my blood, maybe more so than pool in general, if that somehow makes sense. And what John did turned everything I thought I knew about 14.1 on its head, in the best way possible.

Not missing for over 600 balls, sure that's impressive. But honestly, it's the concentration that I can't fathom. Straight pool is really easy until it isn't, and that switch is turned quickly – usually as the result of a seemingly innocuous lapse in focus. Those lapses can be harmless, if you're lucky. When you're not so lucky, they lead to difficult end-patterns, or to literally having no shot. To get to 600+ and not collapse from mental exhaustion, I'd imagine you have to let yourself go

on auto-pilot during the really open racks, and that's when you're most vulnerable.

So the nearest I can figure is that John's auto-pilot is far, far different than that of even other top players. It's not the not missing. It's the never getting safe. It's the never getting on the wrong side of a ball when you're late in your end-pattern. For 44 consecutive racks. It's really incomprehensible and I'm so happy for him. And it's also taught me that triple-dig-it runs aren't necessarily about serendipity, but about careful planning and hard determination.

Finally, I think it's been somewhat overlooked that his feat came as the result of a focused attempt, which I find so impressive. Had he just done it one random night in a poolroom, you could almost call it a fluke. John wanted this record, he made his intentions public, and then *he did it*. Man, I think that's so strong.

**Q:** Significant points I hadn't remotely thought of! Who has been a big influence in your life?

Gina, for sure. She has believed in me and helped me to be more successful than I ever thought I could. Also, my friends. I've been blessed all my life with great friends, and after high school, all my closest friends, and of course my wife, came from pool. The game has been very good to me.

**Q:** Who has been a big influence in your pool game?

Developing as a player in NYC, I've been quite fortunate in being able to learn from some amazing talents. Certainly George was such an influence, especially in rotation. He gave me that much needed polish – how to give up nothing for free, and make your opponent fight for every opportunity. His loss has been immeasurable.

Of late, and due to the dynamite league at Amsterdam, I've been lucky enough to play Tony Robles quite a bit in the last year. I learn ten things every time I play him. Such a smart and creative player. And as to his character, I've seen him lose to a weaker player – then teach the guy a shot. We need more Tonys.

But I don't think it would be a surprise to anyone when I say that the biggest influence on my game has been Danny Barouty. He was the first great player I met, and later, when we really became friends, we had a hell of a ride together over 15 years or so before he moved west. I remember one particular period when I was out of work for a few months after 9/11 – we were playing several games of 14.1 *a day*. He was doing things I only began to understand years later, like manufacturing key balls. Who knew about manufacturing key balls?

He taught me in the only way I think ever really works; by osmosis. Yes, we would discuss the game, and certain positions, but honestly, watching someone play the balls so brilliantly, over and over, for a *decade* – there's nothing like it.

**Q:** I agree, there's nothing like it! You speak of Danny Barouty as if we all should know him – for those who don't, tell us about him real quick, please.

Danny's one of the real characters of the game. He cut his bones at The Golden Cue in Queens during that room's heyday, and he saw it all. To hear him tell it, it was easy to become a strong player simply because he was able to watch the game's greats. But to hear me tell it, lots of guys were in the room during those years, watching the best, and none of them ended up playing like Danny. He has a uniquely talented mind for the game.

He makes everyone laugh. He has a keen knowledge of history. He thinks no song made after 1936 is any good, and in his mind, Led Zeppelin = Britney Spears. As the kids say, I can't even.

I've learned so much from him, but I've never been able to shake the feeling that I've slightly failed him, by never fully learning to see the table like he does. He is a special talent, and one of my fondest pool memories was the honor of inducting him into the Straight Pool Hall of Fame.

I think you are too hard on yourself – from what I see from this interview, you are nothing but a very successful person and player! I am SO happy and honored you said yes to being interviewed. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know you better, appreciate all your perspectives so much, and you also have provided the readers *numerous* gems throughout the interview to help their own game. Thank you, Steve! From one of your biggest fans (for life!).

Melinda, this has been so much fun. This whole process has been a real thrill for me, and you asked some great questions. Thank you so much for the opportunity!

Melinda “ak-trigger” Bailey has been in the pool scene as a player and ambassador for pool for over 25 years.



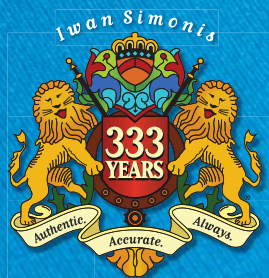
Additionally, she was a Tournament Director for two large tours in Texas for over 15 years. She is a loyal blogger (<http://pooljourney.blogspot.com/>) and holds numerous BCA/ACS Texas State and National titles (singles, doubles, and teams).

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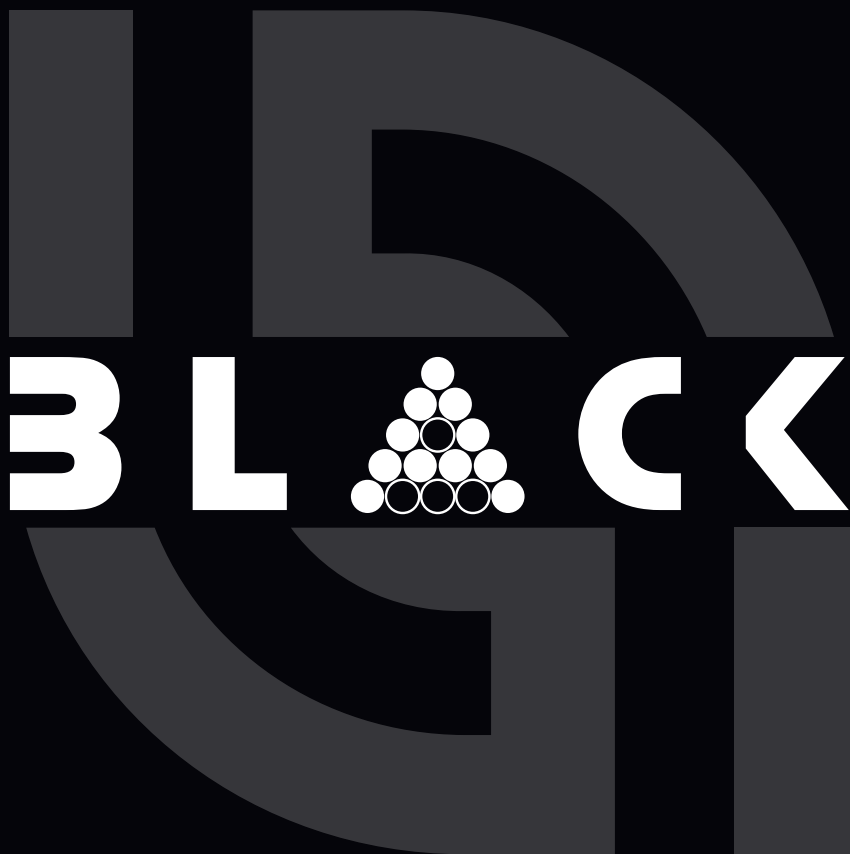


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# Ko Wins Thriller Over Filler, Crowned Predator World 10-Ball Champion

Four years ago, a 19-year-old Ping-Chung Ko was eliminated in the semifinals of the World Pool and Billiards Association's World 10-Ball Championship and watched from stands as his older brother, Pin-Yi Ko, claimed the title over Carlo Biado.

“I was happy for my brother, but I think if I would have been the winner that may have been better,” the younger Ko said with a laugh through a translator.

The roles were reversed Friday night, as the younger Ko used a combination of brilliant shot-making and some late match mistakes by opponent Joshua Filler to claim the Predator World 10-ball Championship at the Rio All-Suites Hotel and Casino. The win is the first major victory for Ko, who has come close in big events in recent

years but hasn't been able to close out until this week in Las Vegas. Last year, Ko finished second at the International 9-Ball Open and had top-10 finishes at the China Open and World 9-Ball Championship.

“The last couple of years, Joshua has played really well and I just wanted to challenge him,” Ko said. “I didn't know if I could beat him but I just wanted to try my best.”

Filler jumped out to an early 3-1 advantage in the finals, using two breaks

and runs and a dry break from Ko. After the two players traded breaks and runs in the next two games, and Ko took a restroom break immediately following Filler's pocketing of the 10-ball. The elder Ko followed along with his little brother, more to be there as a security blanket than to coach or offer advice.

“He didn't really say anything to me,” said Ping-Chung Ko. “Just having him walk with me relaxed me.”



The timeout paid dividends for Ko, who used missed shots by his opponent in the seventh and ninth racks to pull to within 5-4. Momentum really shifted in Ko's favor in the crucial 10th game. Without a clear shot on the 1-ball, the German attempted a safety and left a long open shot instead. Ko pocketed the ball and ran out the rack to tie the score, then mixed in a break-and-run to take the lead. Filler tied the score at six each and had an opportunity to regain the lead in the 11th game when Ko misplayed a safety on the 5-ball, but couldn't capitalize – missing a somewhat routine combination shot on the 9 and 10 balls.

“Both matches today, I played pretty solid at the start of the match but I couldn't get a good lead,” Filler said. “I didn't have a chance to get three games ahead. Then I missed some balls.”

Ko was clutch in the closing stages, executing a sharp cut on the 3-ball and bank on the 4-ball to run out the 15th game and regain the lead, 8-7. When Filler broke dry in the next game, Ko used a challenging one-rail kick shot to pocket the 3-ball and run out the rack and climb onto the hill, 9-7.

Needing one more win for the championship, Ko broke in the 18th game and authoritatively banked the 1-ball into the side pocket – as Filler sat in his chair simply nodding in appreciation.

“That's really when I felt like I could win this,” he said.

As he stroked his way through the final balls, a packed crowd sensed the victory – including a dozen family and fans who had traveled from Chinese Taipei. After landing the 5-ball and sending the cue ball two rails down table for the game winning 9 and 10 balls, the elder Ko let out a sigh of relief.

“I was nervous until he made the last two balls,” he said.



**Ko Ping-Chung**

Filler was plagued with mistakes throughout the day. He reached the finals by surviving a handful of uncharacteristic unforced errors throughout the match, defeating the elder Ko, 10-8.

The reigning WPA World 9-ball champion looked like he could be giving the assembled crowd an early dismissal, jumping out to a 3-0 lead on the strength of three victorious safety exchanges. Filler was cruising through the fourth rack as well but missed a makeable cross-side bank shot on the 3-ball into the side pocket. Ko took full advantage, clearing the table and adding three breaks and runs in route to winning five of the next six games to capture the lead, 5-4. Filler broke and ran out in the 10th game, tying the score at five apiece before the two competitors took a brief intermission.

Everything that went right with Ko's break before the intermission was nowhere to be found in the second half – failing to pocket a ball off of the opening shot three times. After Ko inched ahead once more time, 6-5, after a victorious safety exchange, Filler broke and ran twice and took advantage of back-to-back dry breaks from his opponent to charge ahead, 9-6.

“I was criticizing and questioning myself, and that's why I didn't do well on the breaks,” Ko said through his translator.

The German appeared positioned to run out the 16th game and advance to the finals but missed position on the 5-ball. Filler again had a chance to close out the match in the next rack when Ko again failed to pocket a ball on the break, but missed the 2-ball in back-to-back opportunities.



“Overall, I think it was just a bad day for me,” Filler said.

Filler initiated a safety exchange when he didn’t have a clear shot at the 1-ball after his break in the 18th game. He found an opening after Ko left the 1-ball visible down at the opposite end of the table from the cue ball. The German pocketed the ball and meticulously worked his way through the rack to earn a spot in the evening’s finals. Filler’s go-to move after pocketing the game-winner in a final round is to yell and pump his fist. Not this time, as he collapsed onto the table in relief instead.

“I wasn’t very lucky. Every time that Filler missed, I didn’t have a good position to shoot,” Ko said.

Although he’d been eliminated, baby brother Ping-Chung Ko still had an opportunity to keep the family alive with a victory in the next semifinal match against Masato Yoshioka of Japan.

“The only words I have for my brother is, ‘release your pressure,’” Ko said. “I don’t want to see him under any pressure.”

If the young Ko was feeling any kind of pressure, he certainly didn’t show it at the table. Using stifling safety play as well as pinpoint accuracy when an open shot was available, Ko won five of the first seven racks of the game and cruised to an easy 10-3 victory.

After Yoshiota claimed the first game of the match, Ko took advantage of a foul, scratch and a victorious safety battle to build a 4-1 advantage. His

Japanese counterpart, who was the last remaining player in the event who qualified by winning a regional qualifier tournament, tacked on a break-and-run and took advantage of a Ko scratch to narrow the deficit to 5-3. However, Ko continued to hit the gas pedal – breaking and running in the ninth and 11th racks as he won the last five games of the match.

“My main objective was to just get the experience internationally, but when I got to the semifinals, I felt a lot of pressure. That’s why I didn’t play in a way that I want to play,” Yoshiota said.

*The Predator World 10-ball Championship is a presentation of CueSports International and sponsored by Predator Group. Predator Group is an international billiard industry leader with a focus on high-performance cues and shafts as well as bringing constant innovation and game-improving equipment to billiard players worldwide. The event is being hosted by the Rio All-Suites Hotel and Casino and broadcast live on YouTube by CSI Media, a subsidiary of Cue Sports International. For more information, visit [www.world10ball.com](http://www.world10ball.com)*

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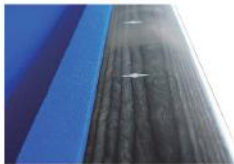


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6.Slate Leveling System (Patent pending)



Our patent pending LevelBox(TM) Plus system designed to match the runway of aluminum alloy beam, allows for moving across whole cabinet beam to micro adjust the slate for precise installation without the need for shims.

7.Leg Leveling System



Leveling the frame by rotating the screw in the pedestal to adjust the distance between the pedestal and the leg.

8.Pockets



Our redesigned pocket buckets are made from TPE (Thermo-Plastic-Elastomers) in the ideal density necessary to eliminate scuffing (and resulting skidding), reduce ball rejection (bounce out) and dampen impact noise. Specially designed with our patent pending T-shape slot device, the pockets offer a precision fit with fast assembly. Each pocket can hold 10 balls and pockets are available in a variety of colors to match the cloth.

# Tkach comes from the loss side to win WPBA Sondheim Diamond Invitational in Iowa

Two young women, one working on her best earnings year to date and the other, coming off of her best earnings year-to-date (2018) squared off in the finals of the WPBA Sondheim Diamond Invitational in Iowa on the weekend of August 8-11.

The former, Russia's Kristina Tkach, a top performer for Roy's Basement, came from the loss side to down hot seat occupant, Taipei's Tzu-Chien Wei. Wei, who, according to our records, had her best year in 2018, had only cashed in one event thus far this year (3rd at the WPBA Masters in late Feb./early March). The \$10,000-added event drew 48 entrants to the Fairfield Arts and Convention Center in Fairfield, Iowa.

They met twice; once in a winners' side semifinal and again, in the finals. Wei had advanced past Catherine Tschumper, Emily Duddy and Brittany Bryant to arrive at the winners' side semifinal versus Tkach. Kelly Fisher, in the meantime, who was runner-up to Siming Chen at the WPBA Master's event in which Wei had finished third, got by Kelly Isaac, Gail Eaton and April Larson to arrive at her winners' side semifinal match against Line Kjorsvik.

Fisher sent Kjorsvik to the loss side 8-3 and in the hot seat match, faced Wei, who'd defeated Tkach 8-6. Wei claimed the hot seat 8-5 over Fisher and waited on the return on Tkach.

On the loss side, Kjorsvik picked up Bryant, who, after her defeat at the hands of Wei, had eliminated Sara Miller 8-3 and, in a double hill match, Jennifer Baretta. Tkach drew a rematch against Monica Webb, whom she'd defeated 8-3 on the winners' side. Webb moved west to defeat Kelly Cavanaugh, Jenna Bishoff and April Larson (all 8-6), and then survived a double hill fight versus Emily Duddy to draw Tkach.



Tkach gave up only a single rack in the rematch against Webb and in the quarterfinals, faced Bryant, who'd defeated Kjorsvik 8-4. Bryant and Tkach locked up in what was something of a predictable double hill fight for advancement to the semifinals. Tkach won it to earn her re-match against Fisher.

One might have expected a similar double hill battle between Tkach and Fisher, both anxious for a rematch against Wei in the hot seat. It didn't happen. Tkach took care of business and downed Fisher 8-5.

With the intangible momentum on her side, Tkach came into the finals and defeated Wei 10-5 to claim her third major title of 2019. She'd previously won the Super Billiards Expo's Women Championship in March and Europe's Dynamic Billiards Treviso Open Ladies Division in May.

WPBA representatives thanked the ownership and staff at the Fairfield Arts and Convention Center, as well as sponsors Diamond Billiard Products, Outsville, Simonis Cloth and Aramis Balls.

CYNERGY



**CUETEC** **BREACH**  
CYNERGY

**SHATTER THE RACK**  
AND LEAVE THE COMPETITION IN PIECES.

# Hansen goes undefeated to take 4th Annual NAPT Summer Classic

**The two stories moved in opposite directions. For a while. Until they didn't, and two female pool professionals met in the finals of the North American Pool Tour's 4th Annual Summer Classic.**

**O**ne story was about a young woman who's already made her mark, winning VNEA junior Championships, chalking up wins on the North Star Ladies Pool Tour and at the age of 16, winning the US Bar Box Women's 10-Ball Championships. Taylor Hansen, 20, is currently a member of Lindenwood University's billiards team, under the tutelage of Mark Wilson, and competing with fellow-Minnesotan April Larson, who joined the program this past year. Hansen and

Larson battled twice at the recent (June) American College Union International Tournament, with Larson capturing her first of (presumably) many college titles ahead. Hansen has competed in the North American Pool Tour's (NAPT) annual Division I Pro 10-Ball Summer Classic three of its four years already, and at this most recent event – August 15-18 at Shooter's Sports Bar & Billiards in Grayslake, IL – she won it, going undefeated through a field of 27 entrants.

The second story was about an older woman who's been competing professionally longer than Taylor Hansen has been alive. Eleanor Callado has been a regular winner on the West Coast Women's Tour for a number of years, a regular competitor at WPBA events, and a competitor in all four of the NAPT's Summer Classics, including 2017, when she finished as runner-up to Karen Corr. According to our records, she had a breakout year, financially, in 2009, but she recorded



her best earnings year, to date, last year (2018). At this most recent NAPT Summer Classic, she lost her opening round match to Caela Huddleston and embarked on an eight-match, loss-side winning streak that led to her challenging Hansen in the finals. Her loss-side run had included a 7-4 victory over her sister, Emilyn Callado, who's in possession of an equally impressive pool resume.

As Eleanor Callado was beginning her loss-side run, Hansen and Christy Dickerson advanced toward a meeting in the hot seat match. Hansen almost got sent over in her opening match as she survived a double hill battle versus Ellen Robinson. She reversed her fortunes in the second round with a shutout over Vanessa Hood and then, downed Veronique Menard 7-3 to draw Kaylin Wikoff in one of the winners' side semifinals. Dickerson defeated her first opponent, Kelly Jones 7-5, before meeting up with the woman who'd sent Callado to the loss side,

Caela Huddleston. Dickerson sent her over 7-5 and then defeated Laura Semko 7-3 to pick up Sarah Rousey in the other winners' side semifinal.

Hansen shut out Kaylin Wikoff and in the hot seat match, faced Dickerson, who'd survived a double hill battle against Rousey. Hansen gave up only a single rack to Dickerson and claimed the hot seat. She had given up only 10 racks over 45 games.

On the loss side, Eleanor and Emilyn Callado were working on their respective winning streaks. Emilyn had lasted one more round on the winners' side than sister, Eleanor. Eleanor got by Kelly Jones, Theresa Ballinger, Ronnette Chop and Tara Williams to draw sister, Emilyn, who'd defeated Chris Honeman, Vanessa Hood, and Laura Semko to get to that point. Eleanor defeated Emilyn 7-4 to draw Wikoff. Rousey picked up Marian Poole, who was working on her own four-match, loss-side winning streak that had in-

cluded recent wins over Veronique Menard 7-5 and Tina Larsen 7-4.

Callado advanced to the quarterfinals with a 7-4 victory over Wikoff. Rousey joined her after surviving a double hill battle against Poole. Callado then chalked up two straight 7-5 wins, downing Rousey in the quarterfinals and Dickerson in the semifinals to earn a shot against Hansen in the finals.

Callado became only the second competitor to chalk up more than three racks against Hansen and in the finals, came within a game of forcing a single deciding game. Hansen, though, prevailed 7-5 to claim the event title.

Tour director Adrienne Beach thanked the ownership and staff at Shooter's Sports Bar & Billiards, and noted that the next stop on the NAPT, scheduled for Sept. 19-22, will be the Division I Pro 3rd Annual Desert Challenge, to be hosted by Griff's in Las Vegas.



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# MARIO HE

## Celebrates Birthday with Eurotour Win

**Mario He (AUT) is the winner of the Dynamic Billard Veldhoven Open 2019. In the final match, he downed Denis Grabe (EST) 9-2.**

**B**irthday came a little early for He, as he eliminated #1 Euro-tour ranked player Eklent Kaci (ALB) in the single elimination stage on Friday 9-4. Things just kept getting better for He on Saturday as the day started with congratulations for his 26th birthday and with a 9-6 win over Konrad Juszczyszyn (POL) in his first match of the day. In his next match, He overpowered Oliver Szolnoki (HUN) with the same 9-6 scoreline. In the semi-final match, He defeated "The Killer" World #1 ranked Joshua Filler (GER) by a whisker in a hill-hill match. That took him into the final match against Denis Grabe, who had just ousted Marc Bijsterbosch (NED) in his semi-final match 9-7. The final was all about the break and He's break was much better on this day. Throughout the entire event, He had been breaking very consistently and in the final match he capitalised on that. Grabe committed a few uncharacteristic mistakes while pocketing the balls and He did not let any opportunities pass him by as he took a big lead over Grabe. In the final racks of the match, already trailing 7-2, Grabe's frustration got the better of him, but He stayed focused, winning rack after rack for a convincing 9-2 victory over Grabe. "I am super happy", Mario He stated after the match, "especially after my real last year it is a wonderful feeling to be back on Europe's top". "To me,

winning a Euro-Tour event is one of the hardest things to do nowadays in the World of Pool Billiards so I am extremely happy with my performance," Mario He added.

### Top Eight Finishers

1. Mario He AUT
2. Denis Grabe EST
3. Marc Bijsterbosch NED
- Joshua Filler GER
5. Mohammad Soufi SYR
- Alex Montpellier FRA
- Oliver Szolnoki HUN
- Fedor Gorst RUS

That concludes the coverage of the Dynamic Billard veldhoven Open 2019. Starting upcoming Tuesday, we will have the Dynamic Billard European Championships for Seniors and Women.

The Dynamic Billard Veldhoven Open were played in the NH Conference Centre Koningshof in Veldhoven, The Netherlands, on up to 24 tables which are all streamed LIVE throughout the whole event. In order to be able to follow all the action LIVE, premium membership can be obtained at [www.kozoom.com](http://www.kozoom.com). Once a premium membership is held, all events for the respective period of time can be viewed LIVE. Additionally, a huge video gallery is contained in the website.

The event was hosted by the European Governing Body for Pool, the European Pocket Billiard Federation (EPBF) and organized by International Billiard Promotion (IBP). For further information and reference please go to the federation website [www.eurotouronline.com](http://www.eurotouronline.com) or visit us on Facebook for regular news clips or contact our press office [press@epbf.com](mailto:press@epbf.com).





## Ouschan Completes Austrian Double Victory For The Weekend

**Jasmin Ouschan (AUT) has won the Predator Veldhoven Open 2019, the third tournament of the women's Euro-Tour series, with a 7-4 victory over Melanie Suessenguth (GER).**

**W**hat really made the difference between Ouschan and the other 59 contestants in this event, her second straight tour stop win, was her break shot and her playing intelligence. Though Ouschan is known as a strong shotmaker, she also knows when to go for a safety in order to achieve an even better situation. Her break shot is also much more consistent than the break shot of her opponents. On her way to the final match, Ouschan defeated Kristina Jaeger (GER) 7-3, Ewa Bak (POL) 7-2, Marharyta Fefilava (BLR) 7-1, Kamila Khodjaeva (BEL) 7-1 and in the semi-final, Tina Vogelmann (GER) 7-3. Those results clearly show her superiority over the rest of the field in this tournament. Suessenguth made her way to the final match with victories over Diana Khodjaeva (BEL) 7-2, Kristina Tkach (RUS) 7-6, Ine Helvik (NOR) 7-3, Christine Steinlage (GER) 7-4, Nataliya Seroshtan (RUS) 7-4 and in her

semi-final, Veronika Hubrtova (CZE) 7-5. While most fans expected a clear victory for Ouschan in the final match, Suessenguth was a tough opponent and demanded everything from Ouschan. Tied at 4-4 after eight racks, Ouschan shifted into overdrive and took the match and the title, winning 7-4 over Suessenguth.

### Top Eight Finishers

1. Jasmin Ouschan AUT
2. Melanie Suessenguth GER
3. Tina Vogelmann GER
- Veronika Hubrtova CZE
5. Kamila Khodjaeva BEL
- Kristina Tkach RUS
- Ina Kaplan GER
- Nataliya Seroshtan RUS

That concludes the coverage of the Predator Veldhoven Open 2019. Starting upcoming Tuesday, we will have the Dynamic Billiard European Championships for Seniors and Women.

The Predator Veldhoven Open were played in the NH Conference Centre Koningshof in Veldhoven, The Netherlands, on up to 24 tables which are all streamed LIVE throughout the whole event. In order to be able to follow all the action LIVE, premium membership can be obtained at [www.kozoom.com](http://www.kozoom.com). Once a premium membership is held, all events for the respective period of time can be viewed LIVE. Additionally, a huge video gallery is contained in the website.

The event was hosted by the European Governing Body for Pool, the European Pocket Billiard Federation (EPBF) and organized by International Billiard Promotion (IBP). For further information and reference please go to the federation website [www.womeneurotouronline.com](http://www.womeneurotouronline.com) or visit us on Facebook for regular news clips or contact our press office [press@epbf.com](mailto:press@epbf.com).

# 31st Annual BEF Junior National 9-Ball Championships

Presented by **Iwan Simonis** Crowns 2019 Champions

The Billiard Education Foundation recently held its 31st annual Junior National 9-Ball Championships, presented by Iwan Simonis, Tuesday, July 23 to Saturday, July 27. The event attracted more than 170 of the top junior pool players in the country.

**D**uring the event the Billiard Education Foundation recognized more than 100 players as Academic All Americans, as they all had a great point average of 3.0 or better. Along with the Academic All Americans, the BEF also recognized Joey Tate and Patricia Huber as the recipients of this year's Brenden Crocket Sportsman Award for exemplifying the ideals of sportsmanship while at the table with ethical behavior, fair play, and integrity throughout the event.

During the week long tournament BCA Hall of Famer Tom "Dr. Cue" Rossman also made his 26th consecutive appearance and held his annual artistic pool competition. Dr. Cue, presented the 2019 Artistic Pool awards to this year's champions: Jack Boldt (U18 boys division), Duncan Weiss (U16 boys division), Jayden Liu (U14 boys division), Vivian Liu (U18 girls division),

Brianna LaRatta (U16 girls division), and Patricia Huber (U14 division).

On Saturday July 27th the Junior National Championships concluded with the final matches in each category. In an effort to stay more aligned with the WPA World event, the BEF awarded Gold, Silver and Bronze medals to the top three finishers of each division. The finalist of this year's BEF Junior National 9-Ball Championships presented by Iwan Simonis are:

#### **GOLD MEDALISTS:**

- 18UB Kaiden Hunkins (Waukesha, WI)
- 18UG Vivian Liu (Harvard, MA)
- 16UB Kodi Allen (Tampa, FL)
- 16UG Tatum Cutting (Diamond, OH)
- 14UB Lazaro Martinez, III (New Braunfels, TX)
- 14UG Skyler Hess (Bowie, MD)

#### **SILVER MEDALISTS:**

- 18UB Lukas Francasso-Verner (Wallingford, CT)

- 18UG Casey Cork (Franklinville, NC)
- 16UB Matthew Wiseley (Poplar Bluff, MO)
- 16UG Tiana Jiang (Harvard, MA)
- 14UB Trenton White (Plant City, FL)
- 14UG Kennedy Meyman (White Bear Lake, MN)

#### **BRONZE MEDALISTS:**

- 18UB Ricky Evans (St. Peters, MO)
- 18UG Alexis Burciaga (Adrian, MI)
- 16UB Cameron Cummings (Como, TX)
- 16UG Savanna Wolford (Troutville, VA)
- 14UB Joey Tate (Lake Villa, IL)
- 14UG Tatum MacLachlan (Bonsall, CA)

#### **SPONSORS FOR THIS YEAR'S EVENT INCLUDED:**

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- Master Chalk
- McDermott Cues
- Predator Cues
- Ultimate Team Gear
- Billiards Digest





# Europe Announces 2019 Atlantic Challenge Cup Team

**The European Pocket Billiard Federation today announced its team to face the Americans during this year's staging of the Atlantic Challenge Cup taking place 28th to 30th November 2019 in Treviso Italy at the BHR Premier Best Western hotel.**

**T**he European team this year consists of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Sanjin Pehlivanovic, Netherlands Jan Van Lierop, Poland's Wiktor Zielinski, and making up the final boys spot this year is Germany's Christian Froehlich. On the girls' side representing Europe this year are Sweden's My Nguyen and the Ukraine's Darya Siranchuk. The European players are selected on their results at the European and World championships along with the highest ranked U19 player on the professional men's Eurotour. Jan van Lierop received his spot on the team through the Eurotour rankings while the other

five team members won at least one gold medal at the European Championships in 2018 to make the team.

After last year's win, the EPBF youth sports director Tomas Brikmanis said, "It's another amazing team that has been assembled for this year's event in Italy. I am quietly confident of another victory, but I will not let my guard down. I know the Americans are hurting from last year's result and I am aware of the potential of an upset. My players are as hungry as ever and will be ready when November comes."

Team USA and both team captains will be announced soon.

Launched in 2015, the Atlantic Challenge Cup features the best youth players from Europe and America in a Mosconi Cup style event for the U19's age category. Six players on each team, four boys and two girls, battle it out on an annual basis to see who has bragging rights across the Atlantic. The event is the result of a joint venture between the European Pocket Billiard Federation and the Billiard Congress of America.

Stay tuned to [AtlanticChallengeCup.com](http://AtlanticChallengeCup.com) for continuous updates on the 2019 event.



# Former Champions First To Enter 2020 Us Open 9-Ball Championship

**A host of former US Open 9-Ball Champions are among the first players to have entered the 2020 event, which will take place at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino Convention Center from April 13-18.**

Germany's Joshua Filler will bid to become only the fifth player to successfully defend the prestigious title. The World No.1 was imperious as he won the Barry Behrman Trophy for the first time in Vegas in April and if he takes his 2019 form into 2020 will undoubtedly be one of the favourites again.

The \$375,000 event offers free entry to all previous champions and American greats like Earl Strickland and Shane van Boening have already signed up. The pair share the record for having won five US Open 9-Ball titles and will be joined in Vegas by fellow American former champions Jeremy Jones, Corey Deuel, Gabe Owen and John Schmidt, who recently ran 626 balls to break Willie Mosconi's 526 record.

Jayson Shaw lifted the trophy in 2017 and will look to win it back next year,

while his fellow Brit Darren Appleton will be on the hunt for his third US Open 9-Ball success. Finland's Mika Immonen completes the list of European former champions who will compete at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino next April.

Alex Pagulayan reached the quarter-finals of this year's US Open 9-Ball and will have his eyes set on another deep run in 2020, while Kevin Cheng has also confirmed his place as he hunts for a second title.

Player entries for the 2020 Open 9-Ball Championship are open now at [www.matchroompool.com](http://www.matchroompool.com). Player entry fees remain at \$1,000 and former champions receive free entry to the event. After sold-out crowds, record TV ratings and a full field of 256 players for the 2019 US Open 9-Ball Championship, players are encouraged to

enter the 2020 Championship early to avoid disappointment.

Prize money payouts will start from 97th place, with players reaching this stage receiving \$1,000. Those who successfully progress from the double elimination stage will earn at least \$5,000 with quarter-finalists taking home \$7,750, semi-finalists earning \$15,000 and the runner-up to be paid \$30,000.

Spectator tickets for the 2020 US Open 9-Ball Championship will go on sale on Friday, September 13th with full details including pricing to be announced shortly.

*The 2020 US Open 9-Ball Championship will be partnered by Diamond, who supply the Official Table; the cloth is supplied by Iwan Simonis and the Official Balls are Super Aramith by Saluc. Predator is the Official Cue of the event and Kamui are the Official Chalk and Tip.*

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# Ouschan And Filler Lead Female Entries To US Open 9-Ball Championship

**Women's Eurotour stars Jasmin Ouschan and Pia Filler are the first two female players to have entered the 2020 US Open 9-Ball Championship, which will take place at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino Convention Center from April 13-18.**

**O**uschan recently won her 17th Eurotour title at the Predator Women's Veldhoven Open and is no stranger to the Matchroom Pool TV stage having previously represented Austria at the World Cup of Pool. Filler was in husband Joshua's corner as he landed his first US Open 9-Ball Championship success in April and such was the magnitude of the event she knew she had to take part in 2020

"It will be amazing to participate in the biggest pool event in the world and I'm really looking forward to it," said Filler. "It is going to be a great experience for my career and it will help me to improve and develop my game.

"The US Open was definitely the best event of 2019 so far but everybody who knows the Matchroom crew knows it's going to be even better and bigger in 2020! Chen Siming performed really well in this year's US Open and she showed the whole world that women can! This should be a good motivation to all the female players out there to train hard and show it to everybody.

"If female players start to participate in big events such as the US Open we can show everybody how good we can play it could be a new era for women's pool."

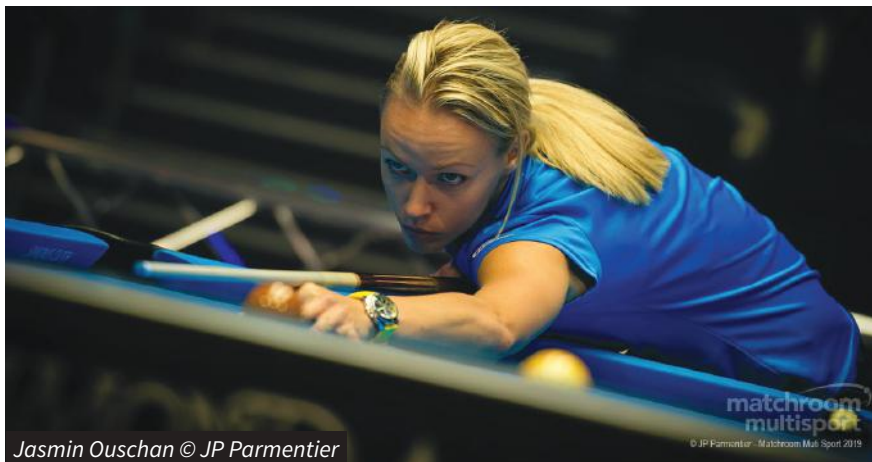
Emily Frazer, COO of Matchroom Multi Sport, said: "It's a great standpoint to already have world-class female players like Pia Filler and Jasmin Ouschan excited and registered for the US Open 2020.

"Just four women participated in the event earlier this year but Siming Chen showed an impressive journey throughout - giving women the inspiration to enter in what is the biggest and most prestigious multi-table event in pool industry. Both Kelly Fisher and Han Yu earned

their place in the World Pool Masters this March with close and tense matches; it's time that women competed among men in these global events and there is no greater fulfillment than seeing the confidence shine through from the likes of Ouschan and Filler.



Pia Filler, Emily Frazer © JP Parmentier



Jasmin Ouschan © JP Parmentier

ers for the 2019 US Open 9-Ball Championship, players are encouraged to enter the 2020 Championship early to avoid disappointment.

Prize money payouts will start from 97th place, with players reaching this stage receiving \$1,000. Those who successfully progress from the double elimination stage will earn at least \$5,000 with quarter-finalists taking home \$7,750, semi-finalists earning \$15,000 and the runner-up to be paid \$30,000.

Spectator tickets for the 2020 US Open 9-Ball Championship will go on sale on Friday, September 13th with full details including pricing to be announced shortly.

“It’s race to 11, winner breaks, 40-second shot clock and a tough grind; who says female players don’t have a chance to go far in this event? Let’s hope this sparks more women to register because the 256 field will sell out, I guarantee that!”

Player entries for the 2020 Open 9-Ball Championship are open now at [www.matchroompool.com](http://www.matchroompool.com). Player entry

fees remain at \$1,000 and former champions receive free entry to the event. After sold-out crowds, record TV ratings and a full field of 256 play-

*The 2020 US Open 9-Ball Championship will be partnered by Diamond, who supply the Official Table; the cloth is supplied by Iwan Simonis and the Official Balls are Super Aramith by Saluc. Predator is the Official Cue of the event and Kamui are the Official Chalk and Tip. The US Open 9-Ball Championship is sanctioned by the WPA.*

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## 2019 INTERNATIONAL 9-BALL OPEN - DETAILS

- Tournament Dates: October 28-November 2, 2019
- Sanctioned by: World Pool Association (WPA) Tier 3 Event. Size of Field: 128 Players
- Added Money: \$50,000. 1st Place Prize: \$30,000. 32nd Place pays \$2,250. Entry Fee: \$1,000
- Format: Double Elimination; Winner Breaks; Race to 11; Finals: Race to 13.
- Site: Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel, Norfolk, Virginia, USA
- Major Sponsors: Diamond Billiard Products, Simonis Cloth, Aramith Balls
- Equipment: 9-foot Diamond Tables, Pro-Cut Pockets, Simonis 860 Tournament Blue Cloth, Aramith Balls, Measle Cue Ball, Accu-Rack 9-Ball Racking Template

## OFFICIAL RULES

It is each player's responsibility to follow these rules.

Players are required to conduct themselves as professionals at all times.

Unsportsmanlike conduct may be subject to penalties administered by the Tournament Director.

### I.

#### FORMAT

Double Elimination  
Winner Breaks. Race to 11.  
Finals: Race to 13

### II.

#### RACKING

The Accu-Rack is the only authorized rack. The Official Racker will rack the 1-Ball in front, the 9-Ball on the spot, and the 2-Ball behind the 9-Ball. All other balls will be randomly placed. Players are not permitted to inspect the rack at any time.

The Accu-Rack may be removed after the break if both players agree to do so. After it's removed, the Accu-Rack cannot be placed on the rail. Upon request, at any time during the match, the Referee may be called upon to assist in removing the Accu-Rack, but it is the Referee's decision as to whether the Accu-Rack can or cannot be safely removed.

### III.

#### BREAKING

Players must lag for the opening break.

Players must break from the designated break box, which is 9" to the left and 9" to the right of the head spot. A legal break requires a minimum combination of 3 object balls either touching the head string line or be pocketed, or pocketing 2 object balls without any balls touching the head string. To "touch the head string line" means that the edge of the object ball must reach (break) the string line.

An illegal break is not a foul. The incoming player has the option to either accept the table in position, or require his opponent to shoot from that position. Neither player may push out after an illegal break. Pocketing the 9-Ball on a legal break in any pocket wins the game immediately.

Pocketing the 9-Ball on an illegal break requires that the 9-Ball be re-spotted immediately.

### IV.

#### FOULS

The "all ball fouls" rule applies.

This tournament is being played with "area" Referees; each Referee may be responsible for several tables simultaneously (except on the Accu-Stats TV Arena Table).

Generally, the non-shooting player acts as the referee. However, either player may ask the area Referee to watch a shot or to clarify a rule. The Referee's decision is final once summoned to the table, either before or after a shot has been taken.

3 consecutive fouls is an automatic loss of game. A clear audible warning of "on 2 fouls" must be given to the incoming player as he approaches the table.

### V.

#### DRESS CODE

Dress-type shirt (with or without a collar) or a dress-type sweater.

Dress slacks; no sweat pants, warm-up pants, jogging pants, cargo pants, or jeans.

Dark shoes or dark-colored tennis or walking-type shoes; no white or light colored soles; no sandals, slippers or open-toed shoes.

No headphones, earphones, earplugs, iPod, Bluetooth devices, hats, caps or headgear.

Hearing aids are permitted.

Note: Any dress code exception to the above requires a medical doctor's note and must be approved by

the Tournament Director prior to the Tournament.

**VI.**

**CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Players must turn off (use the airplane mode) cell phones and all personal electronic devices during the entire match.

Smoking and the use of E-cigarettes are not allowed anywhere in the tournament rooms.

**VII.**

**FORFEIT TIME**

Both players must be in the tournament room at their scheduled match time, even if their scheduled match table is currently in use.

Forfeit time is 15 minutes after the scheduled match time, or when the table becomes available, whichever is later.

If a player is not present at his table a few minutes after the starting time,

his opponent must notify the Referee. Only the Tournament Director can declare a forfeit.

**VIII.**

**TIME-OUTS**

Each player may take one 5-minute time-out period per match. The Referee must be notified when a time-out is being taken. A time-out may only be taken during your inning or if you are breaking. Smoking and the use of E-cigarettes is prohibited during any time-out.

**IX.**

**SLOW PLAY**

Referees will monitor the pace of play on all tables.

Referees will issue a speed-up warning after 1 hour if the pace is not satisfactory. Approximately 10 games should be completed after 1 hour. If the pace remains unsatisfactory, the Referee may implement a 40-second

shot clock, with one extension per player per game.

**X.**

**CONCESSION PENALTY**

Concessions are not permitted at any time. The penalty for a concession is the loss of the conceded game, and also a one game deduction from the offending player's score.

**XI.**

**CUES AND BRIDGES**

Jump cues are allowed. The jump cue must have a minimum length of 40 inches.

Cue extenders are allowed. Players may use their own bridge, provided it is legal in all aspects.

**XII.**

**BALL CLEANING**

Once a game is in progress, only the Referee, upon request, is permitted to clean any ball. The shot clock will continue to run during ball cleanings.

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# Inaugural Arizona Billiards Hall of Fame Inductees Announced

Voting to determine the inaugural class of the Arizona Billiards Hall of Fame is complete, and four people have earned this proud distinction.

The top vote getter, with nearly 2/3 of the vote, is an Arizona legend. He was playing in World Championships before some of his fellow candidates were even born. He is a six time Arizona State Championship, a two time National 8-Ball



Babe Thompson



Mike Howerton present Shane Van Boening with his player of the year award. ar 2015



Scott Frost

Champion and has won titles in 8-ball, 9-ball and straight pool. He has a high straight pool run of 225 balls and has tutored some of the top players in the state.

He is Rodney “Babe” Thompson.

The second inductee is a man who really requires no introduction to anyone inside or outside of Arizona. His name was synonymous with “Arizona Pool” nationwide, even before he opened his beautiful pool room in Tempe.

Inside the state, he has won more state titles and tour stops than any other player alive. Outside the state, he has won many major one pocket titles and is known as one of the players who redefined the very game of one pocket. He is Scott “The Freezer” Frost.

The third inductee is a man who has played competitive pool in Arizona for many years, but his major accomplishments have come from outside the playing arena.

His name is Mike Howerton, and he is the man who created AZBILLIARDS.COM, a news website that focused solely on Arizona pool in the beginning, but gained such a large following that it soon became the go-to site for billiard news from around the world. Mike also originated and operated the Olhausen Arizona All-Around Tour and the Diamond Pool Tour, as well as the first Arizona State BCA Championship held at a Casino in Parker, Az.

Some of Mike's other contributions to pool include former WPBA Board Member, Current NAPT Board Member, Host of Runout Radio and American Billiard Radio podcasts, Arizona representative for the Billiard Education Foundation (BEF), plus, he is the publisher and editor of the Arizona Billiards & Dart News newspaper.

The fourth inductee has represented Arizona on the pro circuit, as well as representing American in one of the most prestigious events in the game, the Mosconi Cup. He was the original "Rocket". He is Roger Griffis.

Roger was on the winning Team USA in the 1996 Mosconi Cup, scoring wins over Oliver Ortmann and Andy Richardson. He was a regular in top pro events in the early 90's, competing against and beating all of the top names in the game.

Roger married in 1993 and moved to Texas with his family, where he lived until he passed in 2017 from diabetes complications.

Congratulations in the memory of Roger Griffis for being voted into the hall alongside Babe Thompson, Scott Frost

and Mike Howerton. Fans and friends will be able to officially welcome all four of these winners to the hall at Bull Shooters on October 18th, at the Hall of Fame dinner.



Roger Griffis



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- Jeanette "The Black Widow" Lee

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# Upcoming Tournaments

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

## SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

### Boothill Billiard Bonanza

**08/27 - 09/01**

United Wireless Center  
Dodge City, Kansas

### 45th Annual Texas Open

**08/28 - 09/02**

Skinny Bob's Billiards  
Round Rock, Texas  
Website: <http://skinnybobs.com/texasopen.html>

### Predator Pro-Am Tour 2019 Stop #13 Eastern States Championship Open Pro Division

**08/31 - 09/02**

Steinway Billiards  
Astoria, NY  
Website: <http://www.predatorproam-tour.com/index.asp>

### 2019 China Open Men's Division

**09/01 - 09/08**

Shanghai  
Shanghai

### 2019 China Open Ladies Division

**09/01 - 09/08**

Shanghai  
Shanghai

### 2019 China Open

**09/01 - 09/08**

Shanghai  
Shanghai

### Houston 9-Ball Open

**09/06 - 09/08**

Legends Billiards  
League City, TX

### 2nd Annual Big Dawg Scotch Doubles

**09/07 - 09/08**

Stroker's Billiards  
Palm Harbor, FL  
Website: <http://www.sunshinestate-proamtour.com/>

### 1st Annual Fall Classic

**09/11 - 09/13**

Herb and Dee's Breakroom  
Longview, Texas

### Action Pool Tour 2019 Stop 9 Open Division

**09/14 - 09/15**

Breakers Sky Lounge  
Herndon, Va  
Website: <http://www.actionpooltour.com>

### Jerry Olivier Ladies Tour 2019 Stop 5

**09/14 - 09/15**

Slick Willie's - Austin  
Austin, Texas  
Website: <http://www.obcuestour.com/>

### 2019 Kremlin Cup

**09/18 - 09/21**

Olympic Sports Complex  
Moscow, Russia

### 2019 Desert Challenge

**09/19 - 09/22**

Griff's  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
Website: <http://www.playnapt.com/>

### The Maine Event XIII

**09/21 - 09/22**

TJ's Classic Billiards  
Waterville, Maine  
Website: <http://www.joss9balltour.com/>

### Big Dog Weekend Extravaganza

**09/21 - 09/22**

The League Room,  
West Virginia

### The Hudson Valley Fall Classic III

**09/28 - 09/29**

The Spot  
Nanuet, New York  
Website: <http://www.joss9balltour.com>

### Joss Tour 2019-2020 Stop 3

**10/05 - 10/06**

East Ridge Billiards  
Rochester, NY  
Website: <http://www.joss9balltour.com/>

### Va State 8-Ball Championship

**10/12 - 10/13**

Q-Master Billiards  
Virginia Beach, VA  
Website: <http://www.actionpooltour.com>

### Midwest Ladies Regional Tour 2019 Stop #4

**10/12 - 10/12**

Cushions Billiards & Lounge  
Westerville, OH  
Website: <http://www.midwestladies-tour.com>

# Upcoming Tournaments

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

## SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

### Joss Tour 2019-2020 Stop 4

**10/12 - 10/13**

Utica Billiards On The Boulevard  
Utica, New York  
Website: <http://www.joss9balltour.com/>

### Jerry Olivier Ladies Tour 2019 Stop 6

**10/19 - 10/20**

Fast Eddie's Sports Bar & Grill  
Embassy Oaks, TX  
Website: <http://www.obcuestour.com/>

### John Babravich - Jim Romanowski 9-Ball Open

**10/19 - 10/20**

Sharpshooters Billiards & Sports Pub  
Amsterdam, NY  
Website: <http://www.joss9balltour.com>

### 2019 American Straight Pool Championship

**10/22 - 10/26**

Q-Master Billiards  
Virginia Beach, VA  
Website: <http://www.americans-straightpool.com>

### 2019 Coupe du Quebec Women's Division 1 Pro Event

**10/24 - 10/27**

Dooly's

Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec  
Website: <http://www.playnapt.com/>

### Northern Virginia Amateur Tour Stop

**10/26 - 10/27**

Brews & Cues  
Glen Burnie, Maryland  
Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/267290537455630>

### Joss Tour 2019-2020 Stop 6

**10/26 - 10/27**

Brickhouse Billiards  
N. Syracuse, New York  
Website: <http://www.joss9balltour.com/>

**2019**

BILLIARD CONGRESS OF AMERICA

# Hall of Fame Banquet

HONORING ALEX PAGULAYAN, GREG SULLIVAN AND THE JANSKO BROTHERS

Friday, Nov. 1, 2019, at 5:00 pm at the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside, Norfolk, VA

 <p><b>ALEX PAGULAYAN</b></p> <p><b>GREATEST PLAYER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ WPA World 9-Ball Champion</li> <li>▶ U.S. Open 9-Ball Champion</li> <li>▶ 2X Derby City All-Around Champion</li> <li>▶ World Pool Masters Champion</li> <li>▶ U.S. Open 8-Ball Champion</li> </ul>	 <p><b>GREG SULLIVAN</b></p> <p><b>MERITORIOUS SERVICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Product Innovator</li> <li>▶ Pool Table Manufacturer</li> <li>▶ Promoter - Derby City Classic</li> </ul>	 <p><b>GEORGE &amp; PAUL JANSKO</b></p> <p><b>MERITORIOUS SERVICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Promoters - Johnston City Hustlers Jamboree</li> <li>▶ Promoters - Stardust Open</li> </ul>
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# Tourney Results

**08/01 - 08/03**

**2019 Dynamic Billard Veldhoven Open**

**NH Hotel Koningshof**

Veldhoven

- 1 Mario He \$5,429
- 2 Denis Grabe \$3,619
- 3 Marc Bijsterbosch \$2,111
- 3 Joshua Filler \$2,111
- 5 Oliver Szolnoki \$1,508
- 5 Mohammad Soufi \$1,508
- 5 Alex Montpellier \$1,508
- 5 Fedor Gorst \$1,508
- 9 Jacques Wollschlaeger \$1,206
- 9 Mateusz Sniegocki \$1,206
- 9 Francisco Sanchez-Ruiz \$1,206
- 9 Aleksa Pecelj \$1,206
- 9 Jakub Koniar \$1,206
- 9 Konrad Juszczyszyn \$1,206
- 9 Nick Ekonomopoulos \$1,206
- 9 Ruslan Chinakhov \$1,206
- 17 Nick Malai \$723
- 17 Moritz Neuhausen \$723
- 17 Stefan Nolle \$723
- 17 Marcel Price \$723
- 17 Ivar Saris \$723
- 17 Karol Skowerski \$723
- 17 Wiktor Zielinski \$723
- 17 Sergey Lutsker \$723
- 17 Alex Lely \$723
- 17 Radoslaw Babica \$723
- 17 Tim De Ruyter \$723
- 17 Maksim Dudanets \$723
- 17 Damianos Giallourakis \$723
- 17 Eklent Kaci \$723
- 17 Alexandros Kazakis \$723
- 17 Pijus Labutis \$723
- 33 Albin Ouschan \$331
- 33 Vitaliy Patsura \$331
- 33 Sanjin Pehlivanovic \$331
- 33 Juri Pisklov \$331
- 33 Marius Skoneczny \$331
- 33 Ralf Souquet \$331
- 33 Oliver Ortmann \$331
- 33 Dimitris Loukatos \$331

- 33 Maximilian Lechner \$331
- 33 Roman Hybler \$331
- 33 Thorsten Hohmann \$331
- 33 Mark Gray \$331
- 33 Marco Dorenborg \$331
- 33 Andreas Bonnelykke \$331
- 33 Abdullah Alyousef \$331
- 33 Jan Van Lierop \$331

**08/03 - 08/04**

**2019 Dynamic Billard Veldhoven Open Women's Division**

**NH Hotel Koningshof, Veldhoven**

- 1 Jasmin Ouschan \$1,809
- 2 Melanie Suessenguth \$1,206
- 3 Veronika Hubrtova \$965
- 3 Tina Vogelmann \$965
- 5 Kristina Tkach \$603
- 5 Nataliya Seroshtan \$603
- 5 Kamila Khodjaeva \$603
- 5 Ina Kaplan \$603
- 9 Christine Steinlage \$180
- 9 Diana Stateczny \$180
- 9 Kateryna Polovinchuk \$180
- 9 Ine Helvik \$180
- 9 Louise Furberg \$180
- 9 Vania Franco \$180
- 9 Marharyta Fefilava \$180
- 9 Yvonne Ullmann \$180

**08/03 - 08/03**

**Q City 9-Ball Tour Stop**

**Mickey Milligan's Sports Bar**

New Bern, NC

- 1 Justin Martin \$625
- 2 Jack Whitfield \$425
- 3 Travis Guerra \$200
- 4 JT Ringgold \$100

**08/03 - 08/04**

**DFW 9-Ball Tour Stop**

**CK Billiards**

Dallas, Tx

- 1 Greg Sandifer \$900

- 2 Tim Larson \$565
- 3 Jeremy Jones \$435
- 4 Doug Winnett \$375
- 5 Robert Clark \$260
- 5 J.P. Kinman \$260
- 7 Amos Bush \$150
- 7 TJ Davis \$150
- 9 Jeffrey Wadsworth \$90
- 9 Randy Staggs \$90
- 9 Andrew Talton \$90
- 9 Jesus Sorto \$90
- 13 Tony Sulsar \$70
- 13 Daniel Herring \$70
- 13 Brandon Sisemore \$70
- 13 Steve Raynes \$70
- 17 Ricki Lee Casper \$60
- 17 Greg Duarte \$60
- 17 Brian Horvath \$60
- 17 Rodney Williams \$60
- 17 Neil Nabil Saidawi \$60
- 17 Ray Hinton \$60
- 17 Donnie Gregory \$60
- 17 Joel Betancourth \$60

**08/03 - 08/03**

**SE Open 9-Ball Tour Stop 2019 Stop**

**Brewlands Bar & Billiards**

Lakeland, Fl

- 1 Kyle Bova \$760
- 2 Tommy Kennedy \$500
- 3 Rhyan Hunter \$400
- 4 Nathan Rose \$300
- 5 Jeremy Bell \$200
- 5 Ashley Chewcaskie \$200
- 7 Dennis Brown \$100
- 7 Steve Wiggam \$100

**08/03 - 08/04**

**2019 Sidepocket Open 9-Ball Championship**

**Side Pocket Billiards**

Shreveport, LA

- 1 Cheng-Chieh Liu \$2,820
- 2 James Aranas \$1,360

- 3 Robb Saez \$1,045
- 4 Roberto Gomez \$727
- 5 Clint Freeman \$480
- 5 Kenny Loftis \$480
- 7 Alejandro Calderon \$285
- 7 Mike Alonzo \$285
- 9 Kevin Guimond \$142
- 9 Blaine Barcus \$142
- 9 Skyler Woodward \$142
- 9 Mike Thomas \$142

## 08/04 - 08/04

### Tri State Tour 2019-2020 Stop

#### Clifton Billiards

- Clifton, New Jersey
- 1 Max Watanabe \$540
  - 2 Dave Shlemperis \$350
  - 3 Luis Jimenez \$210
  - 4 Mars Adinolfi \$130
  - 5 Ilija Trajceski \$80
  - 5 Mike Strassberg \$80
  - 7 Bob Toomey \$60
  - 7 Paul Madonia \$60

## 08/04 - 08/04

### New England 9-Ball Tour Summer Sizzler Partners Event

#### Yale Billiards

- Wallingford, Connecticut
- 1 Mario Argentino \$500
  - 1 Lance Lisciotti \$500
  - 2 Jose Concepcion \$350
  - 2 Angel Marchena Gonzalez \$350
  - 3 Sheikh Ahmed \$250
  - 3 Anthony Petruzzelli \$250
  - 4 Tom D'Alfonso \$175
  - 4 Tyler Boudreau \$175
  - 5 Jason D'Angelo \$125
  - 5 Joe Dupuis \$125
  - 5 Jay Cunningham \$125
  - 5 Jordan Stevens \$125

## 08/08 - 08/10

### US Open 10-Ball Championship 2019

#### Griff's

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- 1 Marco Teutscher \$10,000
  - 2 Dennis Orcollo \$6,500
  - 3 Jeffrey De Luna \$3,800

- 4 Thorsten Hohmann \$2,000
- 5 Skyler Woodward \$1,000
- 5 Shane Van Boening \$1,000
- 7 Danny Olson \$600
- 7 Corey Deuel \$600

## 08/08 - 08/11

### WPBA Sondheim Diamond Invitational

#### Fairfield Arts and Convention

- Center  
Fairfield, Iowa
- 1 Kristina Tkach \$5,000
  - 2 Tzu-Chien Wei \$3,500
  - 3 Kelly Fisher \$2,500
  - 4 Brittany Bryant \$2,000
  - 5 Line Kjoersvik \$1,500
  - 5 Monica Webb \$1,500
  - 7 Jennifer Barretta \$1,100
  - 7 Emily Duddy \$1,100
  - 9 Caroline Pao \$800
  - 9 Sara Miller \$800
  - 9 Janet Atwell \$800
  - 9 April Larson \$800
  - 13 Melissa Little \$600
  - 13 Loree Jon Hasson \$600
  - 13 Dawn Hopkins \$600
  - 13 Jenna Bishoff \$600
  - 17 Kelly Cavanaugh \$400
  - 17 Maureen Seto \$400
  - 17 Hanna Kwon \$400
  - 17 Eugenia Gyftopoulos \$400
  - 17 Beth Fondell \$400
  - 17 June Maiers \$400
  - 17 Gail Eaton \$400
  - 17 Laura Smith \$400

## 08/10 - 08/11

### JPNEWT Tour 2019 Stop #5

#### Triple 9 Bar & Billiards

- Elkridge, MD
- 1 Karen Corr \$700
  - 2 Lai Li \$400
  - 3 Kathleen Lawless \$300
  - 4 Kelly Wyatt \$150
  - 5 Nicole King \$100
  - 5 Elaine Wilson \$100
  - 7 Ceci Strain \$65
  - 7 Linda Haywood Shea \$65

## 08/10 - 08/11

### Predator Pro-Am Tour 2019 Amateur Stop #12

#### Steinway Billiards

- Astoria, NY
- 1 Max Watanabe \$1,200
  - 2 Hector Torres \$850
  - 3 Abel Rosario \$500
  - 4 Kanami Chau \$325
  - 5 Luis Jimenez \$250
  - 5 Ray Lee \$250
  - 7 Joe Morace \$200
  - 7 Jaydev Zaveri \$200
  - 9 Elvis Rodriguez \$140
  - 9 Ryan Dayrit \$140
  - 9 Chris Kelly \$140
  - 9 Michael Callaghan \$140
  - 13 Tony Ignomirello \$80
  - 13 Michael Luster \$80
  - 13 Eugene Ok \$80
  - 13 Irene Kim \$80

## 08/10 - 08/11

### New England 9-Ball Tour 2019 Stop #24

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

- Providence, RI
- 1 Lukas Fracasso-Verner \$500
  - 2 Clyde Matta \$300
  - 3 Rafael Ortiz \$250
  - 4 Jose Concepcion \$200
  - 5 Ranulf Tamba \$150
  - 5 Phil Medeiros \$150
  - 7 Jim Prather \$125
  - 7 Ed Courtney \$125

## 08/10 - 08/11

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Stop

#### Shore Thing Billiards

- Myrtle Beach, SC
- 1 Hunter White \$900
  - 2 Bill Fowler \$650
  - 3 Zach Collins \$450
  - 4 Anthony Vallario \$250
  - 5 Marty Free \$125
  - 5 Collin Hall \$125
  - 7 Mark Ransom \$100
  - 7 Jason Evans \$100

## 08/11 - 08/13

### US Open 8-Ball Championship 2019

#### Griff's

Las Vegas, Nevada

- 1 Skyler Woodward \$10,000
- 2 Jung-Lin Chang \$6,500
- 3 Tyler Styer \$3,800
- 4 John Morra \$2,000
- 5 Corey Deuel \$1,000
- 5 Thorsten Hohmann \$1,000
- 7 Alex Pagulayan \$600
- 7 Dennis Orcollo \$600

## 08/11 - 08/11

### Tri State Tour 2019-2020 Stop

#### CueBar Billiards

Bayside, NY

- 1 Omar Hulse \$500
- 2 Euryel Castillo \$300
- 3 Jowen Pichardo \$180
- 4 Allison LaFleur \$100
- 5 Suzanna Wong \$70
- 5 Ambi Estevez \$70

## 08/15 - 08/18

### 2019 NAPT Summer 10-Ball Classic

#### Shooters

Grayslake, Illinois

- 1 Taylor Hansen \$3,000
- 2 Eleanor Callado \$2,100
- 3 Christy Dickerson \$1,200
- 4 Sarah Rousey \$700
- 5 Kaylin Wikoff \$530
- 5 Marion Poole \$530
- 7 Emilyn Callado \$400
- 7 Tina Larson \$400

## 08/17 - 08/18

### Action Pool Tour 2019 Stop 8 Open Division

#### Champion Billiards & Sports Café

Frederick, MD

- 1 Kristina Tkach \$820
- 2 Chris Bruner \$450
- 3 Shaun Wilkie \$250
- 4 Matt Krah \$170

- 5 Brian Bryant \$120
- 5 Scott Roberts \$120
- 7 Thomas Haas \$100
- 7 Chris Funk \$100
- 9 Scott Haas \$60
- 9 Chuck Sampson \$60
- 9 Daniel Jarquin \$60
- 9 L.V. Abernathy \$60

## 08/17 - 08/18

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Stop

#### Buck's Billiards

Raleigh, North Carolina

- 1 Travis Worden \$400
- 2 Hank Powell \$200
- 3 Billie Spadafora \$100

## 08/17 - 08/17

### Tri State Tour 2019-2020 Stop

#### Steinway Billiards

Astoria, NY

- 1 Tony Kuo \$660
- 2 Duc Lam \$420
- 3 Dax Druminski \$260
- 4 Luis Jimenez \$150
- 5 Bianca Martinez \$100
- 5 Ray Lee \$100
- 7 Luis Lopez \$75
- 7 Rick Rodriguez \$75

## 08/22 - 08/25

### Turning Stone Classic XXXII 9-Ball Open

#### Turning Stone Casino

Verona, NY

- 1 Shane Van Boening \$8,000
- 2 Earl Strickland \$5,000
- 3 Jayson Shaw \$3,600
- 4 Billy Thorpe \$2,600
- 5 Thorsten Hohmann \$2,000
- 5 Brandon Shuff \$2,000
- 7 Raphael Dabreo \$1,600
- 7 Frankie Hernandez \$1,600
- 9 Len Gianfrate \$1,200
- 9 Shaun Wilkie \$1,200
- 9 Yesid Garibello \$1,200
- 9 Jeremy Sossei \$1,200
- 13 Loree Jon Hasson \$850
- 13 Danny Hewitt \$850

- 13 John Andrade \$850
- 13 Hunter Lombardo \$850
- 17 Qais Kolee \$550
- 17 Kevin West \$550
- 17 Chad Bazinet \$550
- 17 Jorge Rodriguez \$550
- 17 Damon Sobers \$550
- 17 Brent Boemmels \$550
- 17 Steven Winter \$550
- 17 Randy Labonte \$550
- 25 Sean Morgan \$300
- 25 Holden Chin \$300
- 25 Matt Krah \$300
- 25 Eric Cloutier \$300
- 25 Jesse Docalavich \$300
- 25 Eric Lim \$300
- 25 Michael Yednak \$300
- 25 Earl Herring \$300

## 08/24 - 08/25

### Tri State Tour 2019-2020 Stop

#### Steinway Billiards

Astoria, NY

- 1 Abel Rosario \$725
- 2 Euryel Castillo \$360
- 3 Harry Guevarez \$260
- 4 Corey Ward \$160
- 5 Mike Strassberg \$100
- 5 Luis Lopez \$100
- 7 Kirill Safranov \$80
- 7 Luis Jimenez \$80
- 9 Yuri Miroshnikov \$60
- 9 Thomas Schreiber \$60
- 9 Jaydev Zaveri \$60
- 9 Mitra Kanhai \$60

## 08/24 - 08/25

### Q City 9-Ball Tour Stop

#### Break and Run Billiards

Chesnee, South Carolina

- 1 Hunter White \$1,100
- 2 Junior Gabriel \$700
- 3 Mike Parkins \$450
- 4 Bill Fowler \$250
- 5 Rob Hart \$150
- 5 Jeff Abernathy \$150
- 7 Mackie Lowery \$100
- 7 Jason Evans \$100
- 9 Aaron McClure \$50
- 9 Zack Russell \$50
- 9 Dale Stanley \$50
- 9 Landon Hollingsworth \$50

# SP REVO

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# MONEY MATCH PROMOTIONS

PRESENTS



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OCTOBER 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>

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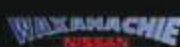
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