



## NORTHEAST MASS APA POOL LEAGUE

# WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FALL SESSION 2015/ WEEK 7 / OCTOBER 11, 2015



### UPCOMING EVENTS

**U.S Amateur  
Championship  
Stroker's  
Palm Harbor, FL  
Nov. 4-8**

**Spring Best of the  
Best and Summer Best  
of the Best  
Date – TBD**

**Fall AMI's & Div.  
Champ.  
The Claddagh,  
Lawrence MA  
Jan. 23-24 2016**

**Fall Tri-Cups  
Jan. 30-31 2016**

**APA National Singles  
Championships  
Las Vegas, NV  
April 9<sup>th</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

### DEFENSIVE SHOTS

Over the years, there have been many questions and misinterpretations concerning the Defensive Shots block on the Scoresheet. Marking Defensive Shots both consistently and correctly ensures the effectiveness of The Equalizer® scoring and handicap system, so it's very important! The failure to correctly mark Defensive Shots when scoring matches is an irregularity. Penalties may be imposed by Local Management, Handicap Advisory Committees, and/or the American Poolplayers Association (APA), on teams or players who are not conscientious of this issue.

Some players do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes a Defensive Shot. A Defensive Shot (also called a Safety) is a shot where there is no INTENT to pocket a ball. INTENT is the key word and certainly leaves room for judgment. This is why both teams have a scoresheet. It isn't necessary for both scoresheets to agree on the number of Defensive Shots. If your player did not intend to pocket a ball, mark a Defensive Shot. Note: Innings are marked for every turn, even if it's a Defensive Shot.

#### **Here are some typical situations that are considered Defensive Shots:**

- ◆ A player does not have what he feels is a makeable shot and decides to leave his opponent in a difficult situation rather than attempt a bad shot.
- ◆ A player shoots one of his object balls softly up near a corner to block his opponent, therefore not intending to make the ball.
- ◆ A player is well ahead in a game or match and decides to purposely miss a few shots. This is unethical and is a form of cheating, called sandbagging, which could disqualify a player or team. In 9-Ball, this is particularly risky as well because it gives the opponent the opportunity to win extra points for his or her team. The way to prevent sandbagging is to mark these Defensive Shots. If every member did so, no one would bother to sandbag. It would be pointless.

#### **Here are some examples that are NOT Defensive Shots:**

- ◆ A beginner/weak player misses shots while trying to make them.
- ◆ A player is left with a virtually impossible shot but does the best he can to try to make it anyway.
- ◆ A player is left "hooked" (or "snookered"), hidden in such a manner that he is unable to shoot directly at one of his object balls. He "kicks" as best he can, but doesn't make contact with one of his balls. The scorekeeper must then decide the player's INTENT. Did he shoot hard enough to make the ball if he had made contact, (which could NOT be considered a Defensive Shot) or did he shoot just hard enough to get the ball to go to a rail to avoid giving up ball-in-hand (which IS a Defensive Shot)? This is a judgment call.

Whether or not the object ball goes in the pocket should not be the deciding factor. Whether or not the player INTENDED to pass his turn to the other player on purpose is the deciding factor. Missing on purpose can be ethical or unethical, but that is not the issue. IF, IN THE SCOREKEEPER'S OPINION, A PLAYER DID NOT INTEND TO POCKET A BALL, MARK IT AS A DEFENSIVE SHOT.

**Question:** What fouls result in “ball-in-hand”?

**Answer:** These are the only fouls resulting in *ball-in-hand*. All other violations are sportsmanship violations. The *ball-in-hand fouls* are as follows:

- a. Anytime during a shot, the cue ball goes in a pocket, on the floor, or otherwise ends up off the playing surface.
- b. Failure to hit a correct ball first. (A player who is shooting stripes must hit a striped ball first.) **The 8-ball is not neutral.** In general, the shooter has the advantage in close hit situations unless his opponent has asked an outside party to watch the hit. Protect yourself. If you think your opponent is getting ready to shoot a shot that could possibly be a bad hit, stop him from shooting and get someone to watch the shot. Potential *bad hit* situations are usually fairly obvious and protests and disputes over these close situations can almost always be avoided if someone is asked to watch the shot. If the outside party cannot determine which ball was struck first, the call goes to the shooter. Teams involved in repeatedly calling bad hits without outside party verification may be subject to penalty points for disruptive unsportsmanlike behavior.
- c. Failure to hit a rail after contact. A rail must be hit by either the cue ball or any other ball after the cue ball and the object ball make contact. A pocketed ball counts as a rail. Even if the ball bounces back onto the playing surface, it is considered to have hit a rail, as the pocket liner is part of the rail. A sentence that should answer many questions is: **ANY ball must go to a rail AFTER LEGAL contact.**
- d. The object ball is *frozen* to a rail and the player is contemplating playing a *safety*. In order for the *frozen ball* rule to be in effect, the opponent must declare that the ball is *frozen* and the player should verify. Once it is agreed the ball is frozen the player must drive the object ball to another rail (of course, it could hit another ball, which in turn hits a rail), or drive the cue ball to a rail after it touches the object ball. If the latter method of *safety* is chosen then the player should take care that he quite obviously strikes the object ball first.

If the cue ball strikes the rail first or appears to hit both the rail and ball simultaneously, then it would be a foul unless either the cue ball or object ball went to some other rail.

e. It is illegal and, therefore, a foul to jump a cue ball over another ball by cuing it up in the air (scooping) on purpose.

- f. Receiving illegal aid (coaching from person(s) other than the coach) during your turn at the table. It is not considered illegal aid to remind a player to mark the pocket when shooting the 8-ball, or to tell a player a foul has occurred. Anyone may do so.
- g. Causing even the slightest movement or altering the course of the cue ball, even accidentally, is a foul. Even dropping the chalk on the cue ball is a foul. It is not a foul, however, to accidentally move any other balls (including the 8-ball) unless, during his turn at the table, a player moves a ball and it in turn comes in contact with the cue ball. Any balls moved accidentally during a shot **must be replaced** by the opponent after the shot is over and all balls have stopped rolling. If it occurs before the shot, it **must be replaced** by the opponent before the shot is taken.

**Exception:** If an accidentally moved ball comes in contact with the cue ball, creating a foul, no object ball will be replaced.

- h. If, during the course of a shot, the cue ball does not touch anything.
- i. Exercise caution when picking up or placing the cue ball in a *ball-in-hand* situation. The cue ball is always *alive*. If the cue ball, **or the hand holding or moving it**, touches another ball it is a cue ball foul and your opponent has *ball-in-hand*. Be especially careful when you are picking up or placing the cue ball in a tight spot.
- j. The player or his coach (during a coaching time-out) **may** place the cue ball in a *ball-in-hand* situation. The same rule regarding placing the cue ball applies to the coach as applies to the player. If the player, or coach fouls in the process of placing the cue ball, it will be *ball-in-hand* for the opponent. Therefore, it should be the player’s choice if he wishes to place the cue ball or allow his coach to do so.

\*\* Pages 6-9 of the Official APA/CPA 8-Ball & 9-Ball Rule Booklet for years: 2014/2015 2015/2016



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