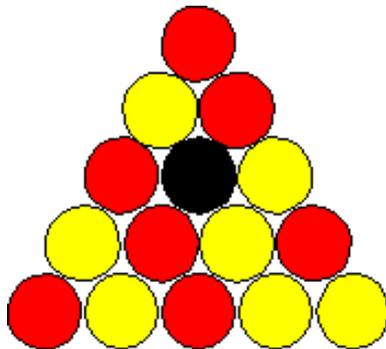


MACCLESFIELD POOL LEAGUE



OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES



Revised 11th March 2013

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1. THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME

- 1.1 The Game is known as Eight-Ball Pool. It is expected that players will play the game in the true spirit and in a sporting manner. The Referee will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the spirit and rules of the game are observed. It is expected out of common courtesy that an exchange of hand shakes take place between both players both prior to/and upon completion of the game.

2. REQUIREMENTS OF THE GAME

- 2.1 The game is played on a rectangle 6-pocket table with 16 balls. Balls comprise of:-
- A 'Cue Ball' – being a white ball.
 - Two groups of 'Object Balls' – seven yellow balls and seven red balls.
 - The 'Eight Ball' – being a black ball.

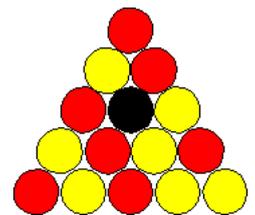
3. OBJECT OF THE GAME

- 3.1 The player or team pocketing their group of object balls first in any order and then legally pocketing the 8-ball, wins the game. When 'On' a group of colours, potting more than one ball of that colour in the same shot is allowed, but a separate shot must be played to pot the 8-ball and win the game, other than in rule 7.4. The game is concluded when all the balls have come to rest and the 8-ball is either legally or illegally pocketed.

4. COMMENCEMENT OF THE GAME (OR RE-START)

- 4.1 The balls are racked as tightly as possible in a triangle as illustrated (right) with a red ball at the top and the 8-ball on the spot which is at the intersection of the centre and corner pockets.

**To the
Baulk Line**



- 4.2 Order of play is determined by the flip of a coin. The winner of the flip has the option of breaking, or requesting their opponent to do so. Where a game is played over more than one frame, after the initial flip of the coin, players/teams(as in pairs) break alternatively until there is a final and deciding frame, when a flip of a coin decides. Please note: In pairs format (order of play) can be changed after each frame.

4.3 THE BREAK

- 4.3.1 The first shot of a frame is called the "Break". To "Break", the Cue Ball is played at the triangle of Object Balls from Baulk. The frame is deemed to have commenced the instant that the Cue Ball is played.
- 4.3.2 The Break will be deemed a "Fair Break" if at least one object ball is potted and/or at least TWO object balls to hit a cushion.
- 4.3.3 If the Break is not a "Fair Break" it is a "Foul Break" and the opponent is awarded two visits, the balls are re-racked, and the opponent re-starts the frame and is under the same obligation to achieve a Fair Break.
- 4.3.4 If the Cue Ball is pocketed on a Fair Break it is a Foul that is penalised by the turn passing to the opponent (*see rule 6.4*).
- 4.3.5 If the break is not a Fair Break and the Cue Ball is potted, the penalty for failure to perform a Fair Break applies (*see rule 4.3.3*).

- 4.3.6 If the 8-ball is pocketed on the break shot it is a "Void Break", the balls will be re-racked and the game re-started by the same player. No penalty will be incurred. This applies even if other balls, including the cue ball are pocketed, or leave the playing surface ("off the table").
- 4.3.7 On any re-started game if a player pots the 8-ball with the break shot, the game is again re-started by the same player, with two visits if appropriate, (i.e. following a foul break the balls are re-racked the player comes to the table with two visits, should the player break and pot the 8-ball the game is again re-started by the same player who still has two visits).

4.4 DECIDING COLOURS

4.4.1 General

- a) When Colours have not been decided the table is deemed to be "Open". When the table is "Open" a player may play at either group of Colours.
- b) Colours can never be decided on a foul shot.
- c) Once Colours are decided, the player remains "On" that coloured group for the duration of the frame. The opponent remains "On" the opposite coloured group.
- d) Playing a shot after neglecting to nominate a choice of Colours is a Foul. Any balls potted on such a shot are ignored for the purpose of deciding Colours. (The referee will normally ask the player to nominate a group, but it is the player's responsibility to conform to the rules).
- e) If no Colour is pocketed from a fair break, then the players continue alternatively playing at either group until such a time as a legal pot is made, which decides the player's group.
- f) Performing a legal pot entitles the player to one additional shot and this continues until the player either fails to legally pot a ball, or commits a foul at any time.

4.4.2 On the Break

- a) If no Colours are potted on the break the table is "Open".
- b) If one or more Colours are potted on the break the player then has a right and obligation to verbally advise the referee of a choice of Colour before proceeding. Failure to do so is a Foul. If a player is fouled under this rule, the opponent faces an "Open" table.
- c) If the player nominates a Colour that was potted on the break, the player is on that colour no matter what happens next.
- d) If the player nominates a Colour that was not potted on the break, to be on that Colour, the player must legally pot a ball of that Colour on the next shot. Failing to do so, the opponent faces an "Open" table.

4.4.3 After the Break

- a) If a player pots one or more balls of the same Colour, the player is then "On" that Colour.
- b) If a player pots one or more balls of different Colours, the player then has a right and obligation to verbally advise the referee of a choice of colour before proceeding. Once a colour is nominated in these circumstances, the player is on that colour no matter what happens next. Failure to nominate is a Foul. If a player is fouled under this rule, the opponent faces an "Open" table.

5. FOULS

- 5.1 "In off" (cue ball pocketed) see *rule 6.4*.
- 5.2 Hitting an opponents ball(s) with the cue ball on first impact of the cue ball, except with the first shot following any foul, or when playing away from a touching ball of own group.
- 5.3 Failing to hit any ball with the cue ball. Once a shot has been played, that is when the cue ball has been contacted by the cue tip, the cue ball must hit an object ball, or the black ball.
- 5.4 Jump shot - defined as when the cue ball jumps over any part of any ball before making contact with any ball.
- 5.5 Hitting the 8-ball with the cue ball on first impact of the cue ball before all their own group are pocketed, except with the first shot following any foul, or when playing away from a touching ball of own group.
- 5.6 Potting any opponent's ball, except with the first shot following any foul.
- 5.7 Ball(s) off the table (*see rule 11.1*)
- 5.8 If a player's body or clothing touches any ball, other than as in *rule 9.1*
- 5.9 Player not having at least part of one foot on the floor at the instant the tip contacts the cue ball. (Any part of foot/footwear, not laces, classed as one foot)
- 5.10 Playing or touching with the cue any ball other than the cue ball.
- 5.11 Striking the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip (that is the end/face of the tip and NOT the side of the tip).
- 5.12 Playing out of turn (*see rule 17*).
- 5.13 Playing before all balls have come to rest.
- 5.14 Playing before any ball(s) have been re-spotted.
- 5.15 Striking the cue ball with the cue more than once (double hit).
- 5.16 Push shot - defined as where the cue tip remains in contact with the cue ball for more than the momentary time commensurate with a normal stroked shot, or the cue tip remains in contact with the cue ball once it has commenced its forward motion.
- 5.17 Failing to nominate when balls of both groups are pocketed with the first legal pot.
- 5.18 Foul break, failing to pot an object ball or drive at least two object balls to hit any cushions.
- 5.19 Not playing a shot within the time allowed (*see rule 13.1*).
- 5.20 Repositioning the cue ball within the area behind the baulk line with any part of the cue when the cue ball is 'In Hand' (*see rule 9.2*).
- 5.21 Playing from outside Baulk, when obliged to play from Baulk (*see rule 23.2*).
- 5.22 Coaching (*see rule 12.1.2*).
- 5.23 If a players cue (other than legitimately striking the cue ball), cue extension, piece of associated equipment (i.e. spider or chalk) touches any ball. This includes such occurrences where the aforementioned are left on the table during the execution of a shot.
- 5.24 Cue ball making contact with, or being dropped onto any other ball during the execution of 'ball in hand' (*see rule 9.3*).
- 5.25 Accidentally stopping the normal travel of any ball by hand or other means.

6. PENALTY FOLLOWING ANY FOUL

- 6.1 Following any foul, other than going 'In Off' on the break shot (*see rule 6.4*) or where 'loss of game' (*see rule 7*) occurs the offending player loses their visit to the table, giving their opponent two consecutive visits to the table. If several fouls occur on one shot, only one penalty is enforced.
- 6.2 If the cue ball has come to rest on the playing surface, then the player having two visits may proceed to play from where the cue ball lies, or the cue ball may be played from any position within baulk. Moving the cue ball in this manner does not count as a shot, or visit. Although not compulsory, players are advised to ask the referee to hand them the cue ball. The referee should then hand the cue ball to the player, and not place it on the table (*see rule 9.4*).
- 6.3 On the first shot only of the first visit, the oncoming player may, without nomination, play the cue ball on to any ball without penalty, including any opponent's ball(s), or 8-ball. If any object ball(s) is pocketed directly, or by combination, the player is deemed to have pocketed a legal ball(s), and continues with the first visit. However, the player must not pot the 8-ball, which would mean loss of game, except if the player is on the 8-ball, then the game would be won. When the player fails to pot a ball on the first or subsequent shot of the first visit, play then continues with the second visit. The second visit is deemed to have started when the cue ball is struck on the first shot of the second visit and not when the referee makes his call.
- 6.4 If the cue ball is pocketed ("In Off") on a fair break the offending player loses their next visit to the table, giving their opponent ONE visit to the table. The table becomes an "Open" & "Free" table. The cue ball may be played from any position within baulk. If the cue ball is pocketed ("In Off") on a foul break then *rule 4.3.3* applies.
- 6.5 Please note: If a foul is not called before the next shot is taken, the foul is assumed not to have happened (*other than rule 17.2*).

7. LOSS OF GAME

- 7.1 If a player pots the 8-ball before all the balls in their own group, except on the break (*see 4.3.6*), the player loses the game.
- 7.2 A player going "in off" the 8-ball when the 8-ball is pocketed, loses the game.
- 7.3 A player committing any foul whilst pocketing the 8-ball, except on the break (*see rule 4.3.6*) loses the game.
- 7.4 A player pocketing the 8-ball and any other ball on the same shot will lose the game, except following a foul when only the 8-ball and ball(s) of the opponents group are on the table, then with the first shot of the first visit, the player may legally pocket the 8-ball as well as ball(s) of the opponent's group by any combination and in any order.
- 7.5 If a player clearly and intentionally stops any object ball or 8-ball going into a pocket, loses the game.
- 7.6 If a player deliberately causes any ball or balls to be moved in a manner other than which may result from the playing of a normal shot. For example banging the side cushion to propel a ball further than it would have otherwise travelled and stopping the normal travel of any ball by hand or other means.

- 7.7 A player who clearly fails to make a legitimate attempt to play a ball of their own group, or the 8-ball (if on the 8-ball) will lose the game. **Examples of this are:**
- 7.7.1 Directly, deliberately and knowingly playing at an opponent's ball, other than in *rule 6.3* or touching ball own group.
 - 7.7.2 Playing into space with clearly no intention of hitting a ball of their own group, or the 8-ball (if on the 8-ball), other than touching ball own group.
 - 7.7.3 When playing out of a snooker a player must make a reasonable attempt to contact a ball of own group.
- 7.7 Where coaching (other than permitted in pairs) occurs which directly and almost certainly affects the outcome of the game (*see rule 12.1.3*).

8 TOUCHING BALL

- 8.1 Touching any ball the player is obliged to "play away" (playing the cue ball at an angle of more than 90 degrees, failure to do so would be a foul (*see rule 5.16*). However, moving the object ball is not automatically a foul. Should a player be clearly playing away from an object ball, and in playing the shot the object ball rocks or rolls back into the area previously occupied by the cue ball without being contacted further, but simply because the cue ball is no longer there, the shot would be deemed fair and not foul.
- 8.2 Touching any opponent's ball or the 8-ball, the player must play a ball of their own group, except on the first shot of first visit following a foul (*see rule 6.3*).
- 8.3 A player touching a ball of own group, or any ball on the first shot of the first visit following a foul may play away from the touching ball and be deemed to have played that ball. Should the cue ball fail to make contact with any ball, or strike opponents ball or the 8-ball, then the shot is fair and not foul

9. CUE BALL IN HAND

- 9.1 When a player has the cue ball in hand, the ball is played from any position on, or behind the baulk line, and in any direction. The player may continue to move the cue ball until he/she executes a shot. Please note: the cue ball may not be positioned touching another ball.
- 9.2 Repositioning the cue ball within the area behind the baulk line with any part of the cue when the cue ball is 'In Hand' is a foul. Cue ball in hand must be moved only by hand (does not apply before the break).
- 9.3 Players should take care whilst positioning the cue ball to avoid the cue ball making contact with any other ball or being dropped onto any other ball. Should either occur then it is a foul.
- 9.4 When a 'Cue Ball In Hand' situation arises, players are advised to ask the referee to hand them the cue ball. The referee should then hand the cue ball to the player, and not place it on the table. Although not compulsory, it is in the player's best interest to ask the referee to hand them the cue ball.
- 9.5 Please note: In pairs matches, whoever the referee hands the cue ball to, does not necessarily indicate in any way that it is his/her particular turn at the table next.

10. PLAYER IN CONTROL

- 10.1 A player is deemed to be in control of the table from the time their body, clothing, jewellery, cue, etc touches the table prior to their shot, throughout their visit and up to until their opponent does likewise prior to their visit. Any ball(s) which fall into pockets during this period, (including the 8 ball) are said to have been pocketed, with the player in control being liable to any penalties or benefits normally awarded for the pocketing of ball(s). However, once the cue ball has been struck, a legal shot must be completed, a ball falling in does not cancel out any foul. Therefore, after contacting the cue ball with the cue tip the cue ball must make contact with an object ball. Failure to comply is a foul (*see rule 5.3*).
- 10.2 Players should be aware that in a Pairs game, rule 10.1 applies if EITHER player touches the table.
- 10.3 If a player, whether in singles or pairs retrieves the cue ball from the trough themselves (i.e. after cue ball being pocketed), the player will be deemed to be in control of the table at that point. However, if a referee retrieves the cue ball from the trough on the players behalf and hands the cue ball to the player, the player will NOT be deemed to be in control of the table until 10.1 occurs.
- 10.4 Where a "Cue Ball In Hand" situation arises (*see rule 9.4*) the player will be deemed to be IN control of the table once the cue ball is handled during the cue ball in hand process, and applies whether carried out by the player or the referee. This only applies when the cue ball has come to rest on the playing surface, when retrieved from the trough, 10.3 applies.
- 10.5 Please note: If a player touches the table in appreciation or frustration of a good shot, he or she will be deemed to be in control of the table.

11. BALLS OFF THE TABLE

- 11.1 It is a foul if any ball leaves the playing surface, does not return by its own means and so remains off the playing surface (other than when potted).
- 11.2 "Playing Surface":- The playing surface of the table is the flat part of the table between the cushions.
- 11.3 "By it own means":-
a) It is not a foul if a ball leaves the playing surface, runs along the top of a cushion, drops back on to the playing surface and comes to rest there or falls into a pocket.
b) It is a foul if a ball leaves the playing surface, comes into contact with a person or object that is not a part of the table and then returns to the playing surface.
- 11.4 Balls are returned to the table as follows:-
a) Cue Ball is played from any position on or behind the baulk line.
b) Object Balls (red/yellow ball) and 8-ball are re-spotted with its centre point on the black spot or as near as possible to that spot in a direct line between the spot and the centre point of the baulk line.
- 11.5 Balls (see 11.4 b) are re-spotted in the following order:-
a) 8-ball
b) Object balls
Please note that if more than one object ball requires re-spotting, the oncoming player to decide which ball on the spot, and order thereafter.
- 11.6 Where more than one ball (*see 11.4 b*) is returned to the table they should be placed as close as possible to each other but without touching.

12. COACHING

12.1 Coaching is not allowed in any frame (other than pairs) and is deemed to be unsportsmanlike behaviour (*see rule 1*) and should be discouraged and dealt with at all times. During a frame, a player is required to play without receiving any advice, either by word or action from other persons relating to the playing of the frame. Should a team member, bone-fide supporter of a player or spectators that couldn't be considered to be normal support offer advice, then the referee should deal with the situation using the following "three categories of coaching" guidance:-

12.1.1 STANDARD COACHING:- defined as when a player is advised how to play their next shot, which would not necessarily result in the player avoiding fouling or likely compromise the result, but would allow the player to execute a shot that he/she may not have been aware of, prior to the advice.

Examples of this are references to:-

- a) First pot selection
- b) Cue ball placement (when ball in hand)
- c) As to whether to execute a positive or negative shot.

The referee should instruct the offender to stop and issue a "First and Final Warning" to that person that a repetition will result in the frame being awarded to the opponent.

12.1.2 SERIOUS COACHING:- defined as when a player is advised how to play his/her next shot which would not necessarily compromise the result, but would avoid the player fouling. Examples of this are references to:-

- a) Cue ball placement (when ball in hand) i.e. in the process of playing a shot when the cue ball is not on or behind the baulk line.
- b) Playing a ball that is not of own group (other than first shot of first visit following a foul).
- c) Playing out of turn.
- d) Striking any ball other than cue ball with cue tip.

The referee should penalise the player by declaring a foul, award two visits to the opponent and issue a "First and Final Warning" to that person that a repetition of any type of coaching will result in the frame being awarded to opponent.

12.1.3 LOSS OF GAME COACHING:- defined as when a player is advised how to play his/her next shot which would clearly compromise the result. Examples of this are references to:-

- a) Player about to pot the 8-ball is reminded ball(s) of own group remain.
- b) Player about to pot the 8-ball (when ball in hand) i.e. in the process of potting the 8-ball when the cue ball is not on or behind the baulk line.

The referee should award game to opponent.

12.2 Coaching is permitted in pairs matches, but only under the following guidance: Conferring may take place between the two players of a pairs team from the point balls stop moving at the end of a partner's turn (throughout the opponent's turn), and up to the point where either player touches the table etc, as defined in *rule 10.1* or the time allowed between shots has expired (*see rule 13.1*).

- 12.3 Please be aware that because it may not always be possible for a referee to hear if a statement made to a player is advice or general supportive comments or light hearted banter, players are advised to refrain from entering in conversation with third parties whilst the frame is in progress as a referee could deem any statement as coaching.
- 12.4 A referee must not interfere with play/coach a player other than as outlined in *rule 21.4*. If a referee does so, then it will be deemed a foul against the referee's player. Please note: A player can not be penalised if the advice/coaching given is from a referee from the opponent's team.

13. TIME ALLOWED

- 13.1 The Referee should not allow a player to take excessive time between shots, or prior to the first shot of their visit. For guidance purposes, more than ninety seconds is deemed excessive. If the "ninety seconds" has elapsed before a shot is played, the referee should instruct the player to play his/her shot. If the instruction is blatantly ignored the referee should call "Time Foul" and the player penalised as in *rule 6.1*.
- 13.2 The Referee will start timing when:
- a) All balls have come to rest from the previous shot.
 - b) Cue ball reaches the trough.
 - c) Balls have been racked and "game on" called.
 - d) Ball(s) returned to the table, and referee moves away.
- 13.3 The Referee has the discretion to make allowances when timing ceases or additional time is allowed. Examples of this are:
- a) If a player is obstructed or needs to leave the playing area for a justifiable reason;
 - b) If the referee needs to inspect the balls to see if a touching ball exist or a possible re-rack situation exists;
 - c) If a player is searching for a piece of equipment, such as a spider.
 - d) If the referee needs to clean any balls;
 - e) In the execution of the referee's duties in giving advice to a player pertaining to the rules (if requested), issuing warnings to players, spectators or third parties, or any general communication that needs to be made;
 - (f) If a player has disability or condition that puts them at a disadvantage of conforming to the 'time allowed' as detailed in rule 13.1.

14 STALEMATE

- 14.1 A stalemate can be arrived at by either a situation whereby a legal shot is impossible to play or where neither player is allowing the game to progress. Please note, that re-racking the balls as a result of the 8-ball being pocketed on the break shot does not constitute a stalemate (*see rule 4.3.6*).
- 14.2 Should any situation arise whereby a legal shot is impossible to play, then the game shall be restarted by the player who started that frame, whether the situation has been arrived at by accident or design.
- Examples of this are:
- a) Whereby the cue ball, or a players only remaining object ball(s) are covered, resulting in a gap too small to allow the cue ball to make contact with a players object ball.

- b) Whereby a player is snookered and it is not possible to play the cue ball onto a flat cushion (i.e. a player is snookered and the cue ball is positioned between an object ball and a cushion, the cue ball is also touching both the object ball and the cushion. Therefore, the cue ball could only be played into the pocket jaws and not onto a flat cushion).
- c) Whereby a player's only remaining object ball(s) are touching an opponents object ball which is hanging over a pocket (playing the cue ball onto object ball would result in the opponents ball being pocketed). The balls must be touching and be called as such by the referee. Definition of "hanging over the pocket" means the edge of the ball is past the end of the bed of the table.

14.3 If in the opinion of the referee neither player is allowing the game to progress to a conclusion the referee should warn the players that each player will have two more visits at the table. If the referee determines that there is still no progress he/she will declare a stalemate and the game shall be re-started by the player who started that frame. If both players agree, they may accept the stalemate without taking their two additional turns. Do not however, be premature in calling a re-rack simply because a ball has not been potted for a given amount of time. Whilst it is sometimes fatal to make comparisons between tactics and downright time wasting (fudging), there is a difference between the two.

'**Fudging**' is a stopgap shot-by-shot play with no clear outcome in mind.

'**Tactics**' (i.e. attempting a possible match winning snooker) have a positive object in view: to win a frame arrived at by planning and foresight, therefore, it can be construed as 'progress'.

14.4 The referee shall not allow numerous visits with neither player making any attempt to make the opening pot which decides the playing groups.

14.5 On any re-started frame, if the player who started that frame did so by virtue of their opponent making a foul break, that player will break on any restart, not the opponent who made the foul break.

14.6 In the event of three stalemate frames occurring as identified in *rule 14.1*, the game shall be concluded by an "8-Ball Shoot Out".

14.6.1 The following procedure should be followed where an "8 Ball Shoot Out" is necessary:-

- a) The referee should remove all balls from the playing surface, other than the 8-ball and the cue ball.
- b) The referee should position the 8-ball on the 8-ball spot and the cue ball at the centre of the baulk line i.e. both balls will be in the centre of the table and parallel with both long side rails.
- c) Order of play is determined by the flip of a coin. The winner of the flip has the option of breaking, or requesting their opponent to do so.
- d) The first player to pocket the 8-ball legally wins the game or the first person who illegally pockets the 8-ball loses the game. Please note, that because this is a "shoot out" and not a break shot, the player who breaks off, will lose the game if they pot the 8-ball and go "in off" with the cue ball. Effectively, the "shoot out" is played as if both players (or pairs) are on the 8-ball as in the conclusion of a normal game.

15 OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE

- 15.1 When outside interference occurs during a shot that has an effect on the outcome of that shot, the referee will restore the balls to the positions they had before the shot, and the shot will be replayed. If the interference had no effect on the shot, the referee will restore the disturbed balls and play will continue. If the balls cannot be restored to their original positions, the situation is handled like a stalemate.
- 15.2 The referee will restore disturbed balls to their original positions to the best of his/her ability. To do this, the referee may ask the players their opinion, and in turn the players have a right to express an opinion if they are dissatisfied with the referee's re-placement. However, the players must ultimately accept the referee's judgment as to placement.
- 15.3 When outside interference is deemed to have occurred, no penalty shall be imposed on either of the players.
- 15.4 Outside Interference is defined as:-
- a) If any balls are moved during a frame by a person other than the players taking part in the frame (this includes the referee) or as a direct result of one of the players being bumped OR
 - b) Any other event deemed outside the players' control i.e. tip falling off a cue, end falling off a spider or jewellery/watch becoming detached and falling from player.
- 15.5 Balls moved by a player who is "in control" of the table will not be replaced, but the player will be penalised according to *rule 5* as appropriate. Balls moved by a player who is "not in control" of the table will dealt with as *in rule 15.1*.

16 UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- 16.1 Unsportsmanlike conduct is any intentional behaviour that brings disrepute to the sport or which disrupts or changes the game to the extent that it cannot be played fairly, thus breaching "The Spirit of the Game". Any such conduct will not be tolerated and should be dealt with immediately.
- 16.2 Depending on the referee's judgement of the conduct the referee may as appropriate, issue warnings, abandon the game, or in extreme circumstances award the frame or game away (*see rule 1.*)
- 16.3 Unsportsmanlike conduct may be regarded as:-
- a) Foul and abusive language.
 - b) Threatening or insulting gestures.
 - c) Assault.
 - d) Arguing with an opponent, spectator or referee.
 - e) Continuously disagreeing with a referees ruling.
 - f) Distracting opponent.
 - g) Playing a shot by intentionally miscuing.
 - h) Changing the position of the balls in play other than by a shot.
 - i) Not moving away from the table or out of an opponent's way after a visit.
 - j) Music system so loud that player and referee communication is affected.
 - k) Barracking.
 - l) Marking the table.
 - m) Continuing to play after a foul has been called.
 - n) Excessive and continuous time wasting.
 - o) Intentionally playing out of turn.

17. PLAYING OUT OF TURN

- 17.1 It is a foul to unintentionally play out of turn. Normally, the balls will be played from the position left by the mistaken play. If a player intentionally plays out of turn, it should be treated as in *rule 16. Unsportsmanlike Conduct*.
- 17.2 Playing out of turn will only be penalised if the misdemeanour has been called by the referee or highlighted BEFORE the following player has played their first shot.
- 17.3 Examples of how possible scenarios of playing out of turn in pairs matches should be dealt with are detailed as follows:-

For the purpose of this exercise players are known as Player 'A', Player 'B', Player 'C', and Player 'D'. Players 'A' & 'C' are one team, with Players 'B' & 'D' being the other. The order of play has been established as (i.e. at least one player from each team has played a shot) ABCD.

Player 'B' has just finished his visit to the table. Player 'A' then comes to the table and plays a shot, thus playing out of turn (it should have been player 'C').

Scenario 1. The referee calls a foul immediately Player 'A' has played out of turn. **Player 'A' loses his visit to the table, giving the oncoming player (Player 'D') two consecutive visits to the table (see rule 6).** The original order of play is maintained.

Scenario 2. Neither the referee nor any of the players realise that Player 'A' has played out of turn. Consequently, player 'A' completes his visit to the table and the oncoming player, Player 'D' also plays a shot. At this point the referee realises that the order of play is wrong (this can be of his own initiative or having been prompted by the players). **The balls are re-racked and the game re-started by the same player. No penalty will be incurred.**

Scenario 3. Neither the referee nor any of the players realise that Player 'A' has played out of turn. Consequently, player 'A' continues his visit at the table and successfully pots his remaining four object balls. At this point (just before he plays the 8-ball), the referee realises that the order of play is wrong (this can be of his own initiative or having been prompted by the players).

The balls are re-racked and the game re-started by the same player. No penalty will be incurred.

Please note: Once the game has concluded and exchange of handshakes has taken place the game will be considered finished.

18. GUIDANCE

- 18.1 The term "Shot" means striking the cue ball once.
- 18.2 The term "Visit" refers to one turn at the table comprising of one, or a series of shots.
- 18.3 The "Second Visit" is deemed to have started when the cue tip contacts the cue ball, following the end of the first visit, and not when the referee makes the call. This will clarify situations where ball(s) fall into pockets to decide whether a player is control on the first or second visit.
- 18.4 The term "Break/Break Shot" refers to the first shot of a game or the first shot of any re-started game.
- 18.5 The term "Free Table" means a player may play at any ball on the table, including the 8-ball, and pot any ball except the 8-ball, unless on the 8-ball.
- 18.6 The term "Open Table" means a legal group has not been established for either player(s), the player may play and pot any object ball(s) except the 8-ball. It would be a foul to play the 8-ball.

19. PLAYING WITHOUT A REFEREE

- 19.1 When a referee is not available (i.e. early rounds of individual/pairs matches, etc), the players in the match will be responsible for racking balls, watching for fouls, and insuring adherence to the rules. In effect, in the absence of a referee, the players themselves "self ref" and are responsible for ensuring the game is played fairly, to the rules and in a sportsmanlike manner.

20. REFEREES GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 20.1 In an effort to ensure fair play and sportsmanship, captains are asked to give serious consideration to using referee's who are conversant with the playing rules.
- 20.2 Only the players involved in a frame may request the referee to advise on rules during a frame. To approach a captain or team member during a frame may be misconstrued as coaching (*see rule 12.3*). Spectators and other players, including a team captain, may only request advice between frames, and only then if the referee is available to answer such questions.
- 20.3 A referee should not submit to unnecessary request for balls to be cleaned. Never attempt to lift a ball for cleaning if it is in a crucial position.
- 20.4 If a player feels that the referee has made an error in judgment, he/she may ask the referee to reconsider his call or lack of call, refer to the playing rules or ask their captains opinion. The referee may change or uphold the decision. Ultimately, the referee's decision is final on the night. Should a player refuse to accept the referee's decision the player should instruct their captain of the disagreement and the referee should abandon the game. The two captains may decide to replay the frame if all parties are in agreement. The Committee wish to make clear it is in the best interest of both teams to resolve disputes on the night of the match. If this is not possible then the facts should be reported to the General Secretary of MPL within 48 hours as a protest, as outlined in the Constitution. Should a player accept the referee's decision during the frame then the decision is final, and will NOT be overturned by the Committee.
- 20.5 A player is obliged when playing out of a snooker to make a reasonable attempt to contact a ball of his/her own group.

21. REFEREE'S DUTIES

- 21.1 The Referee's Duties and Guidelines supplement those directions contained in various other sections of these rules.
- 21.2 The referee is the sole arbitrator of what is fair or unfair play, and will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the rules are observed, and that the player(s) are not distracted by unnecessary noise or movement during play. The referee may, as appropriate, issue warnings, call on a senior referee, abandon the game, or in extreme circumstances award frame or game away.
- 21.3 The referee should ensure the game is played according to the rules, call fouls as soon as they happen and announce shots in accordance with the calling procedure, for the benefit of both the players and spectators.

- 21.4 The referee must NEVER give advice nor offer an opinion on points of play. Only when asked by either player for clarification of a rule will the referee then explain that specific rule to the best of his/her ability. If the referee sees that a foul is about to be committed by either player, he/she must say nothing until after the foul, since any warning before the foul would constitute coaching from the referee (*see rule 12.4*).
- 21.5 Information to be disclosed / not disclosed by a referee:-
- a) A player is responsible for knowing the rules of the game. It is not the referee's duty to explain or quote the rules to a player.
 - b) A referee, if asked by a player, may divulge certain information pertaining to the frame in question under the guidelines of the "Past, Present and Future Rule". A referee may divulge information relating to any past event or present situation in the frame. For example:- "Whose turn is it?" - Present. "Was that a foul?" - Past. "Which Colour am I On?" - Present. However, "If I play this shot will it be a foul?" is a question regarding the Future and the referee should advise the player that the referee cannot answer this type of question.
- 21.6 The referee shall toss a coin to determine the break and announce the result.
- 21.7 If an Object Ball (or balls) is potted on the break the referee will advise both players of this fact by announcing "Ball (or balls) potted". When a player has a right and an obligation to nominate a choice of Colour, and does so, the referee will announce "Player 'A' On Red (or Yellow) Balls". When that player's turn is complete the referee will advise the incoming player of the situation by announcing "Player 'B' on Yellow (or Red) Balls".
- 21.8 In order to carry out the referee's duties the referee will be in such a position that a clear view of the table and player is available. The referee is therefore expected to move around the table as the players move, and if necessary the referee may have to approach the table in order to obtain a clear view. However, this must be done without obstruction or distraction to the player.
- 21.9 Most occasions will allow a referee to change position after every shot. This opportunity should be taken, and will have three benefits:-
- The best possible view
 - Will not obstruct the view of the same spectators
 - The continual movement will increase the alertness of the referee.

22 REFEREES CALLING PROCEDURE

- 22.1 8 BALL POTTED ON THE BREAK SHOT: Call:- "**Void Break**, (Retrieve all Balls and re-rack) **Same Player to Re-start Frame, No Penalty**".
- 22.2 FOUL BREAK: Call:- "**Foul Break**, (Re-rack Balls) **Opponent to Re-start Frame with Two Visits**".
- 22.3 CUE BALL POTTED ON A FAIR BREAK: Call:- "**Foul, One Visit, Free Table, Open Table**". No further call is made until no pot is made then Call:- "**End of Visit**".

- 22.4 ANY FOUL WHEN GROUP NOT ESTABLISHED: Call:- **"Foul, Two Visits, Free Table, Open Table"**.
- 22.5 BREAK SHOT, LEGAL BALL(S) POTTED, ONE GROUP ONLY:
 Call:- **"Red/Yellow Balls Potted, Please Nominate"**.
 If player nominates the group potted Call:- **"Red/Yellow Balls in Play"**.
 If player nominates the group not potted Call:- **"Red/Yellow Balls Nominated"**.
 If colour nominated is then potted Call:- **"Red/Yellow Balls in Play"**.
 Failure to pot nominated colour Call:- **"Open Table"**.
- 22.6 BREAK SHOT, BOTH GROUPS POTTED: Call:- **"Red & Yellow Balls Potted, Please Nominate"**.
 After nomination, Call:- **"Red/Yellow Balls in Play"**.
- 22.7 BREAK SHOT, FAIR BREAK, NO BALLS POTTED: Call:- **"Open Table"**.
- 22.8 FIRST APPROACH AFTER GROUPS ARE ESTABLISHED: On the first time only, that a player is in/takes control of the table, after groups have been established.
 Call:- **"Red/Yellow Balls in Play"**. After this point no further mention of a colour must be made, except if directly asked by a player.
- 22.9 ANY FOUL DURING A FRAME: Call:- **"Foul, Two Visits, Free Table, First Visit"**. Continue to Call:- **"First Visit"** with each successful pot, until a legal shot is played where no pot is made, then Call:- **"Second Visit"** No further call is made until the next time no pot is made, then Call:- **"End of Second Visit"**.
- 22.10 CUE BALL TOUCHING ANY BALL:
 Call:- **"Touching Ball"** . Then point to which ball(s) is touching the cue ball.
- 22.11 TIME FOUL: After the "Time Allowed" period has been blatantly ignored:
 Call:- **"Time Foul, Two Visits, Free table"**. Add **"Open Table"** if no group established.
- 22.12 STALEMATE: If the Stalemate Rule is invoked, Call:- **"Stalemate, Re-start of Frame, Same Player to Break", "One Visit"**.
- 22.13 LOSS OF FRAME FOUL: Following a foul which results in loss of frame or frame being awarded away: Call:- **"Loss of Frame"**. And explain reasons why.
- 22.14 FRAME WINNING SHOT: Following the frame winning shot:- **"Frame won by (players or team name)"**.

23. PLAYING FROM BAULK

- 23.1 The Baulk Line is a straight line drawn a predetermined distance from the face of the bottom cushion (opposite end to where the balls are racked) and parallel to it, and the intervening space termed the Baulk area.
- 23.2 A ball is considered IN BAULK if it is either on the line or more than half of the ball is in baulk, over the line.
- 23.3 With ball in hand it must not be repositioned in baulk with any part of the cue – only by hand. (does not apply before the break)

RULE CHANGES ARCHIVE

Revision: 2	TIME ALLOWED: Rule 13.1 (AGM 24/02/2013) For guidance purposes, more than ninety seconds is deemed excessive. If the "ninety seconds" has elapsed before a shot is played, the referee should instruct the player to play his/her shot.
Revision: 1	Whole re-write and new format of existing playing rules (AGM 29/01/2012)