

TOUCHALONGZ

FAST BEDZ We all find that RunAlongz are difficult on a fast **snooker**-cloth, the sort u tend to find in clubz that host major snooker tournaments. And even more difficult on the fast **worn-out** cloths that u tend to find at RSL'z. Even good playerz had problemz in the old dayz, az ken be seen from this old newz snippet.

REECE VERSUS FRED LINDRUM, 1914

Reece is much the same. On the first day the pace on the table surely puzzled him. It was the same which boy Lindrum & Miss Roberts had smoothed out for two weeks, & the nap was flat. Tommy prefers a table on the slow side, with a nice rich nap that stands up like a Papuan's wool, so that he may hold the balls along "the fence" for his favourite stroke. On this table they were like quicksilver in a changing temperature. Still he did not kick. He had often been up against even faster tables. Notably in one of his champion matches with Inman.....

..... Reece deserved his win in the match with Lindrum finished on Saturday night, for the reason that he played the better billiards. On the first couple of days their displays were moderate, occasioned, as pointed out at the time, by an extra superfine cloth, which gave the balls much pace. They had the cloth changed to one with more nap, & as it settled down the form of both players improved considerably.

TOUCHALONGZ If the bed-cloth iz **too fast**, Eric findz that he ken get a longer run by playing **TouchAlongz**. These are simply a **short-range** verzion of RunAlong CC, KissAlong EE & ThinAlong FF. U could call it **RunAlong CEF**. And this might temporarily transform into an **Anchor** or a **Pendulum** for a while. And occasionally u will kum across a **RunAlong AB** cannon or 2, but never for long.

SLOW BEDZ In fact, i reckon u should try TouchAlongz on **slow** bed-cloths. Unless u are already getting lots of nice long runz uzing normal-range RunAlongz, in which case u should be **writing** instead of **reading**.

OPTIONZ With these short-range cannonz, uken play any cannon that u might play at long-range. But at short-range most are eezyr, & in some pozzyz u hav more **optionz**.

FOULZ When i say short-range cannonz are much eezyr, there iz always a **downside** to everything. There are 2 downsidez to TouchAlongz, the problem of **Touching Ballz** or **Clusterz**, & hence the problem of **Foul Shots**.

KNOWLEDGE Touching Ballz & Clusterz are minimized by knowing which stroke to play & how to play it, ie how hard to hit & whether to uze spin or stun or pique', etc.

EXECUTION Good knowledge iz a good start, but the main problem then bekumz execution. We havta be able to accurately play very short-range strokes, without fouling.

PRAKTIS The answer to both problemz, knowledge & execution, iz more praktis. Eric haz a nice cueing action which helps.

CUEING ACTION

In reality, i reckon that Eric haz say **3 stylez** or actionz for 3 circumstancez, az followz.

Longish Range RunAlong action.

Shortish Range TouchAlong action.

Panic-Range (very short-range) TouchAlong action.

MOOVING

For ordinary TouchAlongz the vizable parts moov like this.

Moov the **bridge** to the proper pozzy for the stroke.

Slide the qtip forward (uzually about 30mm) so that it iz 5mm to 10mm from the center of the qball.

Slight **pauze** (1/4 second), then a 25mm backswing.

Allmost zero **pauze**, then a 35mm forward-swing.

FLOURISH

The forward-swing iz more of an **upswing** -- the qtip finishez up over the top of the qball to **avoid** a double-hit. The qtip iz allready mooving **upish** when it first contacts the qball, & the cue iz allready **lifting** away from the bridge. This **flourish** iz often uzed whether u need it or not, koz touch iz not helped by varying your basic action. And, the flourish ken be **outish** (left or right) to giv soft spin & swerve, or **downish** to help giv soft stun.

STROKE

The stroke iz a forward **slide** & back-**swing** & forward-**swing** -- the **3** thingz are a **unit**. The **strength** of the stroke iz guided by all **3**, the **grip pressure** & the force of the slow forward slide iz just az important az it iz for the back-swing & the forward-swing.

FREEZE

Az u begin the forward-slide, **freeze yor head** & body.

ARM

The slide & swingz involve mooving the **whole arm** az a unit, altho i dare say some cushion-crawlerz might uze the wrist or hand. There iz no need to keep the cue **level**, do whatever feelz comfortable, but u will naturally havta **raize** the butt if u want some **swerve**.

RESTING

It iz best to **relax** & breathe deeply at intervalz, & even to stand straight up & **stretch**, koz it iz eezy to overdo thingz.

RUSHING

One tendz to **rush** too much when thingz seem to be going great.

BRIDGE

U don't havta moov yor **bridge hand** for every stroke -- but when u moov yor bridge u should allso moov yor head. You will probably be **leening** on the table, so u don't need to moov yor **feet** with every stroke, u uzually just slide along a bit.

SHORT GRIP

Regarding yor **head**, the **closer** yor eyez are to the action the better, so the **shorter** yor grip the better. Eric holdz hiz cue lightly allmost at the **half-point**, uzing a **boucle bridge** -- a boucle bridge savez having a **death-grip**. Why not uze a short grip **all** the time -- whether u need to or not -- it iz more **consistent**.

CENTER

Hitting the qball dead **center**, or a little abov center uzually, obviatez the need to chalk-up. Its not just lazyness, chalk-marks, & hence kicks, are a killer for nursery cannonz. But **don't** overdo it. If u are faced with a shot needing a lot of action, **chalk-up**.

THINKING

The TouchAlong thinking parts think like this.

- The decision as to what stroke u should now play woz made befor u played the previous stroke.
- As the ballz kum to rest, u confirm that u will play the stroke u allready knew u would play, & u decide the line & strength & spin etc needed. This takes allmost zero time, koz u more or less do this az u are mooving yor bridge.
- The abov -- needed -- duznt meen needed to get the score, it meenz needed to leev a certain stroke for the next stroke. This makes it all seem difficult, but in fact a nice run haz only 1 or 2 types of strokes, so it iz a no-brainer most of the time. U only need to wake up when thingz go awry.
- Az u do the forward-slide & back-swing u confirm the line & strength needed. The strength iz eezy, koz in reality after a few cannonz u hav a standard strength built into yor action, & hence all u need do iz decide whether to back-off a bit or step on the gas a bit.
- Az u do the forward-swing u concentrate fully on making an accurate controlled legal stroke & flourish. With the addition that u will gladly accept this opportunity to fine-tune exactly how the flourish will look, which will partly rely on a last minute assessment & an eleventh hour debate & a democratic vote concerning what u see in front of u.
- Never think about thinking.
- Apparently Eric haz delegated out much of the responsibility for thinking about strength & force & pace. This leevz Eric free to watch the progress of the run, or to carry on a conversation about some problem that he thort he saw pass-by a few shots ago.

LOOKING

The TouchAlong looking parts look like this.

- Yor eyez will be gazing at the ballz az they kum to rest, & az u moov yor bridge.
- Then yor gaze will shift to the back of the qball az u do the forward-slide.
- Then yor gaze will shift back to the ballz az u do the back-swing.
- During the forward-swing, yor gaze will shift to the nearest half of the object-ball. There iz no benefit from this. The benefit kumz from the fact that u focus on something, anything, & that u then fix yor gaze for the whole forward-swing. Koz, if u moov yor gaze during the forward-swing, pretty soon everything will be mooving.
- During the forward-swing the gaze will be fixed on the object-ball (or something), but u will be free & able to see the second object-ball in yor peripheral vizion, not that this iz going to help anything.
- It iz possible and ok to not focus on nothing, ie to stare at a bare spot somewhere in the middle of the action. Hence u will see the 3 ballz & the qtip all at once, in yor peripheral vizion. This might be ok, az long az yor thing.attention iz fixed on something (or nothing) during the forward-swing, that's the

PANIC-RANGE 1

When thingz get too ticklish, u

will need to fall back on the panic-range action. The main differencez are az followz.

- Don't rush, treat each stroke very carefully. U are in trouble.
- The forward-slide & back-swing & forward-swing will be smaller, perhaps 10mm.
- The uncomplicated smooth & oily single forward-slide iz replaced with a tortured forward & back & forward & back fiddle, & u keep this up for az long az it takes. Don't play the stroke until u are happy that u hav accustomed yor arm to the requirements of the stroke.
- A flourish type of upward follow-throo iz no good. Eric uzez a short straight jerky jab, with zero follow-throo.
- In the worst pozzyz, when the gap to the object-ball iz a few mm, but the cannon needz power, the back-swing & forward-swing might become a fiddle also. U advance closer & closer to the *q*ball, while fiddling, & u don't know when u will make contact.
- Your gaze & focus & attention will be fixed on the back of the *q*ball for the whole of the stroke. Avoiding the foul iz paramount.
- Hav u thort about a mini-masse' ????????

PANIC-RANGE 2

Here iz a clever little trick.

- This trick iz hard to describe, u uze your left hand (your bridge hand) az a stopper.
- Hold the cue firmly with just your right hand, say 200mm from the tip. The butt of the cue layz on the table (or cushion). U hold both your handz together, the left acts az a sort of solid wall, the right iz holding the cue. Start off with the *q*tip 3mm from the *q*ball.
- Make slow softish (or hardish) to & fro moovments with the cue, the right hand hitting the unyielding left. U uzually don't hit the *q*ball with the first few strokes.
- Gradually leen (or slide) the left hand (the bridge hand) towardz the *q*ball. Eventually, the *q*tip makes contact with the *q*ball, & u get a fair cannon.
- The force of the right hand iz enuff to sqeez the left hand enuff to allow the *q*tip to contact the *q*ball, and the left hand stops the *q*tip from following throo & fouling.
- Hit low for stun, high for follow. Hitting with check-side helps u to avoid the double-hit foul. But too hard & the ballz scatter.
- A similar & much more forceful shot iz sometimez possibl during an ordinary stroke, by slamming your right hand into the side of the rail, if a rail iz handy. Uken get a strong screw, while the red goze almost nowhere. I think that Peter Taylor showed me this trick at SMB in about 1966. He woz able to screw from the baulk line back to the baulk cushion without the red kumming back into baulk.

SPIN BENEFITS OF TOUCHALONGZ

RunAlongz ken be eezyr at short-range koz spin, swerv & stun effects are eezyr.

ANGLE Spin helps the *qball*'z angle -- here i am not referring to the angle taken by the *qball* after hitting the first ball or the second ball. Spin (throw) haz very little effect on the *qball*'z line of trajectory -- but spin (**throw**) haz a significant effect on the anglz taken by the object-ballz. And spin (throw) haz a significant effect on the speedz of the *qball* & the object-ballz -- the speedz of trajectory -- yhusly, spin **duz** affekt the *qball*'z angle -- the angle that u hav for yor **next** stroke.

THROW ken be uzed to inkreec the amount of doubl-kiss on the yellow, or to avoid a doubl-kiss. The more the spin, i meen the steeper the spin-axis, the more the throw.

DRAG It iz difficult to put a lot of side-spin on a *qball*. When we talk about side-spin, we probably don't care what it iz in terms of **rps**, we are interested in the **ratio** of side-spin to topspin. This iz best described by the **angl** of the axis-of-rotation. If sidespin equalz roll, then the axis iz at 45°, for a moment at least. U ken get a 45° axis by hitting wide on the *qball*'z equator, ie at 3 o'clock or 9 o'clock. The funny thing iz that, u karnt improov on 45° by uzing drag, ie by hitting the *qball* below the equator. Koz, the lower u hit, the less wide u ken hit. Hence, if u hit the *qball* at 7 o'clock or 8 o'clock or 9 o'clock, u will get about 45° for each. Actually, i suspect that hitting at 8 o'clock maximizez the axis angle, u might get a little over 45°. Actually, hitting at 7 o'clock seemz to me to giv a small dekreec every time (ie u get less than 45°), & a large dekreec most of the time.

BALONEY We hav been told that drag inkreecesz spin effect, but this iz baloney. If u uze a striped pool-ball for a *qball*, u ken eezyly see that there iz no such gain. I tryd hitting a pool-ball across a table, hitting at 7 & 8 & 9 o'clock, hitting just hard enuff for the ball to reech the other side of the table. And i placed coinz at the points where i reckon that the spin-axis died, ie reeched 00°, ie where spin reeched zero. The coin for 8 o'clock woz the winner, this coin sat just past the $\frac{3}{4}$ point of the journey. The more that i tryd to uze slowish drag the worserer the rezults. Long-range drag iz hard to control, the spin iz inconsistent & the rezidual spin iz often comparativly poor. I reckon that few playerz ken make a *qball* skid for more than 1/10th of its journey, ie 1 inch of skid to 9 inchez of roll. Hence, drag might make a 10 inch stroke act like a 9 inch stroke. Spin evaporates at an even rate per second. The time for the first 1 inch of the 10 inch journey iz not 1/10th, it iz less than 1/20th, hence the gain in spin might be 4% at most. Not worth the effort. In fact, this 4% dependz. If the roll rezistance iz high, & the spin rezistance iz low, then drag would rezult in a dekreec in the axis angle, the maximum axis angle would rezult by rolling the *qball* -- see what i meen???? In fact, i am saying this -- if the roll reziztance iz (or iznt) high, & the spin reziztance iz (or iznt) low, then rolling the *qball* iz (or iz) best. Drag might be ok to uze at timez, but for other reezonz. Hmmmmm.

TRANZMITTED SIDE I nearly forgot about **tranzmitted side**, this ken affect the yellow'z **rebound-angl** off the cushion. The steeper the spin-axis on the *qball* the more the tranzmitted side (to the yellow) -- any vertical component of ball-to-ball friktion iz wasted so to speak. In addition -- while we are in a theoretical mood -- if a *qball* had a very high spin rate (eg if the spin axis were say 80°), then much of this spin would be wasted allso -- koz the size of the ball-to-ball friktion would then be the limiting thing.

SPIN Anyhow, the shorter the range of the cannon, the higher the angle of the spin-axis -- the larger the spin effects -- ie throw & tranzmitted side.

SWERV BENEFITS TOUCHALONGZ

At short-range, **swerv** iz doubly **effectiv** & doubly **accurate**.

LONG RANGE

Az allready mentioned, spin duznt much affect the *qball*'z Deflexion Angl off an object-ball. An old red-ball player iz happy to uze spin to help the angle, but what iz really happening iz that it iz the swerv that iz helping her angle. When she uzez sidespin she gets swerv whether she likes it or not. The more she raizez her butt the more swerv she gets, but more swerv iz more difficult to control, & long-range swerv iz never more than perhaps 1° at best. Here the 1° iz the difference in the attack angle at the *qball*, compared to zero swerv.

SHORT RANGE

But at short range, simple swerv ken be very big & very friendly. Raizing the butt ken giv u 5° of swerv, & switching to a spear hold & raizing the butt to 30° ken giv u allmost 10° of swerv. Raizing the butt to over 45° ken giv u a mini-masse'.

PRAKTIS

Actually, this 5° & 10° of swerv dezervz some praktis. If u praktis with just a lonely *qball* u will soon see that u aren't az good at getting swerv az u thort. Hmmm.

STUN BENEFITS OF TOUCHALONGZ

At short-range, **stun** iz doubly **effectiv** & doubly **accurate**.

SKIDDING

I reckon that for ordinary RunAlongz we uzuually hit the *qball* hard enuff to send it about 6 ball lengths if it missez everything. Here all of the energy haz gone into rolling rezistance. If it duznt miss everything, & gets a cannon, the 3 ballz moov along say 1 ball each, a total of 3 ballz of roll. Here some of the energy haz been robbed by 2 or 3 ball-to-ball collizionz, & by 0 or 1 or 2 ball-to-cushion collizionz. Earlyr i sed that uken skid a *qball* for at most 1/10th of its journey. Hence, for a 6 ball strength of stroke, u should be able to skid the *qball* for 0.6 ballz, ie 31.5mm. Hence, u should be able to get some stun effect at 20mm range to the object-ball -- which iz a common range for ordinary RunAlongz.

45° STUN

But soft-stun duznt work that way -- at soft pace the normal lawz break down -- Newton duznt apply, nor Einstein. If u uze a striped pool ball u will see that it iz allmost impossible to get much stun at 20mm without giving the *qball* about 20 ballz of roll (u might do better on a very slippery cloth). The only way to get slow stun at 20mm iz to raize the butt abov 45°. In a TouchAlong, we uzuually hit the *qball* hard enuff to send it about 3 ball lengths, ie about half of the 6 ballz that we reckoned for an ordinary RunAlong. The 1/10th skidding factor works out to 0.3 ballz, or 16mm. Hence, u should be able to get some stun effect at 10mm range to the object-ball -- which iz a common range for ordinary TouchAlongz. But, once again, this 10mm stun buziness duznt work unless u raize the butt beyond about 45°. But with TouchAlongz this 10mm to 15mm stun range iz friendly (albeit at 45°), it iz much eezyr to handle than the 20mm to 30mm stun range that we might find with other RunAlongz. Trying to get stun (even 45°) at 20mm iz suicide.

10MM GAP

A 10mm gap between *qball* & yellow might in fact allow 14mm of elbow room for yor 45° stun stroke if u are aiming ½ ball. Anyhow, 10mm iz plenty even if aiming full-ball - in fact i often see playerz rezort to a 45° incline just to help avoid the foul even tho stun iznt needed. So, a 45° stun shouldn't feel uncomfortable in a run of TouchAlongz.

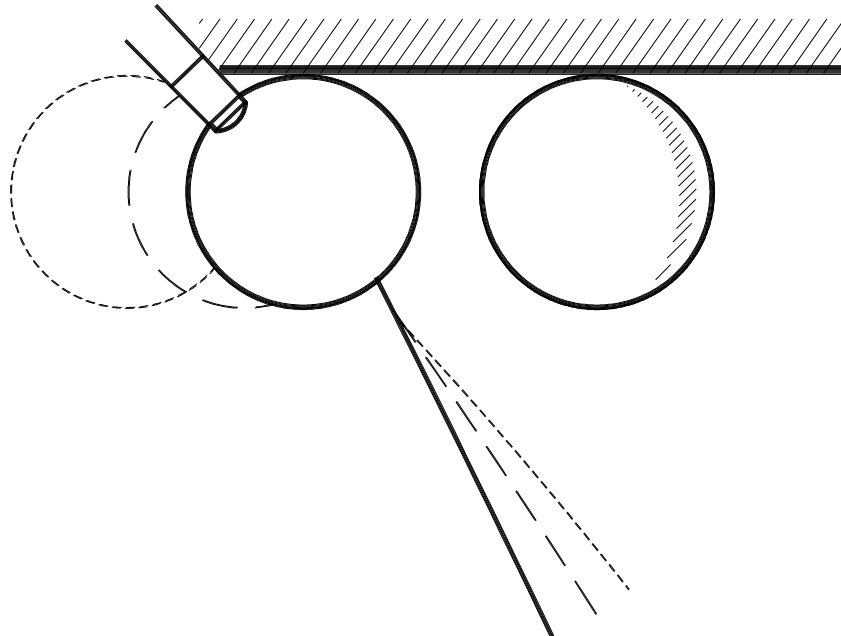
OFF-CENTER

Actually, most of yor 45° stonz will need some swerv & spin, if so u will need to hit the *qball* off-center. Hitting the *qball* off-center helps even more-so to avoid the double-hit foul, so u might occasionally uze swerv & side even tho u don't really need it.

SHORT-SIGHTED BENEFITS

GEZA GAZDAG THE ACCOMPLISHED CUEMAN 1991

Geza sez that the qball iz **short-sighted**. This iz more or less the gist of what i say in the chapter on **Deflexion Anglz**. This meenz that, at short-range, u hav the benefit of a wider Deflexion Angl, if u wish, hence less need to uze swerv etc.



TOUCHALONG 1 Here the drawing showz the maximum possible Deflexion Anglz for each of 3 placinz of the qball, $\frac{1}{4}$ ball clear of the yellow, and $\frac{1}{2}$ ball clear, & 1 ball clear. Az ken be seen, the maximum possible Deflexion Angl (the solid line) for a $\frac{1}{4}$ ball separation (the solid ball) iz more uzer friendly (if u need a wide angle) than the trajektoryz for the $\frac{1}{2}$ ball & 1 ball spacinz.

If u don't need a wide angle, then in one sense all 3 placinz are a bit of a muchness, in that u ken allwayz get az narrow an angle az u might need by simply playing a thick run-throo, contacting the yellow az thickly az necessary (not shown), the main problem then bekumming the risk of a double-hit foul, plus the fact that -- the thicker u havta hit -- the further the yellow runz etc.

BIGGER BALLZ In effect, with short-range TouchAlongz, u are using **bigger ballz**. It's much like playing normal RunAlongz, but uzing ballz that are **twice** the size, ie 105mm ($4\frac{1}{8}$ inchez) diameter. In other wordz, if i draw the ballz 13.125mm apart (ie $\frac{1}{4}$ ball), u wouldn't really know whether that ment to show 105mm ballz 26.25mm apart ($\frac{1}{4}$ ball), or som other size $\frac{1}{4}$ ball apart. The Deflexion Anglz, the cannonz possible, & the leevz, would be identical in each case (near'nuff).

I don't know what my silly bigger ballz notion all meenz, but it might hav som sort of relevance. Here i am referring to the anglz u get -- obviously if u really uzed larger ballz (& thusly equally larger spacinz) it would take a lot of pressure off the needed touch etc -- which iz not what i am meening here. But it duz remind me that no one ken stop u from buying some $2\frac{1}{8}$ inch or $2\frac{1}{4}$ inch ballz for learning purposez. I occasionally roll out my $2\frac{7}{16}$ inch ballz. Hmmmm.

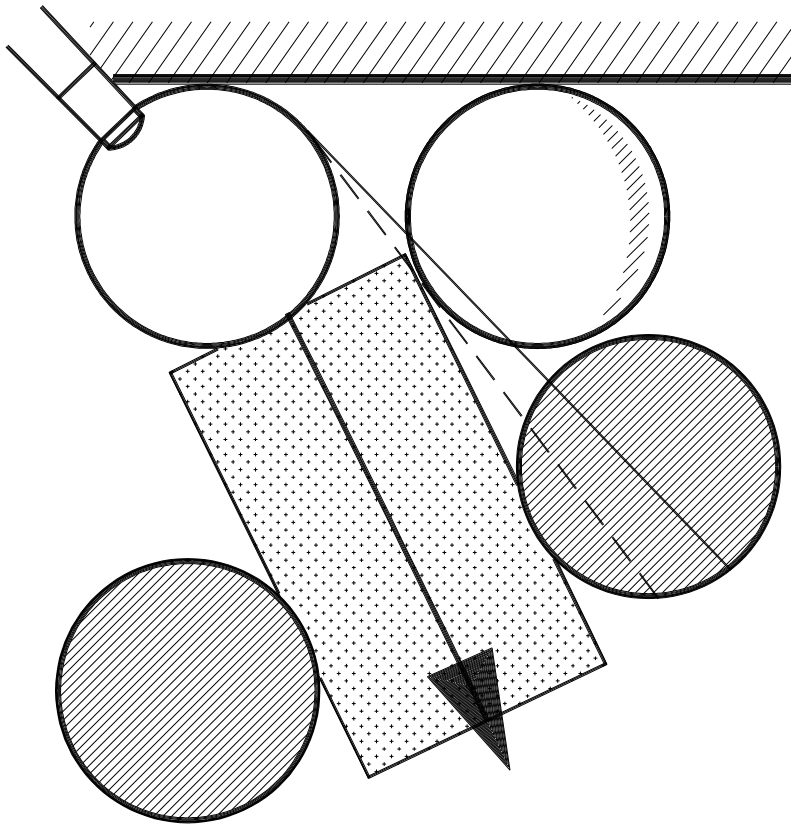
MORE SHORT-SIGHTED STUFF

TOUCHALONG 2

Here iz that $\frac{1}{4}$ ball spacing between the *q*ball & yellow mentioned in TouchAlong 1. The broken line iz ment to show that the *q*ball ken see less than $\frac{1}{4}$ ball of the red in the pozy shown -- this iznt important.

The solid aim-line remindz us that in this pozy an $\frac{1}{8}$ th ball aim on yellow givz us the maximum possible Deflexion Angl off the yellow, for pure roll (ie without rezorting to swerv etc). The cross-hatched zone showz the area thusly traversed by the *q*ball.

This $\frac{1}{8}$ th ball aim givz a thin clipping cannon on the nearer red (az shown) -- & it would allso clip the red if it were where the 2nd red iz shown -- alltho this haz nothing to do with TouchAlongz.



RUN-THROOZ

Here i remind u that any contact on yellow **thicker** than $\frac{1}{8}$ ball (not shown) will giv a narrower angle, & hence will contact the red thicker than clipping, in fact az thick az u like -- but will rezult in zero cannon az regardz the western pozy for the red. And i should remind u that any **thinner** than $\frac{1}{8}$ ball on yellow (not shown) will allso giv a narrower angle & hence will contact the red thicker than clipping (but only a little thicker), & would allso rezult in zero cannon az regardz the other red. Here i disregard the complication that the yellow will rebound off the cushion & hence *squeez* the red south & hence bump it even more-so into the path of the *q*ball. And i allso disregard the uzual napkurv that we might enjoy (or suffer) near the top-cushion (& everywhere else).

THINALONG

The pozy abov iz of course good for a 70° ThinAlong. Which remindz me that there iz really only one way to play a ThinAlong -- i meen there iz no TouchAlong verzion of a ThinAlong -- the gaps etc between the ballz, & the pace of the run, are allwayz a sort of TouchAlong -- alltho i supoze that u ken allwayz hit softer & thinner if u want, but why would u want to, it risks touching-ballz & clusterz & coverz & foulz.

RUNALONG AB

TOUCHALONG 3

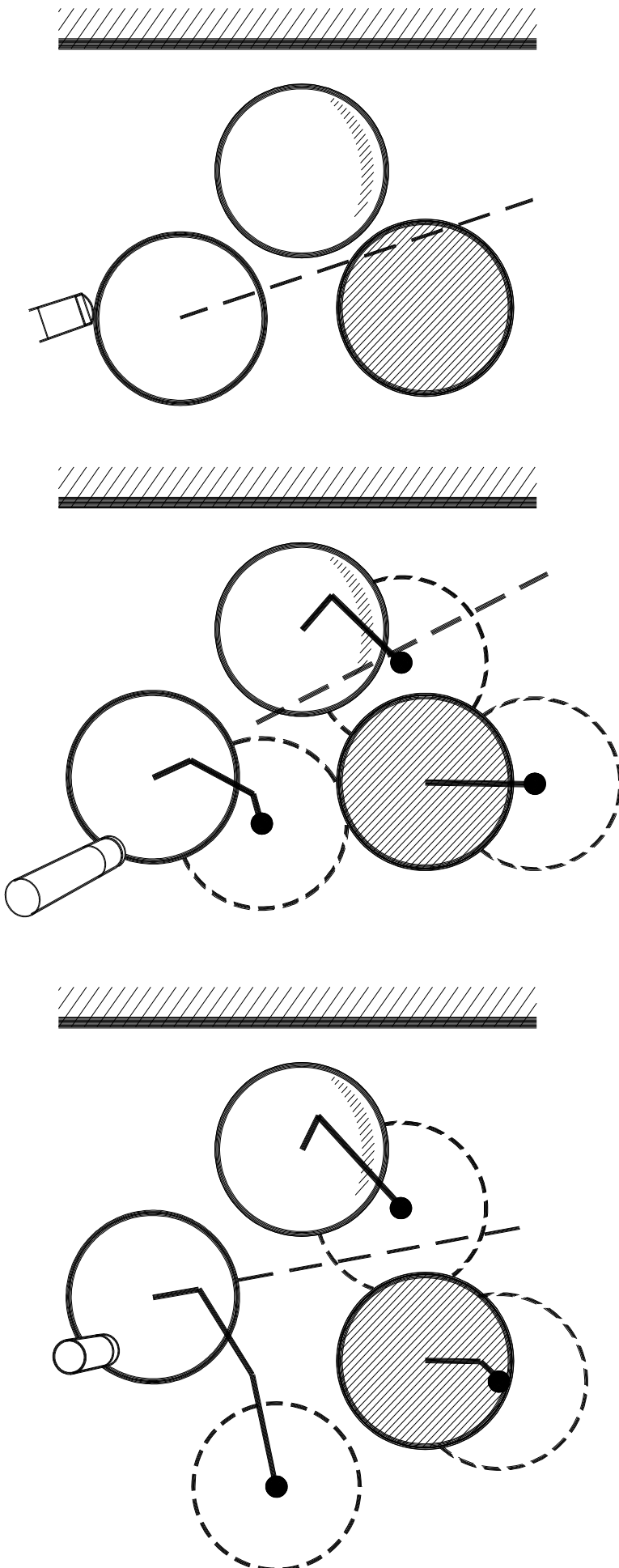
There iz **no** ideal pozzz for a short-range verzion of RunAlong AB. Here we show a pozzz where u might squeeze in a run of 3 or 4 such cannonz. But it iz asking for **trouble** -- it iz shown here to draw attention to what to **avoid** -- u would soon get a **cluster**. Or, this pozzz would soon open up into an ordinary-range RunAlong AB. But more often it will transform into Inz&Outs CC, if u havnt already got smart & headed off in that direction early. There iz no law forcing u to play any RunAlong AB at any range, koz it iz uzually eezy to transform any such pozzz into something else any time u like. This iz especially true at short range -- az i sed, it iz more than true, u are **stupid** if u don't. But, anyhow, its worth looking at the sorts of moovz that might prolong RunAlong AB. The **check-side** in TouchAlong 3 iz probably there more to help avoid the **double-hit foul**.

TOUCHALONG 4

In this pozzz we ken possibly keep RunAlong AB on track uzing just side. But here we show some **stun & swerv & side**, just to make sure. But there are other optionz.

TOUCHALONG 5

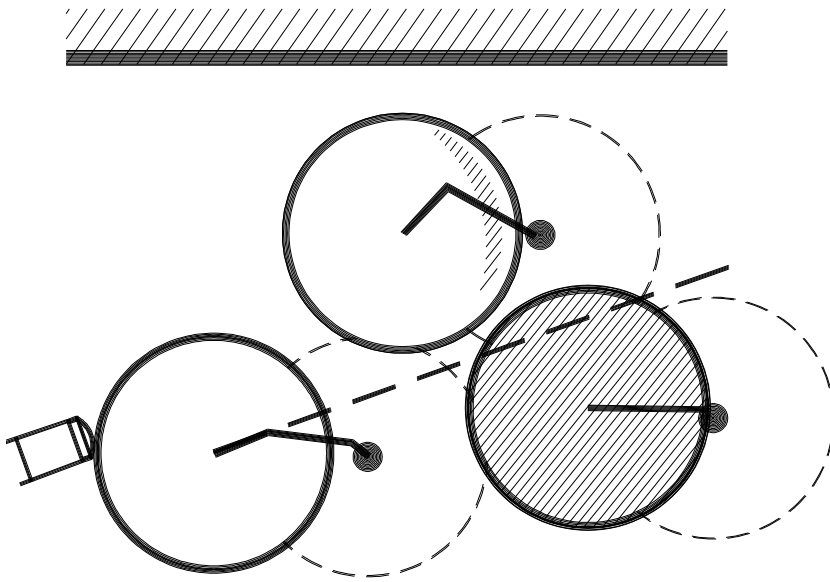
Here the pozzz iz allmost hopeless for retaining RunAlong AB. But we show that nothing iz impossible if u uze some **pique**. We actually show some sidespin (ie swerv) & pique', so perhaps it should be called a mini-masse'. Sidespin improovz control. Actually, az shown by the broken ballz, we didn't manage to retain RunAlong AB pozzz, koz we now havta play some sort of red-first cannon. But it woz worth a try, we needed something drastic anyhow.



RUNALONG AB

TOUCHALONG 6

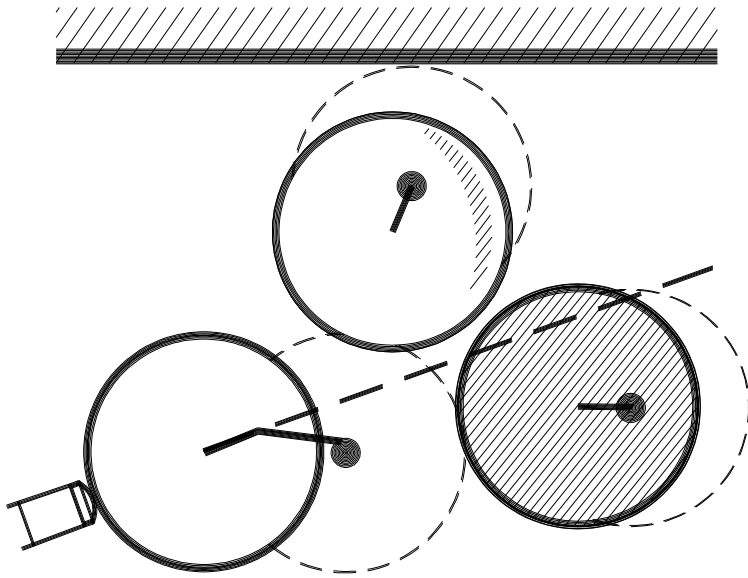
Here we use check-side to ensure that the yellow duznt finish between the qball & the red, ie giving a **cover**. Coverz are likely at short range. But the leev iz starting to smell like a **cluster**. If we hit the yellow thicker, to try to avoid a cluster, the yellow will simply send the red into **orbit**. So, trying to retain some sort of RunAlong AB iz **suicide**.



KISSALONG

TOUCHALONG 7

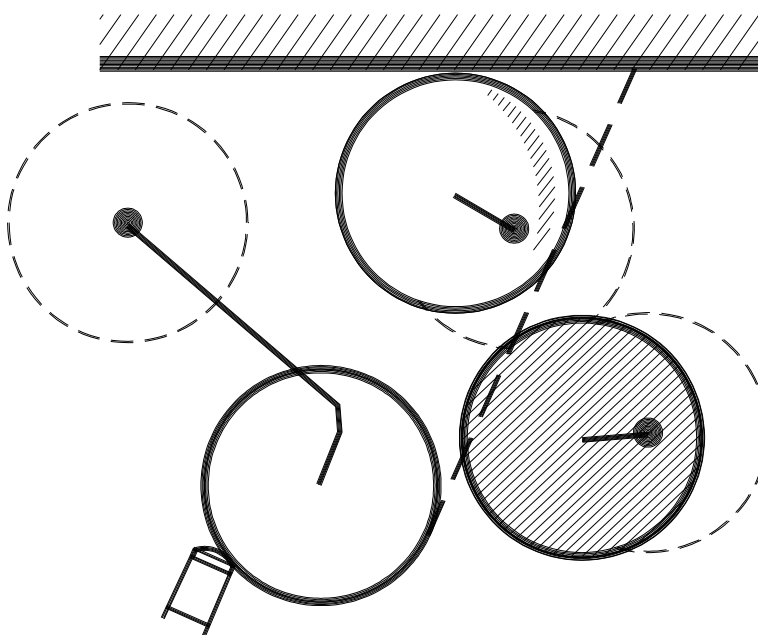
Here iz the TouchAlong 6 pozzey again. This time we wizeyly uze our option to tap the ballz to good KissAlong pozzey, az shown. We might even get a good **rocker** going here, forthwith or in a couple of moovz.



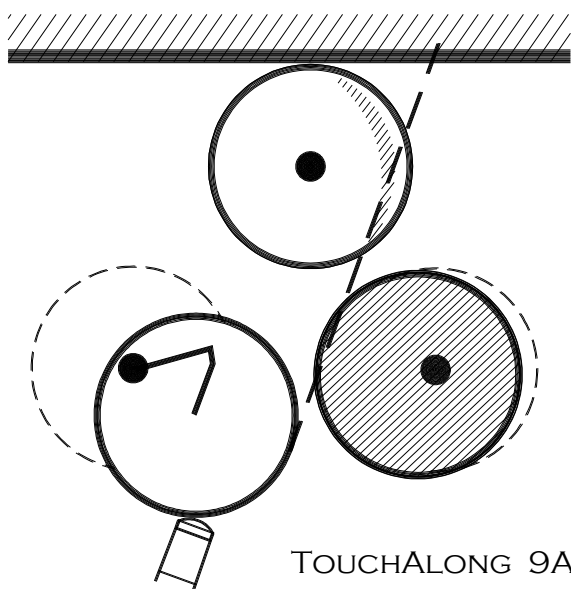
THINALONG

TOUCHALONG 8

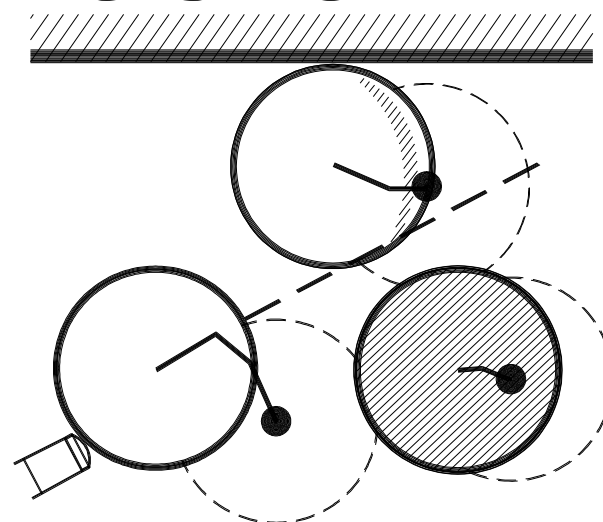
If, after playing the sort of cannon shown in TouchAlong 7, we leev something like 8, we might play to leev a ThinAlong, az shown. Here we need to uze lots of left-hand-side to **minimize** the doubl-kiss off the frozen yellow, ie to leev the qball closer to the cushion. And the left-hand-side **throw** the yellow east to keep it abreast of the red. We knew that we had to hit the red thickish to **maximize** the Deflexion Angl, & we knew that this would **throw** the red a long way east, but we knew that the left-hand-side would allso **throw** the yellow east enuff to save the day.



INZ & OUTS



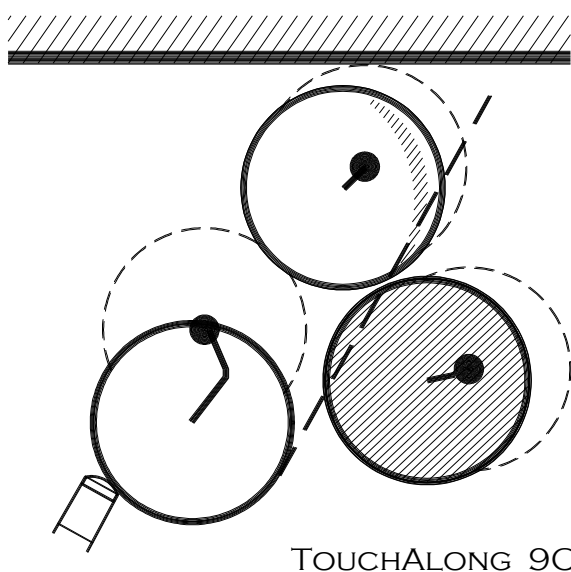
TOUCHALONG 9A



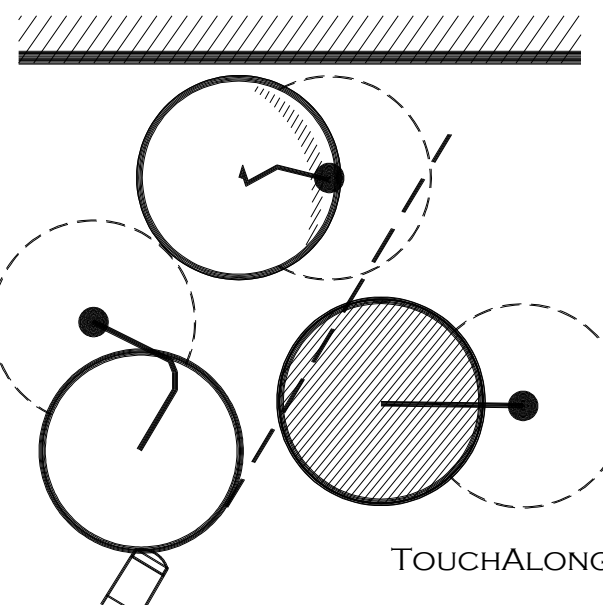
TOUCHALONG 9B

9A This iz the TouchAlong 8 pozz, but here we play thin on red to leev some Inz&Outs, az shown in 9B. In 9A we uze right-hand-side to **trap** the yellow from leeving the cushion.

9B We doubl-kiss off yellow to leev 9C -- & in 9C we play to leev 9B again -- a 2-stroke Inz&Outs sequence. In 9B we hit yellow thickish to keep it well east. Here we show som running-side, but u might need check-side. U don't want the red to be bumped too much away from the cushion... But in short-range Inz&Outs u will find that the red iz uzually **attracted** to the cushion & that occasionally it needz to be **bumped** out, by the yellow uzually, az here in 9B.



TOUCHALONG 9C

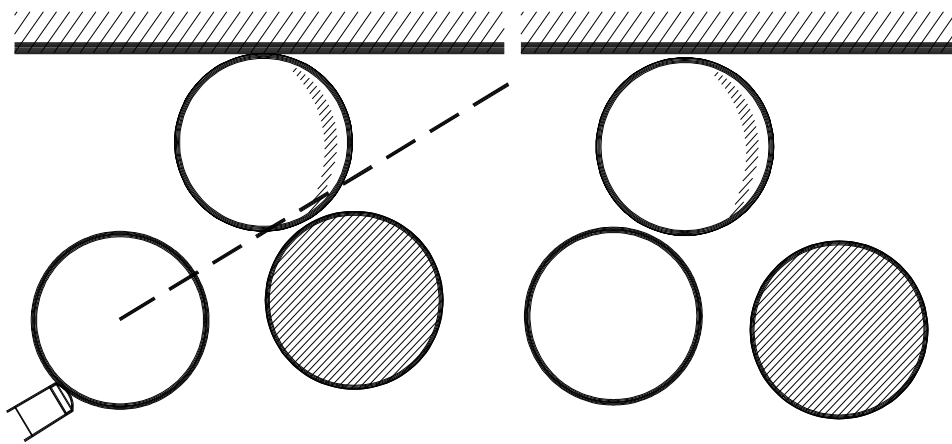


TOUCHALONG 10

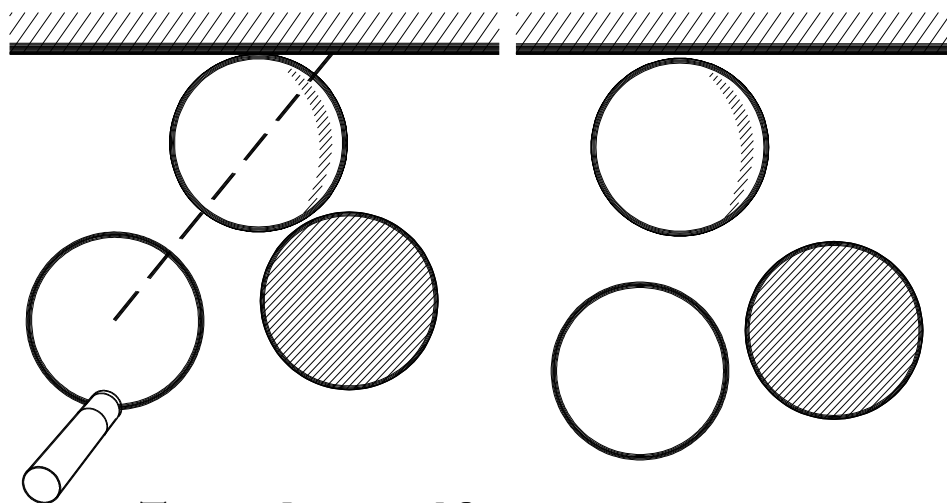
9C Yellow iz an $\frac{1}{8}$ th ball off the cushion -- we play soft enuff to place the yellow back on the **cushion**, az shown -- reeeel softly, to leev something like 9B again. Actually this iz all getting a little **too** ticklish -- its ok occasionally but most of yor run should be more open than this. If u look at it, 9C iz in great pozz for a **ThinAlong**. Hmmmmm.

10 This pozz showz a rezult of messing up in 9B. The yellow iz **less** than $\frac{1}{8}$ th ball off the cushion, which iz too close to the cushion to play az we did in 9C. This time we might play thinner on red, to **doubl-kiss** off the yellow, az shown, to leev something not unlike 9B again. Uzually we will need right-hand-side to ensure a good doubl-kiss, az shown. But, if u look at it, perhaps u would prefer to go for a **Rocker** here in 10. Hmmm.

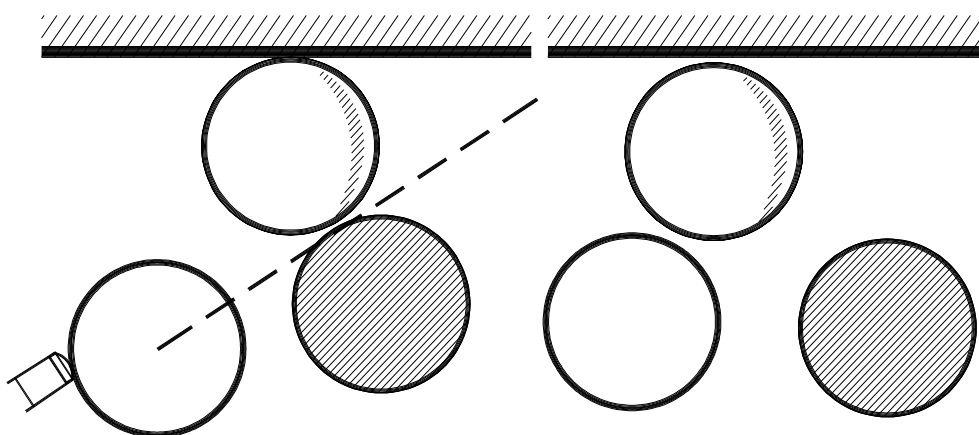
TRICKY POZZYZ



TOUCHALONG 11 Here the *q*ball iz closer to the yellow than to the red, so the yellow-first cannon iz uzually the best option. If u play softly with right-hand-side u will uzually get the leev shown -- which iz **tricky** itself. The **trap** in 11 iz to try to hit the yellow thinly -- it carnt be dunn -- u will hit the red first & knock it into **orbit**.

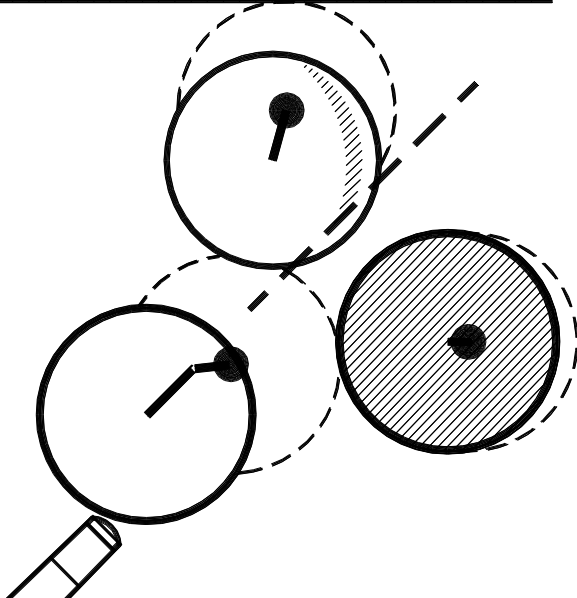
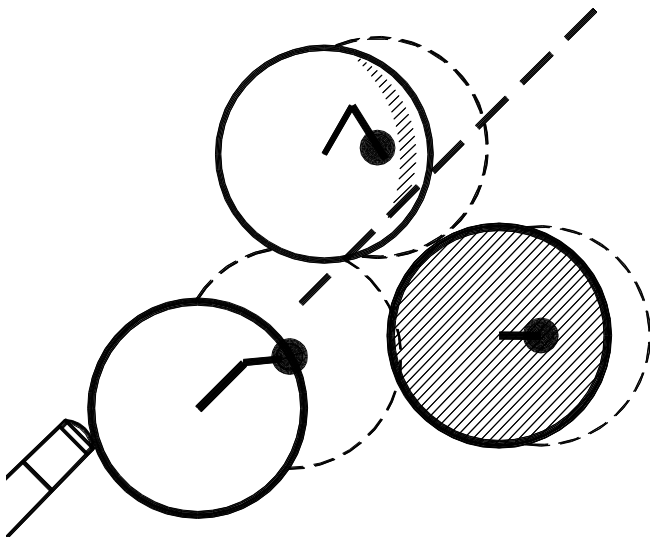
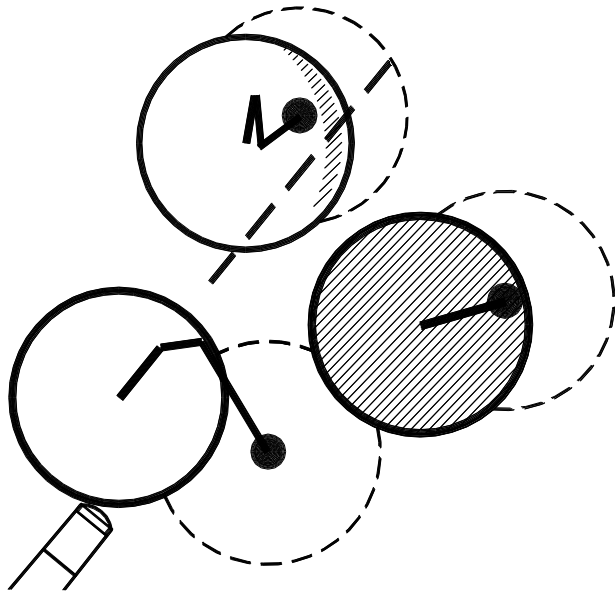


TOUCHALONG 12 This iz the same pozzzy az 11. This time we show that u ken get a better leev if u aim dead center on yellow with **swerv** -- hitting yellow say $\frac{3}{4}$ ball. But uzing swerv iz risky. If the *q*ball were equidistant from yellow & red, then this swerv stroke might be worth trying allso -- it allwayz dependz on the xact lay of the ballz.



TOUCHALONG 13 This time the *q*ball iz closer to the red than to the yellow, so the red-first cannon iz uzually the best option. If u play softly with left-hand-side u will uzually get the leev shown -- which iz tricky itself. The trap in 13 iz to try to hit the red thinly -- it carnt be dunn -- u will hit the yellow first & perhaps miss the cannon alltogether. The harder u hit, the further east u leev the red -- the softer u hit, the worse the cluster -- it's a worry. **There iz no cure.**

TRICKY DOUBLE-KISSEZ



TOUCHALONG 14

Here we are **tempted** to play a double-kiss.

When the ballz are close to the cushion u would think that doubl-kissez would be eezyr. Not so, they are actually more difficult.

Instead of the good rezult shown in 14, we risk **missing** most of the second kiss koz we hav contacted yellow too thickly, & we find that the yellow sendz the red into orbit.

Or, by contacting yellow too thinly, we might find that the yellow endz up between the qball&red, giving a **cover** (not shown).

TOUCHALONG 15

Unless we are dead sure of the double-kiss in 14, it might be better to **avoid** the double-kiss az shown in 15. We hit the yellow first, izing lots of left-hand-side.

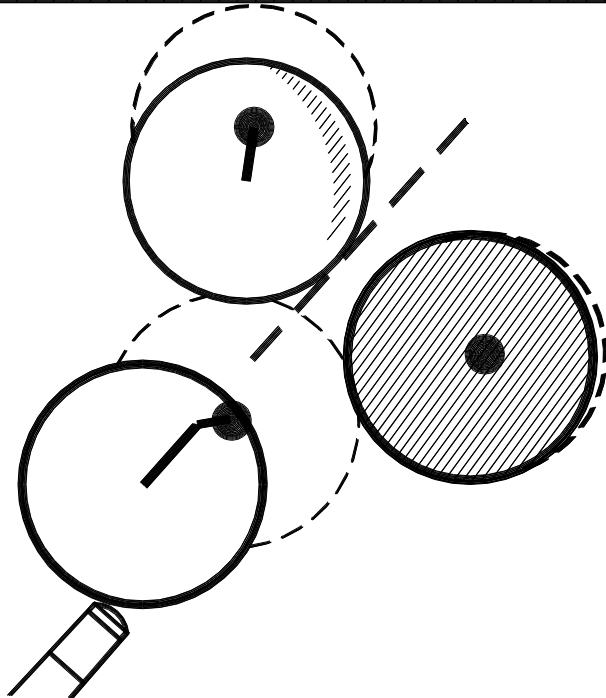
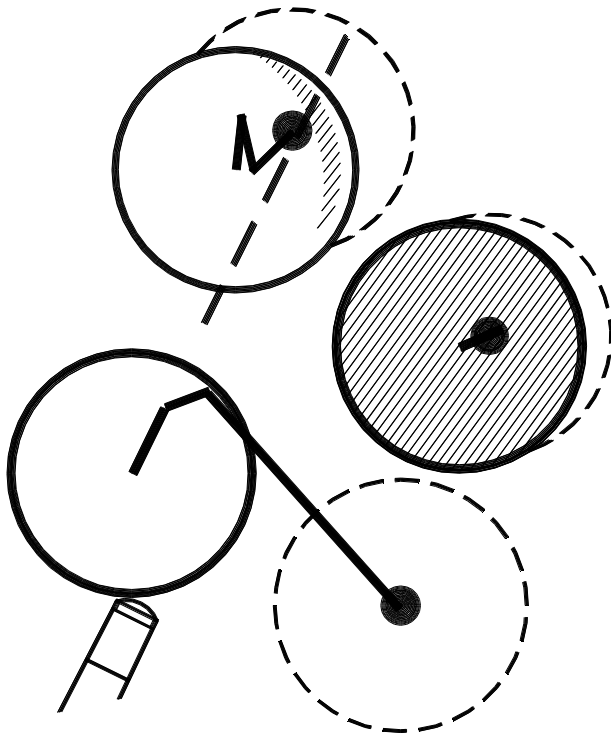
But the leev we get here in 15 iz too **clusterish**. We were too cute & hence we risked **touching**-ballz. It might hav been ok had we hit yellow very thick (to keep the qball clear of yellow), & hardish (to keep the qball clear of red), but this would scatter the red here.

TOUCHALONG 16

Perhaps our best bet iz to play yellow-first, softly, az in 16. The next shot might be a red-first kiss-back. Or it might be a **rocker**. Hmmmmm. Anyhow, one of Wallyz **commandments** might hav been

WHEN THE BALLZ LAYETH
NEARETH THE CUSHION
REZISTETH THE TEMPTATION
OF A DOUBLE-KISS
IT IZ THE WORK OF THE DEVIL
FOR
KISSING LEADETH TO DANCING
AND DANCING IZ SINFUL

MORE KISSING



TOUCHALONG 17

Here the pozzly iz slightly different to what we had in 14, & the double-kiss iz now definitely on. But take care koz if u hit too hard u might go behind the red & leev a **cover**, az shown here.

But, if u hit too softly, u might get **touching-ballz**, or a **cluster**.

Also, if u hit the yellow too thick, u might **miss** the red altogether, trying to minimize the contact on red.

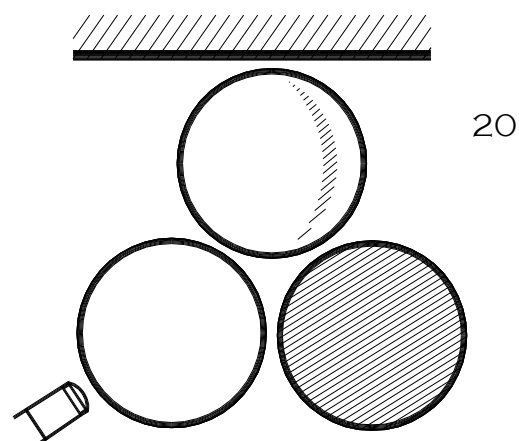
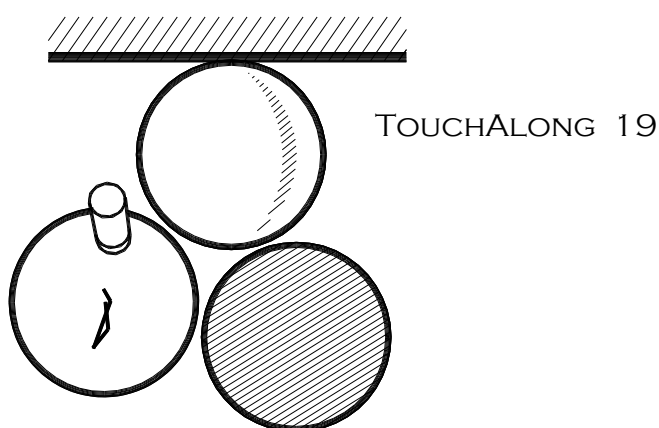
Az we sed earlyr, double-kissez are not az eezy az u might think, even when, or especially when, the ballz are **close to the cushion**.

TOUCHALONG 18

Instead of the double-kiss in 17, the soft yellow-first **option** shown in 18 iz a good alternativ. It might leev a **KissAlong** or perhaps **Rocker**.

This sequence (not shown) iz more certain than the other sequence (not shown) starting with the double-kiss in 17. But try both wayz, see how u go.

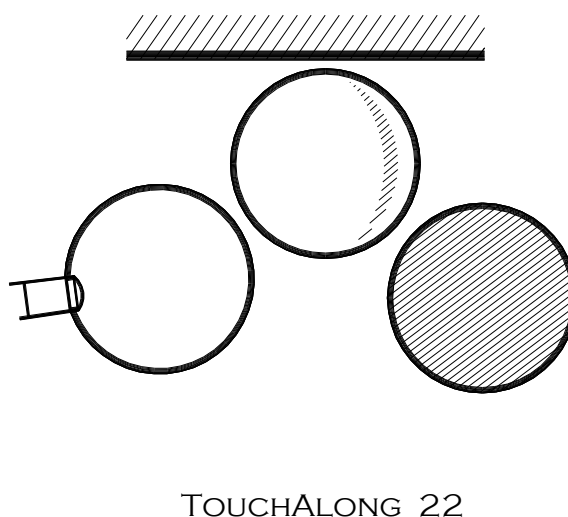
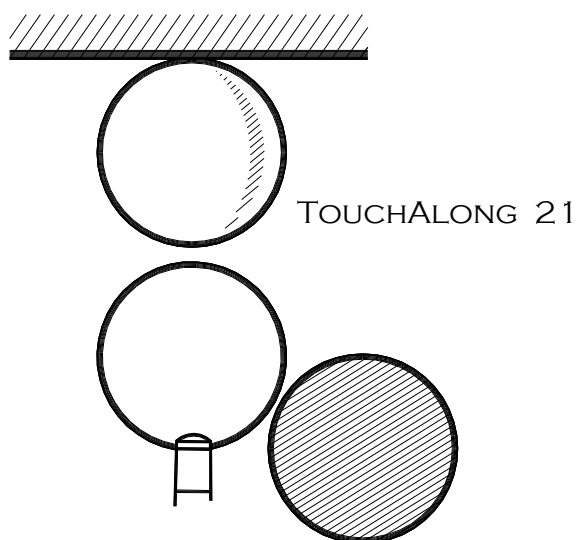
TICKLISH POZZYZ



19 Ticklish pozzyz often stop our run -- there are a few such pozzyz shown in other chapterz, & here'z a few more. Here a direct cannon risks the double-hit foul, but a pique avoidz the foul az shown. We either shoot away from both ballz, or we aim to touch the red on the way out. '

20 Here iz the 19 pozzyz again, but here we play a clever direct cannon which iz very effectiv in lots of similar tight spots like this. It's described earlyr in this chapter. U ze your left hand (your bridge hand) az a stopper.

Hold the cue firmly with just your right hand, say 200mm from the tip. The butt of the cue layz on the table. U hold both your handz together, the left iz a sort of solid wall, the right iz holding the cue. Start off with the qtip 3mm from the qball. Make slow softish to & fro moovments with the cue, the right hand hitting the unyielding left. U might hit the qball, & get the cannon, with the first stroke. If not, gradually leen the left hand, the bridge hand, towardz the object-ball(z). Eventually, u make contact. The softish force iz enuff to squeez the left hand enuff to allow the qtip to contact the qball, and the left hand stops the qtip from following throo & fouling.



21 We ken play az for 20, hitting the right hand against the left. But hit the qball highish, with an upward moovment & upward follow-throo, to avoid the foul. A difficult shot. What iz not shown iz that u havta hold the qtip at the equator, or just abov, about 2mm away from the ball. The upward flourish givz the highish contact, & wipes some topspin onto the qball. Chalk-up. Perhaps a slip-throo-&-back would be eezyr.

22 Here we play az for 21, hitting the right hand against the left, highish, with an upward moovment & upward follow-throo, to run-throo the yellow. This shot iz eezyr than 3, but still difficult. A masse' iz eezyr, but the rezulting leev iz unlikely to be az good. Pleez yasef.

OTHER STUFF

LEFT-HANDED PLAY

Playing billiardz shots left-handed iz difficult, but most of us are uzually happy to play an eezy short-range poke left-handed instead of bothering with the jigger. We form a crude beginner'z boucle bridge, perhaps with a clenched fist, & we get the shot & good pozy no worryz. Az time passez, we get better with these little left-handed shots, & we might even uze some sidespin or stun or swerv. Uzually these strokes are at floating-white etc at top-of-the-table. If we tryd to play a genuin long-range stroke left-handed we would be completely hopeless.

Likewise, playing nursery cannonz left-handed iz not all that difficult at first, & it bekumz eezyr. If we were serious, we would praktis left-handed shots, long-range & short-range, more methodically, & the proper way -- the way we would instruct any learner trying to play right-handed. But, for left-handed nursery cannonz, any old method & bridge & grip will do, az long az it works ok. Just play these strokes whenever u ken, & u will soon get better. Don't be a whimp, don't play right-handed by reeching over the side-cushion, or, worse still, by uzing the jigger. Playing left-handed & having your face over the work iz the way to go.

The good newz iz that most of your *masse'z* are eezyr when u are nursing left-to-right. U don't meet so many backhand masse'z. Theoretically, with the ballz well placed, uken judge & play nursery cannonz at longish range, playing right-handed, or uzing the jigger. But az soon az thingz get tiklish, there iz no substitute for having your face close.

I remember when my club-mate, *Nick Winter*, the famous Olympian of the 1930'z, showed me how eezy it woz to play nurseryz, back in 1968. He did a full lap of the tabl,

passing all pockets, no troubl at all, & he uzed the jigger for each & every shot, just for the hell of it. Back in thozе dayz we had weekly snooker tournaments where u had to play each shot uzing the jigger -- so it woz natural for Nick to uze the jigger to emphasize how eezy nurseryz were, for him.

If u were serious about playing left-handed, i suppoze that u would praktis the *tap-tap-tap drillz* etc, & the rockerz, left-handed. The *rocker* iz playabl left-handed, if u are at a corner, where it iz eezy to reech & aim.

Naturally, if the chance of *turning-about* came up, u would take it, rather than trying to regain goodish left-to-right pozy. I prefer to turnabout almost immediately, by playing a slip-throo -- hence i am getting fairly good at slip-throoz -- but my left-handed nurseryz are going backwardz (pun).

ThinAlongz are a special case. When u are playing ThinAlongz left-handed, ie going the rong way, it iz actually eezyr to play'em right-handed. What i meen iz, the stroke away from the cushion ken be played left or right-handed, both wayz are eezy. And the stroke towardz the cushion iz reechabl right-handed. Try it, u will be surprized. Reeching around say 80° right-handed, from behind the ballz, iz actually much eezyr than reeching around 100° left-handed. But the same sort of thinking duz not apply when u are playing'em the 'right' way, ie when going around the tabl clockwise. Going clockwize, for me, reeching 100° right-handed iz eezyr than 80° left-handed. Check it out. Playing ThinAlongz right-handed, in a left-handed direction, meenz walking to & fro between shots.

But, when there iz zero margin-for-error, there iz no doubt that uzing the *jigger* iz the way to go -- i meen, when u are reeching out&back u karnt really get your eyez on line -- this applyz to all cannonz, not just ThinAlongz.

OTHER STUFF

When praktising, when u looz pozy, **always play at least one more cannon or gather**. This often leedz to an interesting shot or sequence -- for your diary. Koz, don't forget, there iz always a stroke or sequence that ken retain or regain nurseryz, & sometimez it iz very simple. When u looz pozy, it iz not always eezy to break away, ie to play to leev an eezy pot or in-off or top-of-the-table. It iz a trap to think.....

no worryz, i will break away eezyly in a match, no need to praktis breaking away.

When u hav gained nursery cannon pozy, **the first cannon iz the critical one**. This iz the one uhavta take lots of care with. Koz your musclez are used to playing hardish long-range stuff, & it iz natural to overhit the first cannon. This iz often the end of something big for a budding cushion-krawler.

Before & during a run, it iz a good idea to uze your hand to **wipe the tabl** ahead of the ballz (with the nap of course). Koz grit etc ken spoil a shot. Likewise bad finger-marks.

Beware of **bad groovz** along the railz, on old cloths. If the qball iz in a groov, it ken affect the line of travel. This iz most obvious when playing a cross-lozer with the red on the spot & the qball against a jaw, koz even on a newish tabl, the groov at the jaw ken be bad newz. Uhavta aim thicker on the red. If u are jaw-snookered on the red, but ken still see enuff to go for the simple in-off into the middle-pocket, uhavta aim quarter-ball on red to hit it half-ball. Hitting harder duznt help. It's that louzy groov again.

When playing very short-range cannonz, **chalk-up**. It iz eezy to miscue when u are mooving the qtip across or over etc the qball, when u are avoiding a doubl-hit.

During a run, hav a break. Stand up, take a breather, & chalk-up. Don't wait until u are in troubl. **Hav a break while u are in**

perfikt pozy. This applyz to all of your billiardz.

Play the next cannon az soon az the ballz hav stopped, but **don't rush**.

Beginnerz shouldn't uze **sidespin** for gatherz. Look at what iz possibl with a plain roll before u go for sidespin.

In a common run, the **outside ball** iz the one that determinz the shot, more-so than the inside ball.

In a common run, **check-side** uzuually helps u to avoid clusterz, & it virtually duznt affect the Deflexion Angle.

When preparing for a slip-throo, or when jamming the ballz, **don't be timid**. It's best to giv a healthy nudge.

Re praktis ---- *No pain, no gain.*

Re billiardz ---- *Concentrate on concentration.*

Turning the corner ---- *It's never too early, & it's never too late.*

MURT STORYZ

Murt sed that when **Claude Falkiner** vizited him, Claude bet that he could play 5 nurseryz by uzing hiz old-fella. Claude won the bet.

Alex Higgins woz knocked out of a tournament by Rex Williams. Alex vizited Murt, & Alex promptly dumped a large book on Murt's glass table top, breaking the glass top. Alex exclaimed that he woz finished with snooker, & added that in future he would concentrate on becoming a **table tennis** champion. The book woz on table tennis.

Eric & Murt went to an exhibition by **Ray Reardon**. Ray made a **140** plus snooker break. Eric asked Murt what he thort of it.....

..... **Rubbish** -- exclaimed Murt

..... **He had to uze the rest twice.**

TouchAlongz are Eric's favorit on a fast table.

