

MIDDLE POCKET

Passing the middle-pocket iz probably only an historic amuzement. Now that the cannon limit iz 75, u are hardly likely to want to pass the middle-pocket in a serious match. U would normally take at least 20 cannonz to go half-way along the top-cushion, to get to the corner, & then at least 40 more cannonz to get to the middle-pocket, so u would hav less than 15 cannonz remaining. Perhaps if the limit woz raized to 100 it would be worthwhile, especially if a pro set her eyez on a baulk-line-xing (dreamz). Actually, in the old dayz, the middle-pocket woz used for a baulk-line stroke by Wally & also by Macka (see later).

TOM REECE *DAINTY BILLIARDS 1925* iz the best book on English nursery cannonz -- it haz a section on passing the middle-pockets. At that date there woz no limit on cannonz, xcept that there woz a limit of 25 direct cannonz. Tom sed.....

Let me assure you that the "turning" of a corner pocket iz as child's play compared with the getting them safely by a middle pocket. As a rule, the middles with their protruding "bumps" and the opening in between, are proper stumbling-blocks to the close-cannon player. Thus you will find, in nineteen close-cannon cases out of twenty, the near approach to a middle pocket being accepted as a signal to switch on to another scoring line. But if you are willing to take and accept risks by adhering to the cannons and will do your best to manoeuvre the balls past the awkward middle pocket, there is a means, difficult though it be, to give them a passport on to the adjoining cushion. One has to tackle the pocket's "bumps," and so far from being afraid of them rather rely upon their helpfulness.

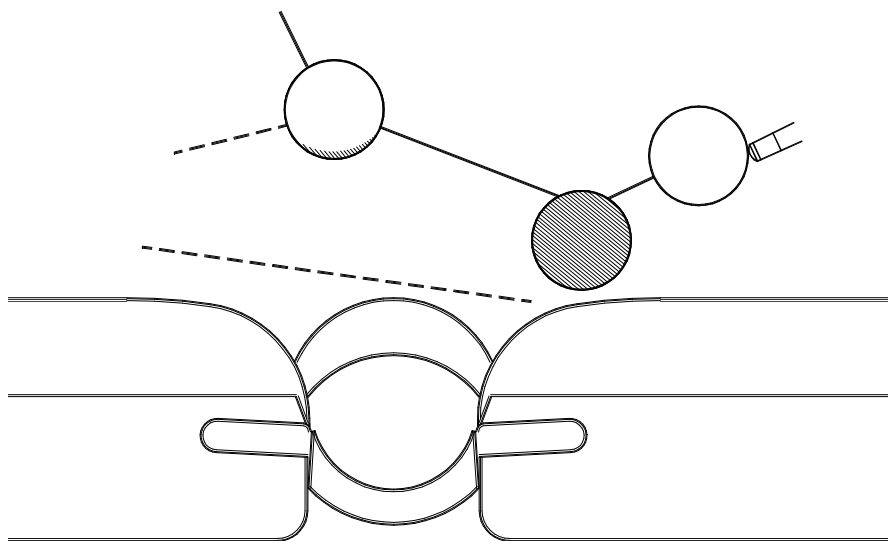


Fig. 33
Steering the balls past a centre pocket --- the first object-ball is played on to the nearest "bump."

There is not anything approaching equality of trouble in directing the object-balls safely to the further side of the middle pockets. The outside ball can be sent straightway into its accustomed position well away from the cushion. All

the care in the world is, however, needed to send the inside ball along by or alongside its partner.

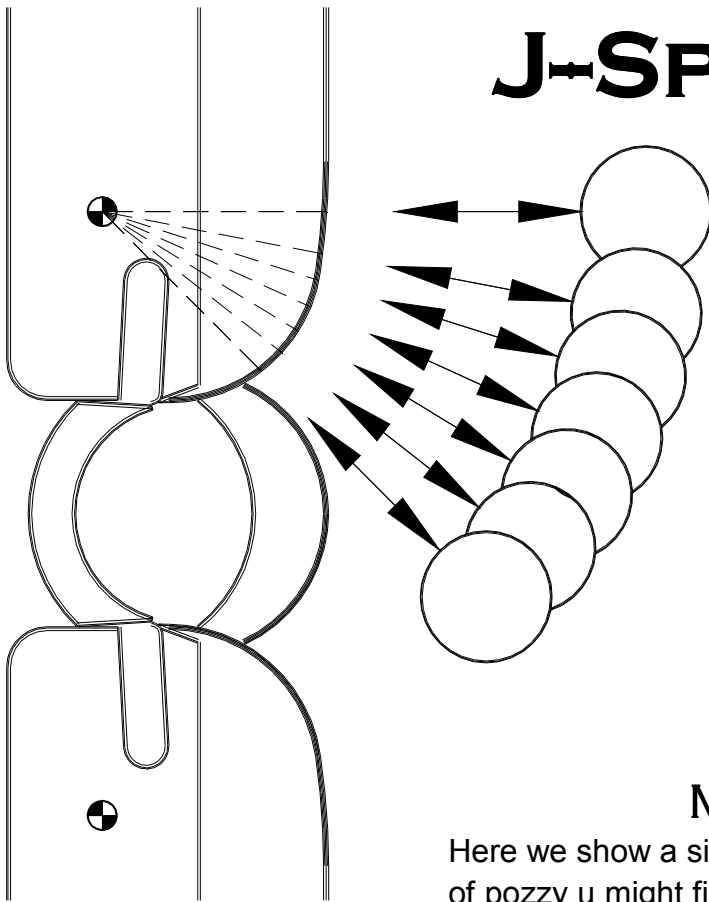
To best get it there the forward sliding movement given to a ball in motion from the first "bump" (which unlike the second "bump sets up no resistance whatever) is utilised. The speed and throw-off of the ball striking this short curving line of acquaintance, are to be understood from practice of one of the neatest and, really, cleverest strokes imaginable.

A much more unusual means of passing the middle pocket is to send the first object-ball on to the further or resisting "bump".

J-SPOT

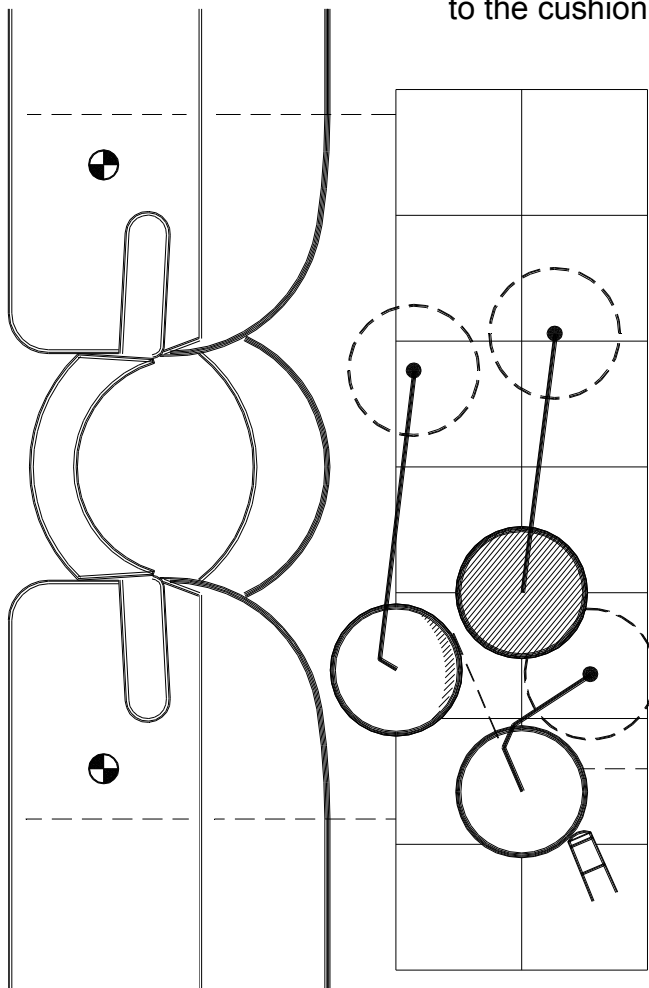
MIDDLE POCKET 1

Each jaw has a J-Spot which can help you aim -- but jaws vary. If you stick a bit of blue-tack as shown, you can check the J-Spot on your home table -- hit the cue ball at the blue-tack from a number of angles, as shown -- if the ball comes straight back to the cue for each then you know that the blue-tack is in the correct place. Do the same for the second jaw. You can't use blue-tack this way in a serious match -- but you might find that the line of aim coincides with the visible extremity of the brass pocket-plate for the narrowest angle of attack (as shown). These J-Spots are good aiming-points, or guides, for positions that come up later in this chapter.



MIDDLE POCKET 2A

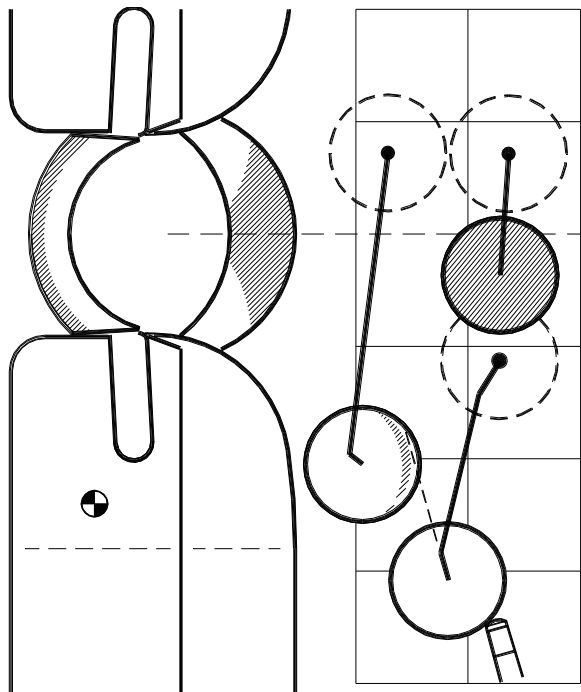
Here we show a simple way of passing the pocket. This is the sort of position you might find if you continue a run too close to the pocket -- you should have set up a passing-position before here. In the position shown, we hit the yellow half-ball with running-side -- the yellow goes to its place directly, without double-kissing the cue ball. The primary reason for using running-side is that it keeps the red closer to the cushion.



The usual stuff-up is to hit yellow too thin because you are afraid of the pocket -- the yellow has a squarer rebound & kisses the red -- not good. Kissing the red later-on, near the far jaw, is usually ok. But if you hit the yellow too thick it goes ahead too far -- so, it's a juggling act.

If in doubt don't try to pass the pocket in one shot. Half hit the stroke -- the red & yellow stop at the center-line of the pocket -- then take things from there (not shown).

During a run, when you try to set-up 2A position, the position of the red is the key. The yellow can be almost anywhere along the jaw -- usually it will be nearer the start of the jaw -- in which case it is best well off the cushion (say 10mm). If the yellow is nearer the pocket (very rare) it is best about 2mm off or even frozen. As usual, you might need to use check-side, or werv, or stun, or pique, to give the yellow (and red) a nice line & pace. As usual the contact on yellow (and red) might need to be thicker or thinner than half-ball. (The grid is 50 by 50).

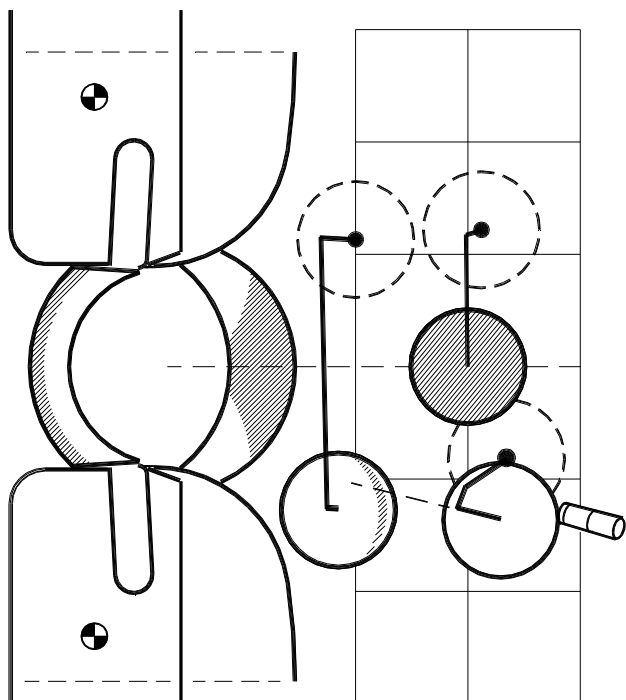


MIDDLE POCKET 2B

Here, in preparing for passing, we hav bumped red ahead, az suggested by Tommy & also Alby -- altho they probably didn't meen this far ahead.

We play a thick half-ball on yellow, with right-hand-side. Right-hand-side iz uzually a good idea -- it iz uzually needed to throw the red closer to the cushion.

The uzual stuff-up iz to hit the yellow too thinly, in which case it kissez the red & spoils the leev.



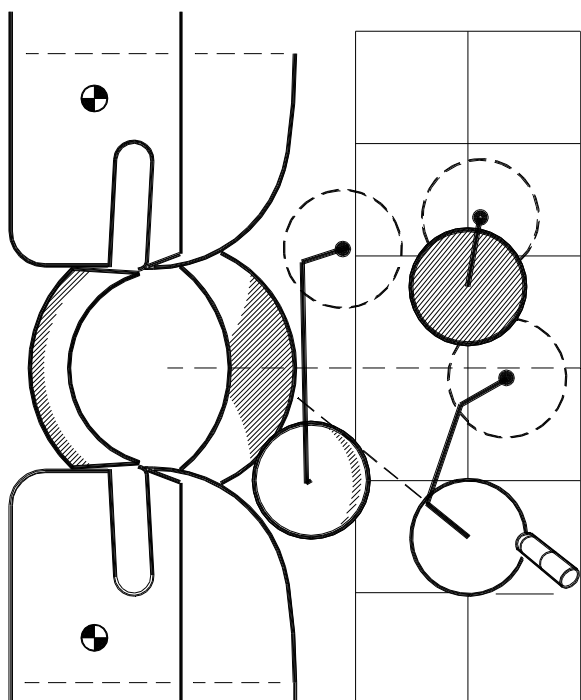
MIDDLE POCKET 2C

I don't know how we got here -- but this time we need to hit the yellow three-quarter ball with stun & a touch of running-side, az shown.

Don't panic & over-screw the stun. We want a full double-kiss, to kill some of the yellow'z pace, & to keep yellow away from the red.

U carnt rely on the yellow hitting the other jaw, so hit it az softly az u dare.

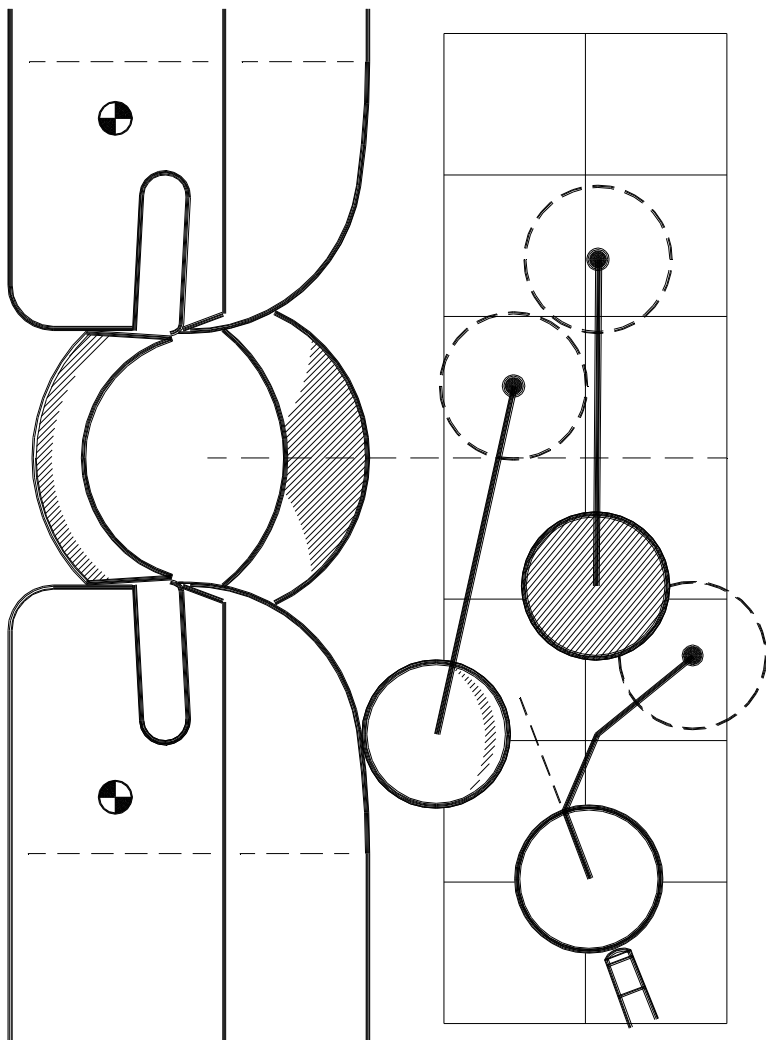
The running-side will keep the yellow quieter, whilst giving the red pace, & throwing the red closer to the cushion.



MIDDLE POCKET 2D

Here the yellow iz in trouble, so we havta uze screw & perhaps a touch of pique'. A little running-side won't hurt.

A stun shot might result in a double-kiss on yellow, & on this angle a kiss meenz certain death for the yellow.



MIDDLE POCKET 3A

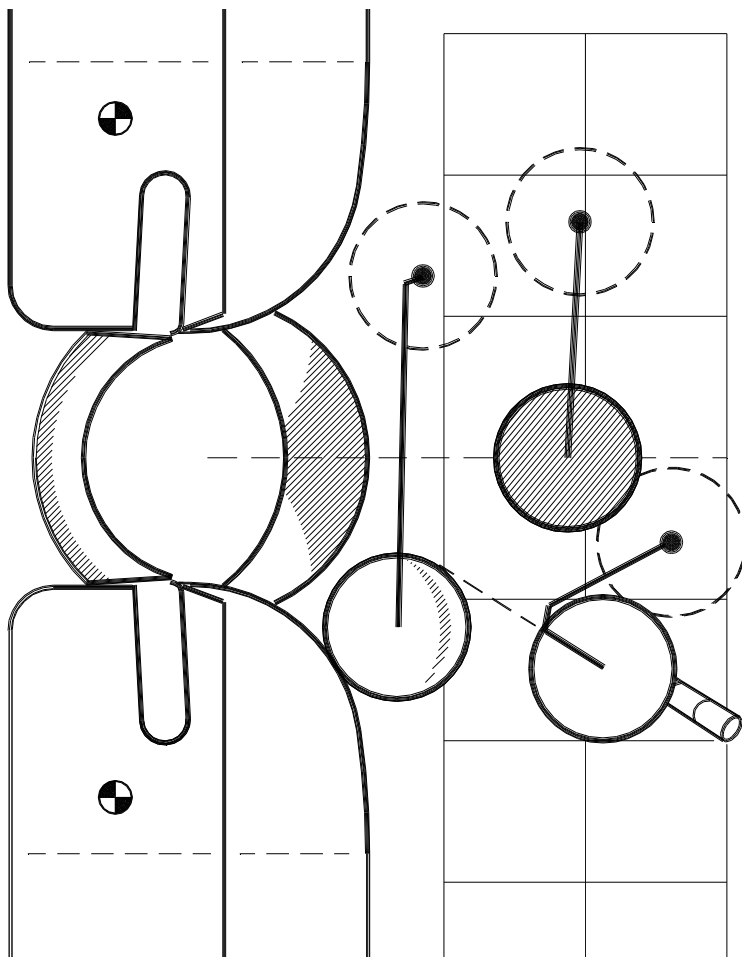
Here the yellow iz frozen on the cushion. The pozzly looks inviting but it iz no good. If u hit yellow half-ball, it will get to the red before the qball gets to the red, & the yellow will kiss into the pocket. If u hit the yellow thinner than half-ball, to make sure that the qball winz the race to the red, the yellow will be left behind, giving a poor leev.

The leev (broken ballz) shown in 3A iz about the best we could do if we were allowed a duzen attempts. Don't risk it.

If, instead of 3A, the yellow were 15mm closer to the pocket, or if the red woz 15mm further east, then the pozzly would be ok. We could play half-ball on yellow.

In 3A all u should do iz play a softish cannon (not shown). If in doubt don't try to pass the pocket in one shot. Half hit the shot, the red'n'yellow stop short of the center-line of the pocket (not shown), then take thingz from there.

Or, why not play a thinnish baby cannon to set up something like 2C -- 2C iz less risky.

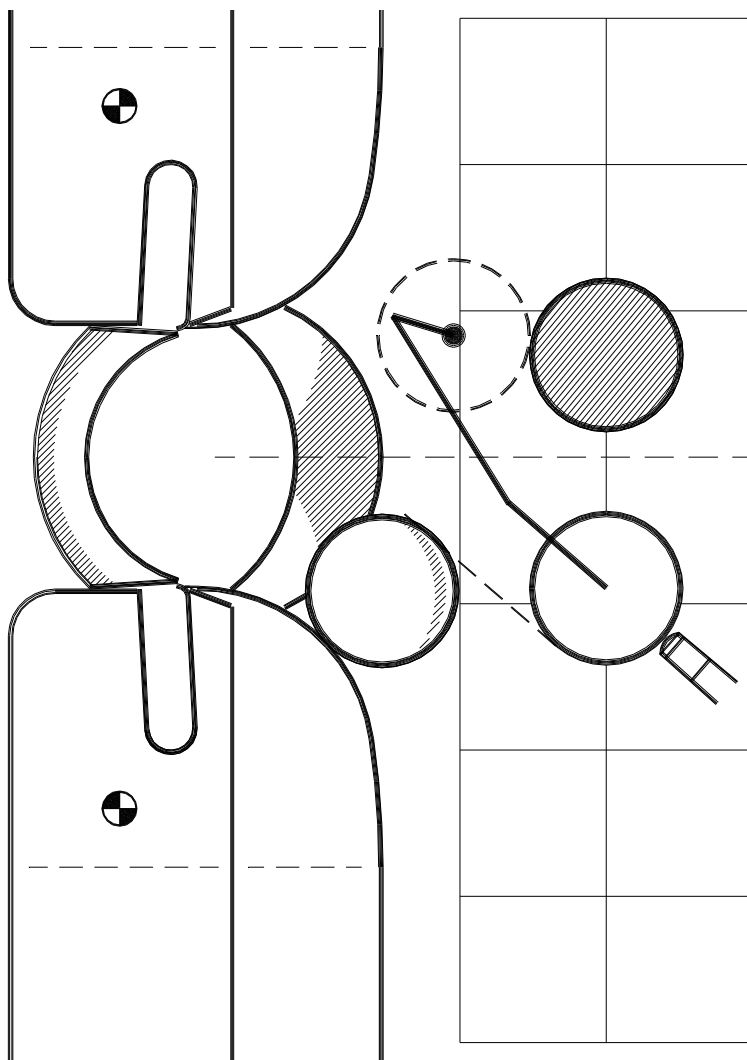


MIDDLE POCKET 3B

Here the yellow iz frozen, & in trouble. But, a half-ball contact with screw & running-side will do the trick. If in doubt uze some pique.

The referee will havta hold the light-shade aside for u.

If u uze pique, the yellow will take off like a rocket, so hit yellow az softly az u ken.

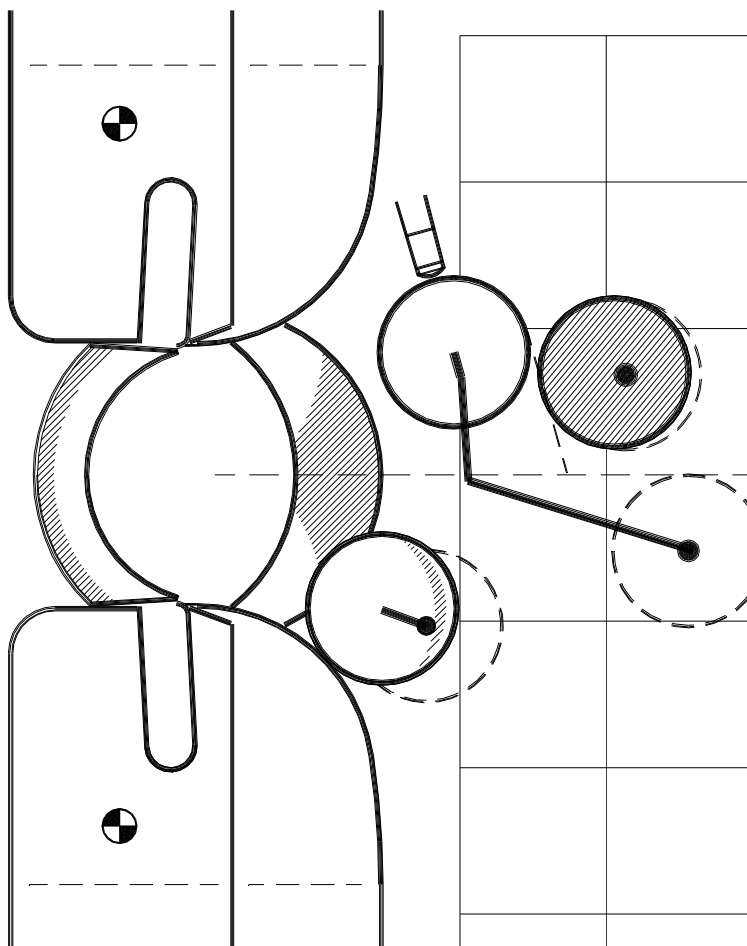


MIDDLE POCKET 3CA

Here the yellow is on the verge of falling in, & it can't be saved. U ken try screw or pique & u will fail.

Uken break away & play the in-off red. But, there is still a chance of retaining cannonz.

Just for fun, why not play as shown. Play ultra-thin on yellow, to cannon softly on red, off the jaw, leaving 3CB.



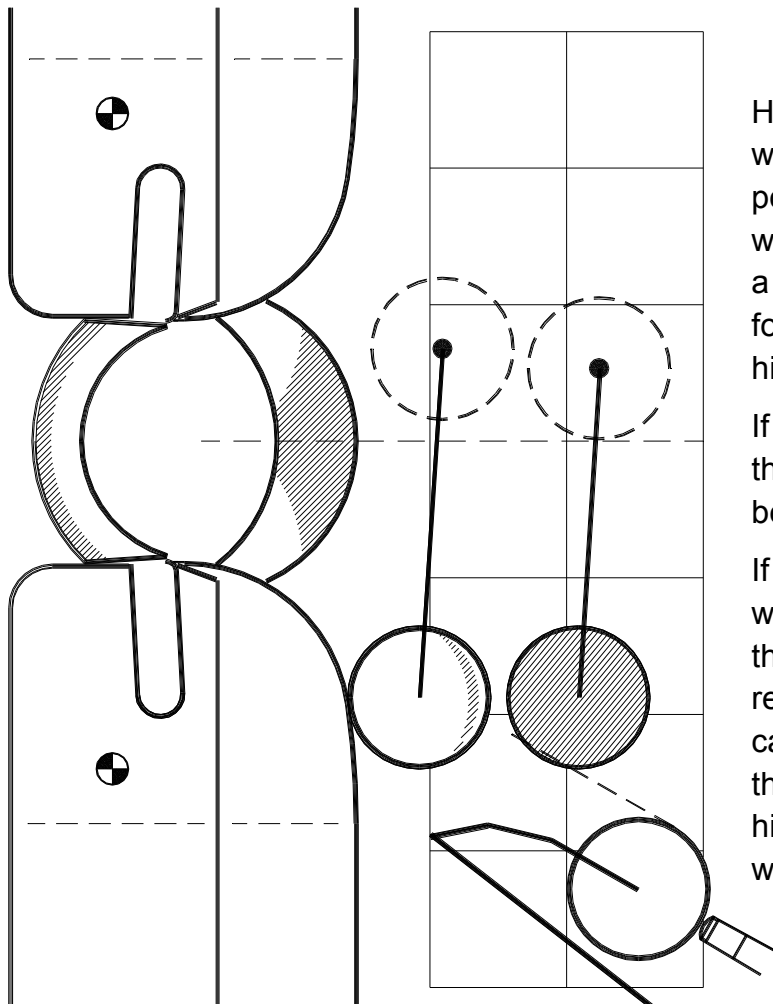
MIDDLE POCKET 3CB

Then, play thin on red & as thick & hard on yellow as u dare (shown).

With luck u will kiss the yellow out a bit, as shown.

Now uken play a pique (see 2C & 2D) which will get the yellow out while passing the middle-pocket at the same time.

I only showed 3CA & 3CB to show that there is almost always some way of keeping cannonz going.

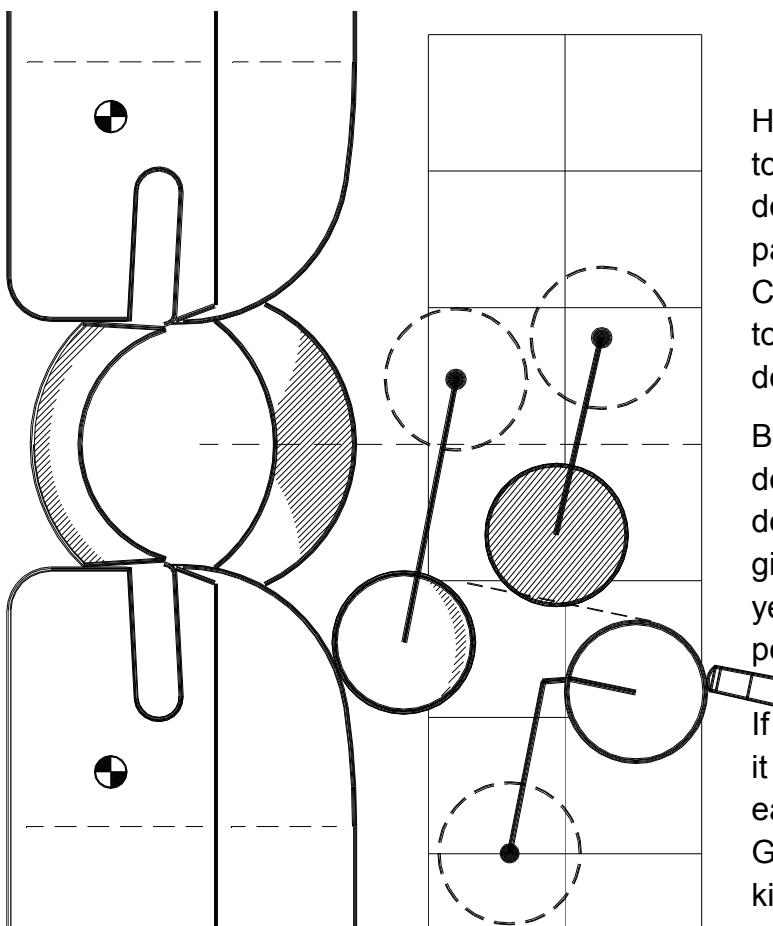


MIDDLE POCKET 4A

Here we hit the red first, very thin. Koz we want to hit the yellow az thickly az possible. The leev (broken ballz) shown would hav been better if we had hit the red a little thicker, & if we had uzed more pace for the shot. But the uzual stuff-up iz to hit the red too thick & too hard.

If the yellow woz a little off the cushion thingz would be much eezyr. There would be much less risk of an early kiss on red.

If we could see more of the yellow, we would hit the red a little thicker, to reduce the contact on yellow, to keep the yellow'z rebound-angle nearer the cushion. In that case a little left-hand-side would help -- this would reduce the risk of the yellow hitting the red -- koz an early kiss on red would spoil the leev.]

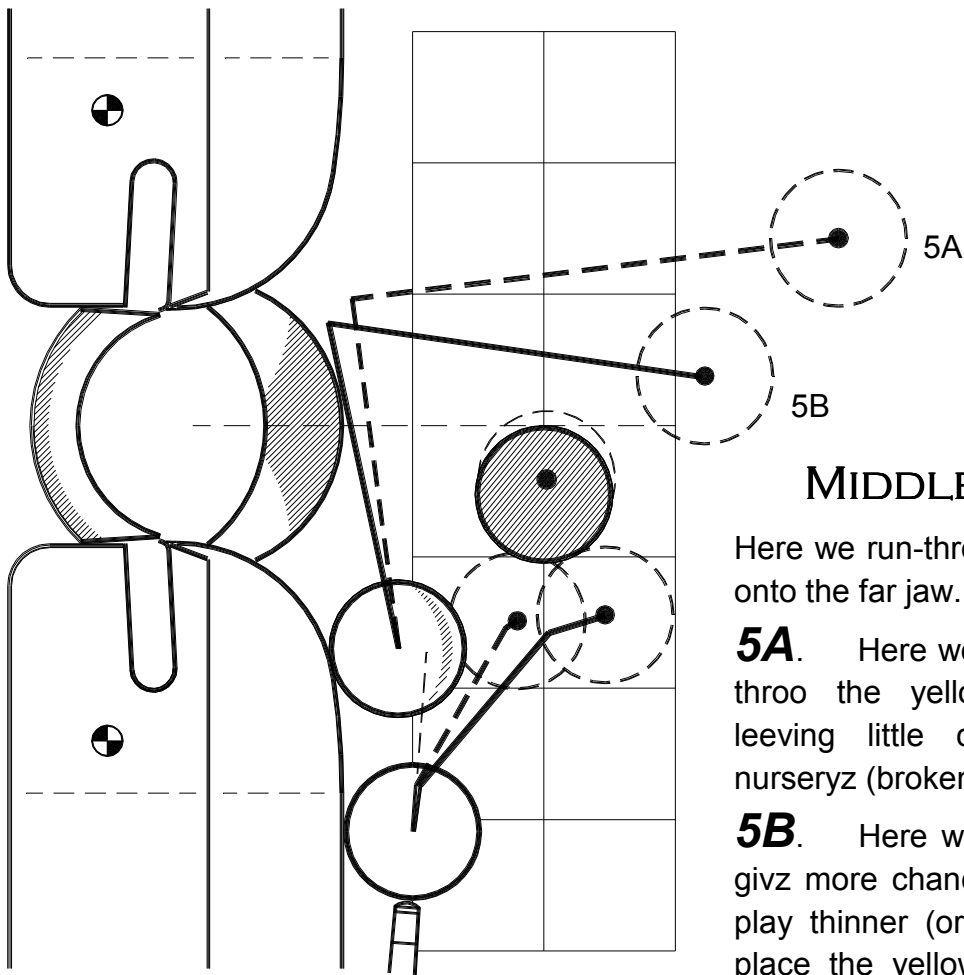


MIDDLE POCKET 4B

Here we play thin on red & thick on yellow to get a full double-kiss. We want a full double-kiss, to kill some of the yellow'z pace, & to keep yellow away from the red. Check-side somehow makes thingz eezyr to judge -- & it helps us to ensure a full double-kiss.

But the shot iz problematical. Thick double-kissez ken be ornery. So, if in doubt, it's best to play a half-pace shot to giv the leev shown -- to leev the red & yellow just over the centerline of the pocket.

If the yellow were say 4mm off the cushion, it would make thingz more difficult. An early kiss on red would be harder to avoid. Getting thin on red & getting a big double-kiss on yellow would be more crucial.



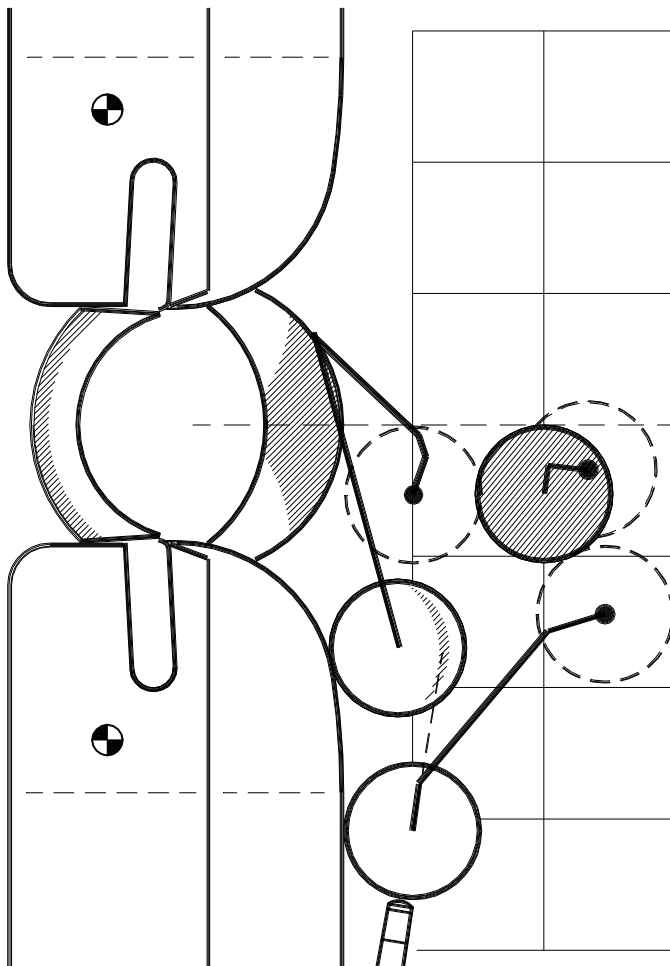
MIDDLE POCKET 5A

Here we run-thro the yellow, sending yellow onto the far jaw.

5A. Here we show a safe play -- we run-thro the yellow, three-quarter ball, but leeving little chance of continuing with nurseryz (broken trajectory line shown).

5B. Here we show risky play, but which givz more chance of continuing a run. We play thinner (or uze running-side), to try to place the yellow nicely near the red (solid trajectory line shown).

This givz a better chance of more nurseryz, but it iz a low percentage shot. Still, we are sure to hav something to go on with. So there iz little to looz by trying.



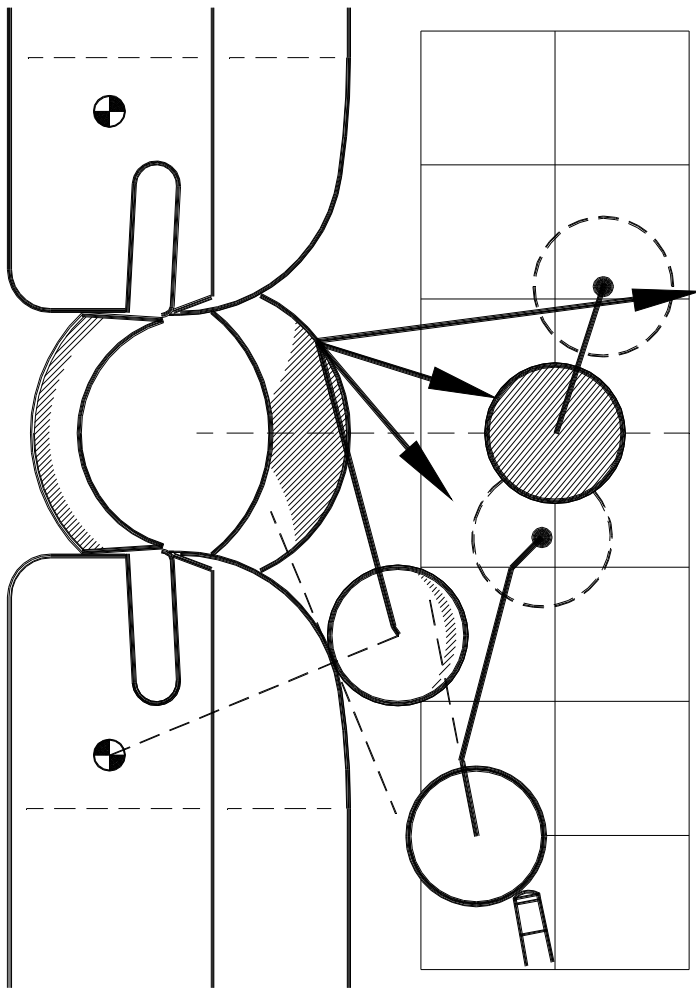
MIDDLE POCKET 5C

Here iz another option, instead of 5A or 5B.

If we really want to improov our chancez of nurseryz (perhaps we want to pass the middle-pocket for our first time, or perhaps we want to run up 75 cannonz for our record), then why not play az thin az u dare on yellow, flirting with the pocket, so that it kumz back onto the red.

The three ballz will kiss, & perhaps we will hav some luck with the leev.

The leev we hav here looks tricky, but we are not beaten yet. See 8 & 9.



MIDDLE POCKET 6A

Here we play a three-quarter ball run-thru yellow with right-hand-side, to take yellow off both jawz.

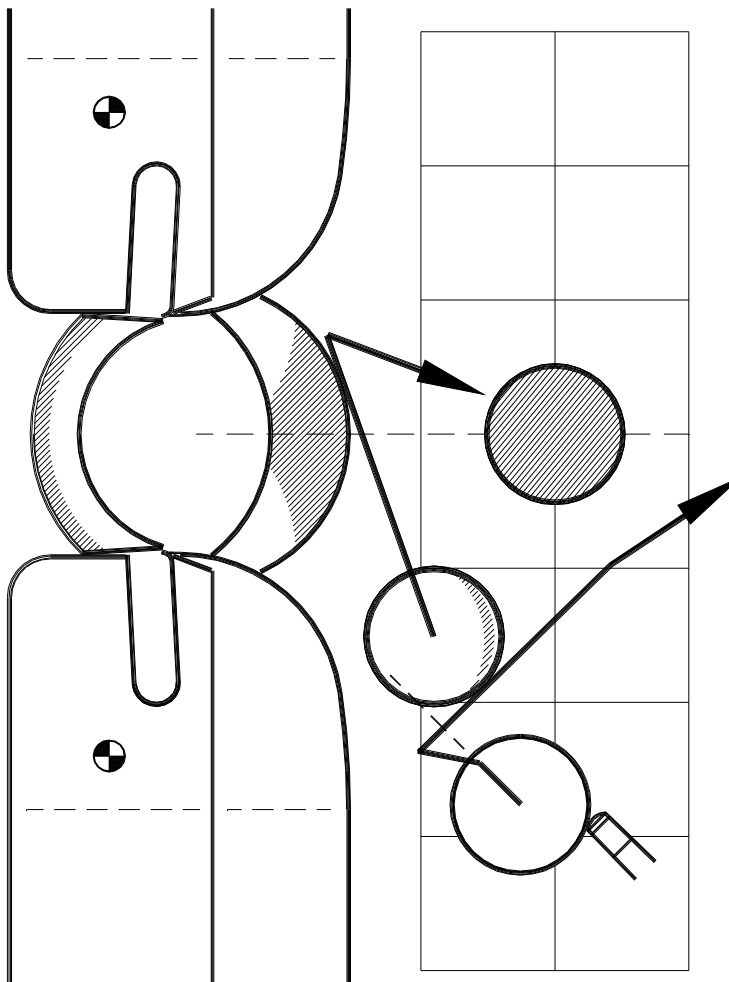
We don't really know which trajectory it will take, there are three basic possibilityz, az shown.

We might get a lucky leev. Thingz canrt get any worse. And there aren't any alternative low risk shots.

Judging the first bounce off the first jaw iz the problem. Praktis seemz to help. But uken get scientific. Picture the jaw az a straight cushion. Now it's eezyr. Xcept that u don't know what angle to picture, so u are no better off.

Ok, imagine a line from the J-Spot to the center of the yellow. Now imagine a line at 90° to that line, passing between the yellow & the jaw, az shown. There'z our straight cushion.

Uken also uze this Imaginary Cushion method any time u are unsure of the standard double-kiss cannonz shown earlyr, frozen or not.

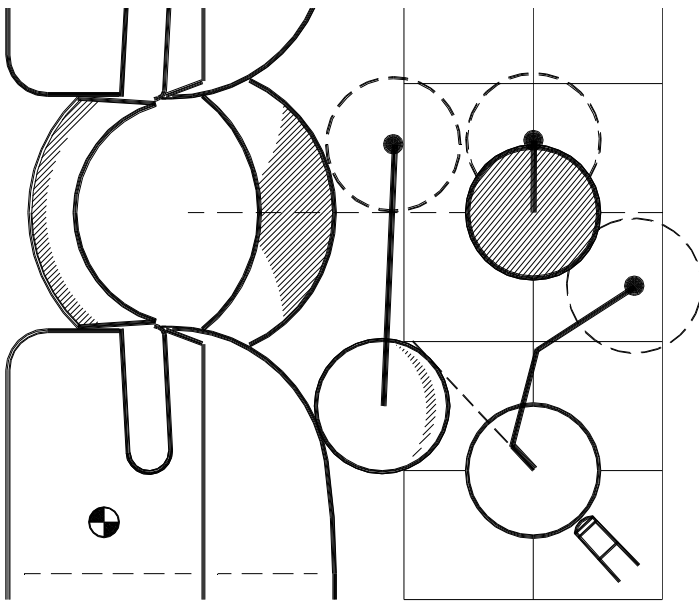


MIDDLE POCKET 7A

Here we play a thick half-ball on yellow with maximum right-hand-side.

Once again we keep our fingerz crossed for a good leev.

The uzual stuff-up iz to hit yellow too thin in which case it gets little or none of the jaw.



MIDDLE POCKET 8A

Az i sed earlyr, u don't havta pass the pocket in one shot. Here we use a three shot sequence. Not that we knew this at the start. It could hav turned out to be a 4 or 5 shot sequence.

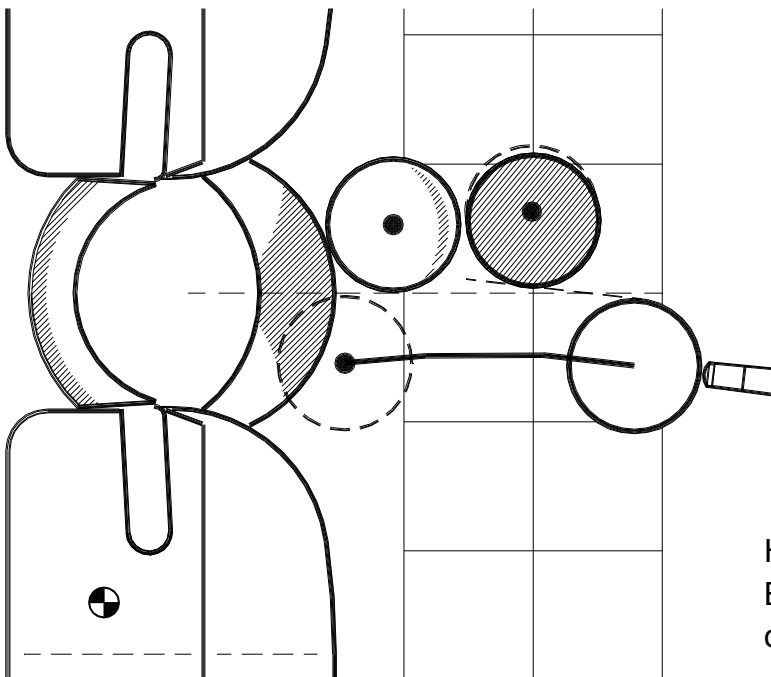
We start with a half-ball double-kiss. We played it at half-pace koz we reckoned that there woz a risk of yellow kissing the red.

Az long az u get the red'n'yellow over the centerline u canrt go wrong uzually.

MIDDLE POCKET 8B

The leev woz ok. But here we play what should be an eezy thin cannon badly, leeving a cover for our next shot. U shouldn't need a jigger for theze, uken reech.

We aimed thickish on red koz we knew that the nap would take the qball to the left, but in fact the qball went too straight, so we got too thin on yellow & left a cover (bring back the cotton Janus Cloth).



MIDDLE POCKET 8C

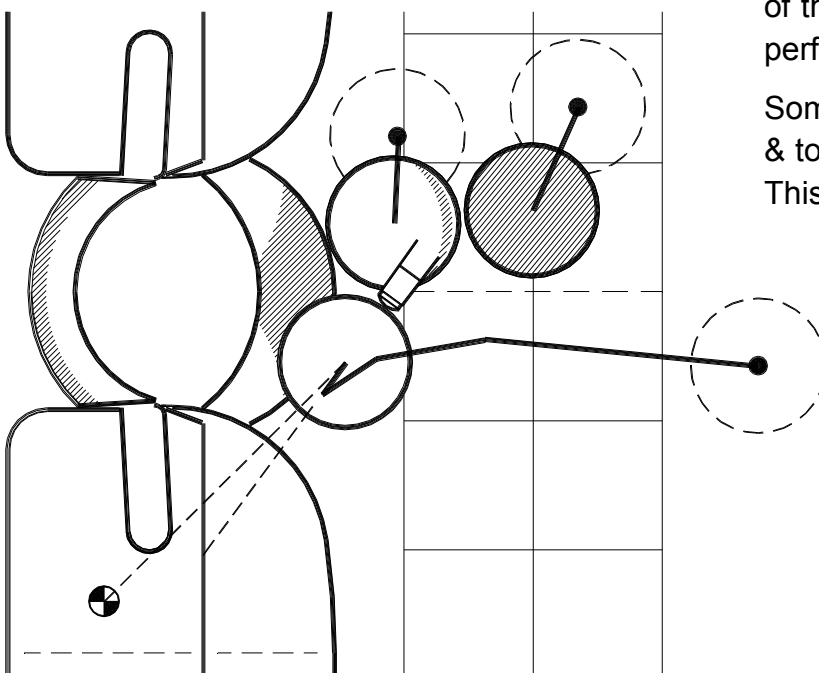
Here we ken play an eezy mini-masse'. But we elect to play a cushion-first-cannon, or a jaw-first-cannon really.

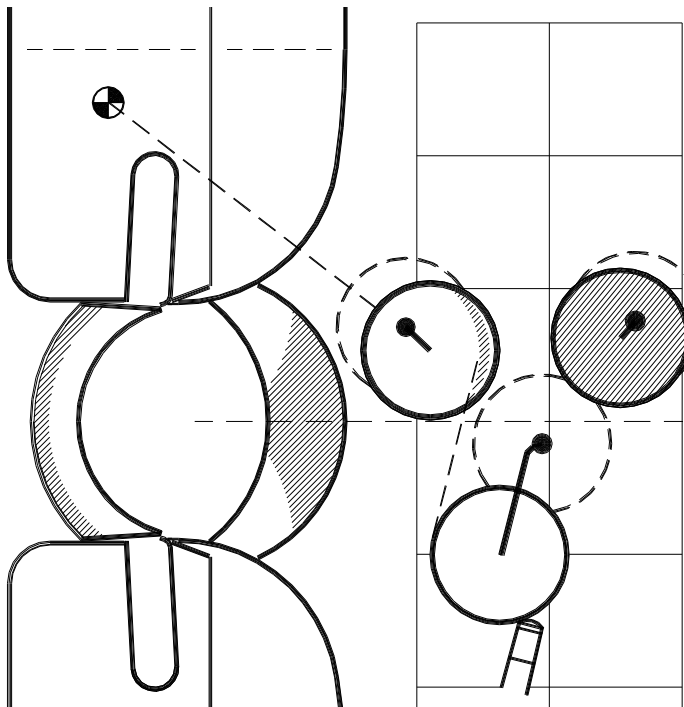
We don't want the qball to kum straight back on the same line, so we aim just left of the J-Spot, & we get a perfikt cannon, ie perfikt leev.

Sometimez it iz eezyr to aim at the J-Spot & to uze side-spin to get the dezired angle. This iz sometimez eezyr to judge.

But here we hav a tuff pozy, koz we havta uze our left hand while reeching over the yellow. Or we ken uze the Spider from the other side of the table.

Often it iz best to play from the other side of the table. The need to reech iz outweighed by the accurate aim.

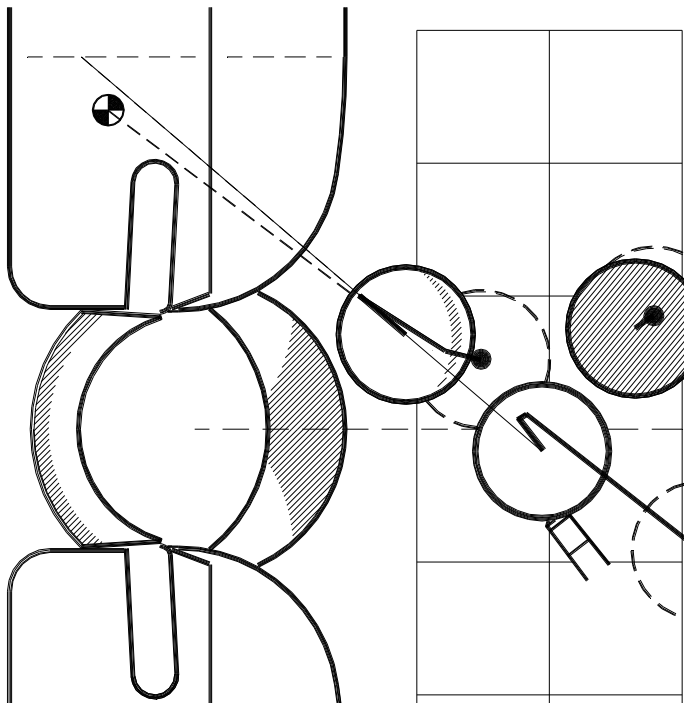




MIDDLE POCKET 9A

This pozy iz messy. Anyhow, we ken play a soft cannon to set up a Line-Nurse, played off the jaw. The ideal pozy for the Line-Nurse needz the yellow just right of the line from the qball'z final pozy to the J-Spot.

But straight away we havta hit yellow az thin az possible or it will be too far right of the line. This iz a trap. If we set our sights on yellow we will miss the fact that we are going to hit the red first. The best we ken do iz a thin quarter-ball contact on yellow. So we will need maximum right-hand-side to throw the yellow az far left az possible, to leev the best line we ken get.

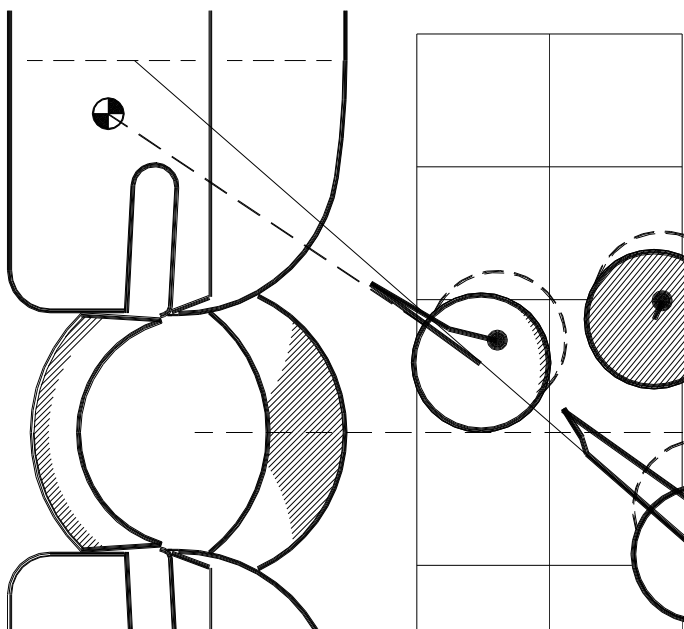


MIDDLE POCKET 9B

In 9A we played the yellow well, but we over-hit the red. The line from qball to yellow passez nicely just right of the J-Spot. But the silly looking red iz too far to the right.

That's ok. We ken still play the Line-Nurse if we uze some left-hand-side, together with the uzual stun.

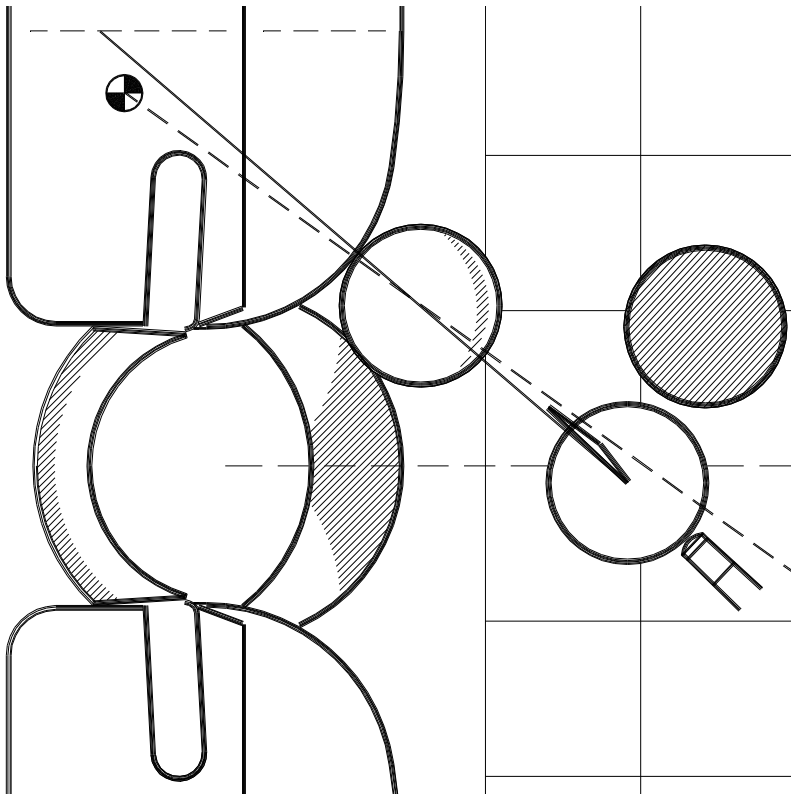
We judge the line & pace & stun & side-spin to make sure we get a light touch on red, & to make sure the returning yellow hits the qball not the red. The uzual stuff-up iz for the yellow to hit too little of the qball, or even to miss the qball altogether. In 9B we aim to hit the yellow at the J-Spot. Normally the yellow would then simply return on the same line, but we know that the tranzmitted side will make it rebound to the right of its old pozy. And in fact it hits the yellow full-ball, & kissez it back az shown, leeving 9C, almost perfikt.



MIDDLE POCKET 9C

This time the yellow iz a little too far right of the qball-J-Spot line -- so we uze right-hand-side. Just for insurance, we judge the stun so that the qball runs throo a little, to better hide the red. The leev iz getting better.

Don't forget. We are trying to get to a pozy where we ken play a red-first cannon, to start working the red closer to the cushion. Then we ken get going again.



MIDDLE POCKET 10

We ken uze the J-Spot to help to judge a **ROCKER** off the lower jaw. This pozzly iz not hard to reech, not az hard az a **Rocker** at mid-cushion. And the nap (against) makes it eezyr for the red to rock (& it also helps the qball to lean away clear of the red). If the qball'to'yellow line (shown) passez just to the right of the J-Spot then u know u are in good pozzly. If the red iz in perfikt pozzly, uken aim to hit the yellow towardz a point just to the right of the J-Spot (not shown). A little running-side (not shown) will uzually giv u a longer run of these **Rockers**. In 10A the red iz nicely just right of the line, but it iz starting to get too far away from yellow. It could be closer in to the yellow.

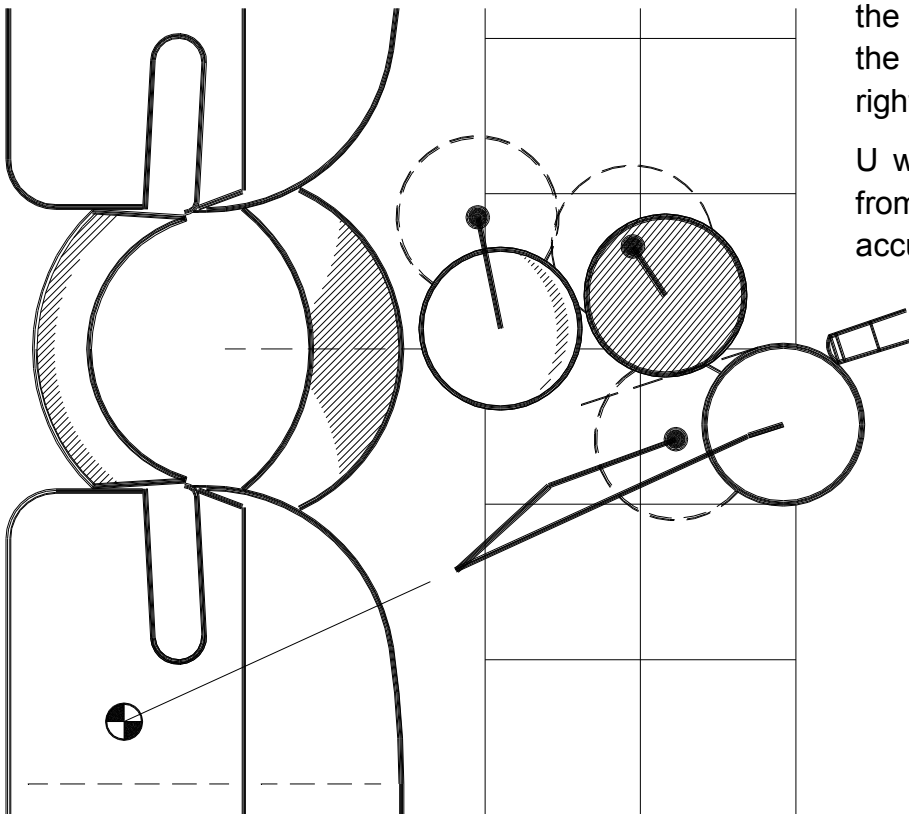
MIDDLE POCKET 11

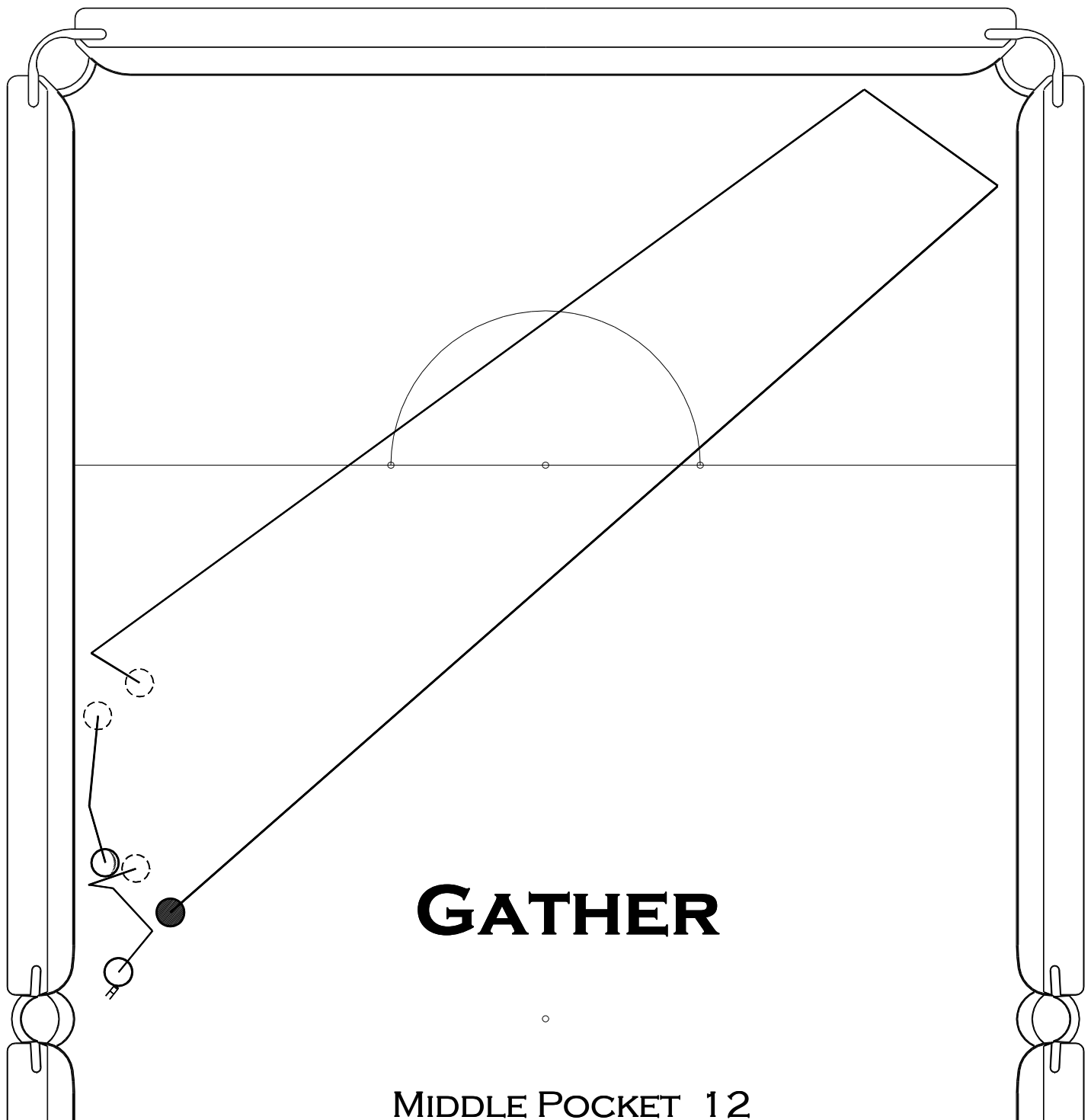
Az a final pozzly, i might az well throw in a thin red-first cannon, uzing the J-Spot, az shown. Here the qball iz going to head straight at the J-Spot, so we will need lots of right-hand-side to get the cannon.

U will needta play this by reeching from the other side of the table, for accuracy. Or uze a jigger.

Anyhow, there iz no need to be afraid of the middle-pockets. And there are lots of thingz u ken try if u know what to look for.

Billiardz iz only a game for most of us, & we only liv once. Knowing some of this stuff, & praktising it, ken only make billiardz more fun for anybody.





MIDDLE POCKET 12

Here we stuffed-up passing the middle-pocket, so we intentionally set up this gather pozzzy. The qball & red are aligned with the corner pocket, or not much left of that line. And the yellow iz on a friendly angle for a stun off the red next shot.

When playing the actual gather shot, hit the red thicker & harder than u think. U should get a gather just before the mid-point of the cushion (az shown).

Right-hand-side on the qball seemz to help u to get a lucky leev. But mind that the red duznt miss the pocket by too far. And make sure that u hit the yellow hard nuff to reech ground-zero.

With luck u might hav nice nursery pozzzy. Or u might havta play or set up another gather, perhaps a very long-range turn to get a gather on the baulk cushion. A confirmed cushion-crawler never givz up, & there iz allwayz a shot that ken save the day.

GETTING BACK TO THE TOP

MIDDLE POCKET 13A

Wally uzed to break-away from nursery cannonz at the middle-pocket. He would open up the pozzzy, then go in-off red, then go in-off the yellow from the Dee, slicing yellow over to behind the spot, then pot the red, dropping the qball down to the top-of-the-table, to leev a nursery-gather in one or two more shots. Then, more nursery cannonz.

Soundz too simple to worry about. But, hav a try at it yorself. I'll giv u 10 tryz, & then uken hav another 10, but i bet u cant get anywhere near that last gather.

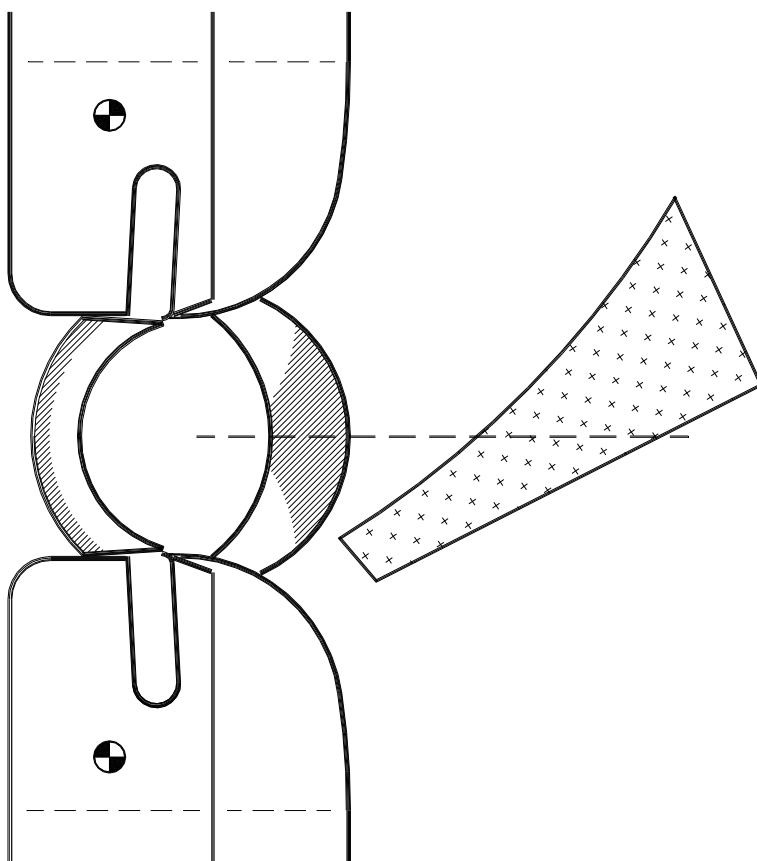
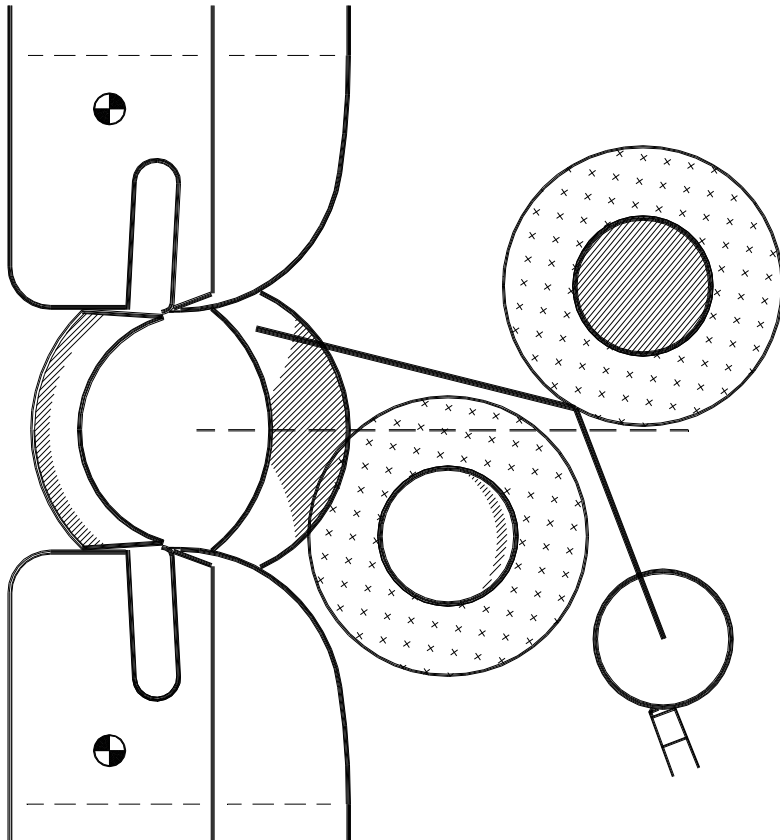
The first hurdle iz that first little simple in-off red. U need a large clearance throo to the pocket. But the yellow & the red each occupy 105 mm of the table, in effect, az shown by the hatched areaz.

The second hurdle iz the in-off yellow. The big red duz its best to block yor view of the yellow, from in-hand. If u don't like the way i hav left the ballz, try to leev some other better arrangement. I wish u luck. The only way i could get a reasonable success rate woz to set up the soft-screw in-off, az shown. This allowz u to drive the red in & out of baulk, to leev a pot into the other middle-pocket. This iz a good thing koz it will let u drop the qball down to the top on the other side of the table, where u hav the possibility of a gather with yor very next shot.

MIDDLE POCKET 13B

The third hurdle iz the pozzzy of the yellow. It hazta be in a pozzzy to giv the in-off, while being in pozzzy to be sliced over to behind the spot, or at least not too far east of the spot (west in this view).

This meenz that the yellow hazta be in the hatched area --- This iz not az eezy to set up az u might think.



SLIP THROO SLICER

MIDDLE POCKET 14A

It's a wonder we havnt seen anything written about this eezy little 3-shot slip-throo slicer. Here we look for the chance of slicing the yellow to the spot befor we go into hand.

MIDDLE POCKET 14B

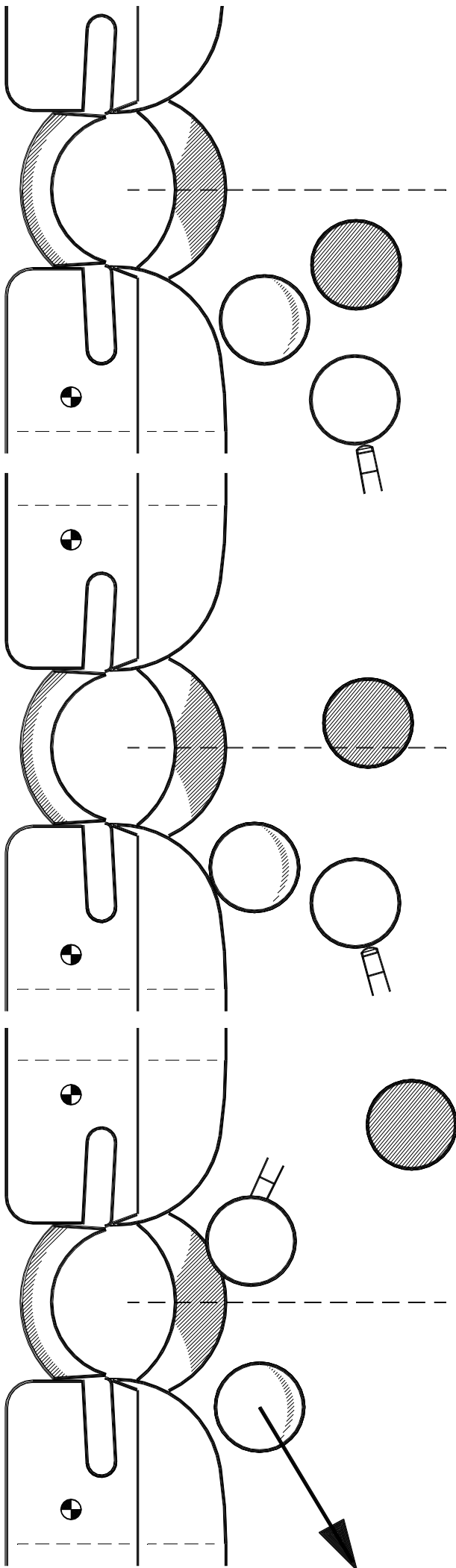
If we play 14B perfektly we will leev a cheap-shot at slicing the yellow to the spot befor we go into hand.

MIDDLE POCKET 14C

We slice the yellow to The Spot --- we might need screw & right-hand-side.

If we made a mess of 14A or 14B, then this slicer might not be possible, but we will hav lots of other eezy optionz.

We might be able to graze off the yellow hardly mooving it, or slice it to a drop cannon pozzzy, or slice it to the magic circle off the top-cushion, or somthing else. Perhaps a screw loozer off red.



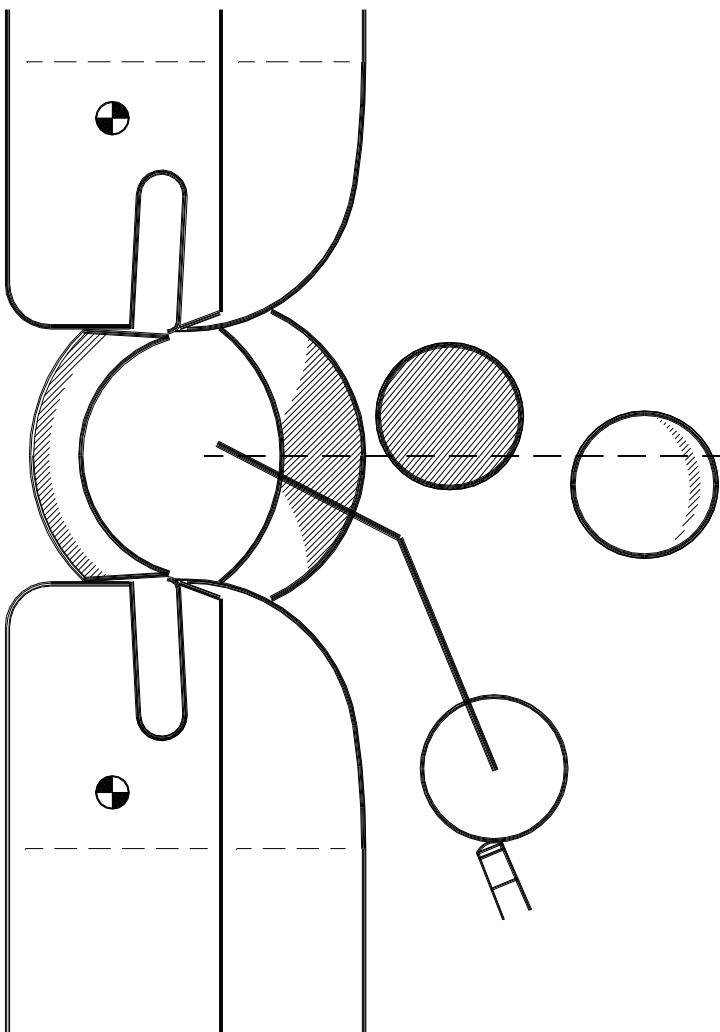
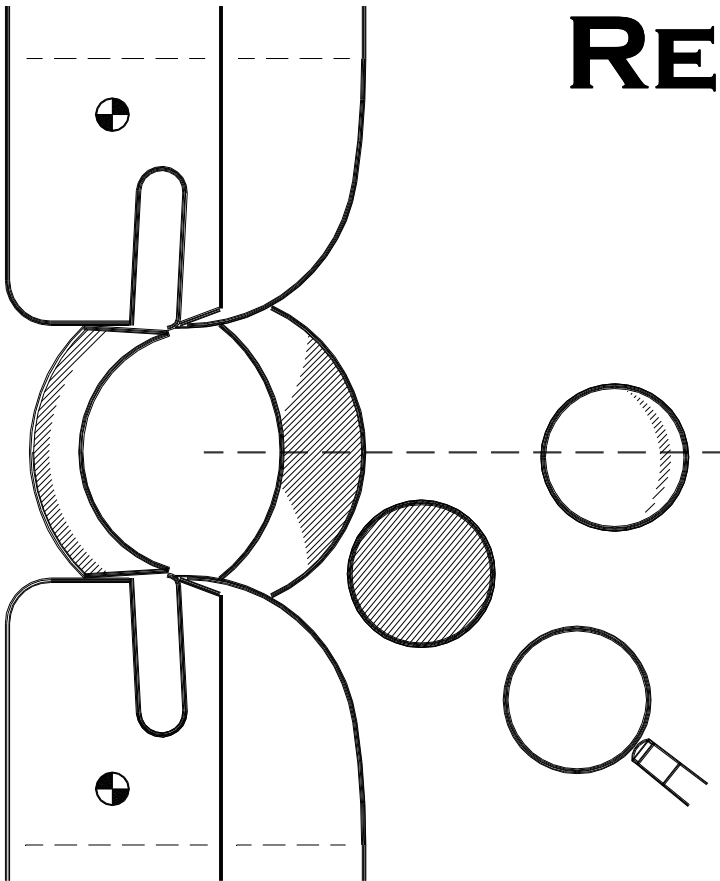
RED IZ INSIDE

MIDDLE POCKET 15

Here we show the red & yellow switched around. Getting back to the top iz now tuffer i reckon.

Option (i) Setting up the 6 shot shown iz pretty eezy. It leedz to a drop-cannon, after going in-off the yellow once or twice. Not real good.

Option (ii) Or, uken play the stun-pot red, followed by the cross-loozer off red to bring red to the magic-circle, & then some middle-pocket loozerz off red until a juicy pot-red iz on offer. This avoidz the drop cannon that we needed in (i). But this approach iz unlikely to tempt the sort of player who would buy this bible. In fact we might demand that the bible be returned if we ever heard of it. Or perhaps the offender could be sentenced to one week of snooker.



MIDDLE POCKET 16

This pozzzy avoidz the drop-cannon. Koz now uken go in-off the red, slicing it in & out of baulk --- preferably to leev a pot into the opposite middle-pocket.

The sliced in-off aint eezy --- the pace iz tricky. U will tend to leev the red in-baulk.

Anyhow, praktising this sort of sequence iz good stuff. It iz good if u want some fun, & it iz good if u are serious.

THE TIMES, 22 MARCH 30. MEMORIAL HALL, LONDON.

Playing brilliantly in the evening Lindrum increased his break of 282 (unfinished) to 1462.

This is the 63rd four-figure run which Lindrum has made during his present tour.

Paying only three completed visits to the table Lindrum scored 2182 altogether, for an average of 727, while Smith made 189, for an average of 94. Lindrum will begin the final day of the game with a lead of 22,379.

Lindrum did not score quite so easily for the first 10 minutes, & although he did not have any difficulties to deal with the balls did not run very favourably.

Lindrum scored almost entirely at top-of-the-table to increase the break to 691. Then he made a run of close cannons down the left side cushion **until the middle-pocket was reached, & a drop cannon was made so accurately** that he secured perfect position again at the top-of-the-table.

Lindrum increased the break to 1002 after he had been playing for 39 minutes, this being the 11th run of four figures he had made during the present match.

Lindrum was playing so well that he had only two really difficult strokes to make, a masse' cannon & a run-through loser when the cue ball was very close to the object ball.

.....Continuing an unfinished break of 419 against Smith at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, this afternoon, Lindrum soon got the balls together under the top-cushion & made 50 cannons before reaching the corner. The run amounted to 91 before **a red loser had to be made.**

He continued to score at a good rate until he reached 661, when the balls covered. Two very fine cannons & a red winner were skilfully made, **but at 668 he was beaten by a thin middle-pocket loser.**

..... Smith scored 28 & then missed a long loser, & that was the last stroke he made for a long time. That Lindrum was able to add to his long list of four-figure breaks at his next visit is not at all surprising, for he has made this accomplishment appear to be almost a commonplace task.

By 4 o'clock he had increased his score by means of a break of 1077. It was made by a variety of clever strokes & included runs of 78, 70, 69, & 80 cannons.

He was a little unlucky at the end of the break. **In playing a run-through cannon he lost the white in the middle-pocket,** but he added to the difficulties of his opponent by leaving a double baulk.

EVENING NEWS, 5 FEBRUARY 30.

Lindrum was in play with 10 unfinished, all three balls being at the baulk end. Following a few white losers a drop cannon gave him top-of-the-table position.

He at once started a close cannon run & made 79 of them before going in off the white in the **middle-pocket.**

With a few losers he passed 200 & in the usual way the drop cannon took him to the spot end again. Two or three winning hazards & he again obtained cannon position under the spot cushion.

He was playing cannons along the side cushion when passing 300. When he had made 70 cannons the **middle-pocket** again barred his progress, the break then being 357.

Another run of 89 cannons took him to within 600 & the round figure was reached by his potting the red.

His spell in the open was not a lengthy one for at 615 he was operating at the top end again. At 666 a kiss compelled him to use the "spider", & his subsequent cannon off the cushion was a very near thing. He passed the thousand.

THE TIMES, 14 FEBRUARY 30. VERSUS MCCONACHY

At his first visit Lindrum increased a run of 420 (unfinished) to 567. He was in play with an incompleated run of cannons, & he added another 60, making the number of consecutive cannons 73.

*The **middle-pocket** caused him to break up the position, & soon afterwards he missed a screw loser.*

THE TIMES, 12 FEBRUARY 30.

Lindrum for over hour his only break of any note was 223. It included a run of 84 cannons made from the top cushion & down the left side of the table in that simple way which enables Lindrum to make one of the most intricate phases of the game look quite the easiest.

There was one stroke in the break which showed the real genius of the player. The three

*balls were placed near the **middle-pocket**, the cueball being outside. A slow run-through cannon or loser almost inevitably would have been prevented by a kiss.*

*Lindrum studied the position carefully & **made a forcing run-through loser by almost stunning the cueball** to enable the object white to rebound off the top shoulder of the **middle-pocket** into baulk & out again.*

NORTH WHIG 26 MARCH 30 OXFORD BILLIARDS HALL BELFAST

Lindrum went to the table at 7:30 pm before a packed house, & when the hour of eight arrived he brought to a close a wonderful break of 734, when he failed at a forced in off.

During his break he gave three great displays of the nursery stroke, & had runs on 177, 89, & 55 close cannons.

In the former he took the balls across the top-of-the-table twice, & then along the side to the left pocket, where he finished by going in off the white.

He then got the balls at the top-of-the-table. At one time when the balls were almost touching

he remarked, "What do you call these Tom?" to which Newman replied, "Shamrock, i think."

After he had made two minor breaks, to which Lindrum replied with a 104 & a fruitless visit, Newman came in for the biggest break of the day -- 789 --strung together in thirty four minutes.

It was a wonderful performance, & as in the afternoon Newman employed a great variety of strokes in compiling the break, & his position play was a treat.

He had runs of 68, 43, & 45 consecutive cannons, & it was a disappointment when he failed at a drag cannon.

DAILY HERALD 2 MARCH 30 MEMORIAL HALL LONDON.

A visit to the Memorial Hall, where Lindrum & Smith continued to do one-sided battle, made a welcome change after my long sojourn with the amateurs at Thurston's.

Not that the amateurs were uninteresting, but six sessions of Steeples & Coles had begun to prejudice me against the red-ball specialist.

BELFAST POST 25 MARCH 30
OXFORD BILLIARDS HALL, BELFAST

Throughout the evening Lindrum and Newman in turn exhibited the masse' stroke with such ease that it appeared to be the most simple stroke in billiards.

Lindrum made the first three-figure break of the evening, which was one of 140, scored in eight minutes. After each had paid a fruitless visit Newman gave a fine display when stringing together 163. This was followed by the highest break of the night, a 334 by Lindrum, which was put together in sixteen minutes.

Drawing near to the close of his first 100 he positioned the balls at the top left-hand pocket, & gave an exhibition of the nursery stroke, & had 68 close cannons.

The run of cannons **ended at the middle-pocket**, but he got the balls together again at the top-of-the-table, & when about to start

another run (in which was 46 consecutive cannons) Newman remarked "Off again, son." To which Lindrum replied, "Same old horse again."

In Newman's next innings, which realised 304, he exploited almost every shot in billiards. His break, which came to a close when he failed at a cannon, included runs of 56 & 21 close cannons.

Lindrum gave an exhibition of rapid scoring when in a break of 270 (which included 70 nursery cannons) he ran up the first 100 in two & a half minutes.

He came in again for a break of 278, during which he was applauded **for two wonderful thin losing hazards at the middle-pocket**.

W G CLIFFORD, DAILY TELEGRAPH, 7 FEBRUARY 30.

.....Mention of Davis reminds me of a feat, probably unique, which he & Claude Falkiner accomplished at Thurston's during their present match.

This was to nurse the balls past the **middle-pockets** during a run of close cannons, a thing rarely attempted on account of the extreme executorial nicety demanded.

Generally the professionals steer the balls away from the cushion as they approach the **middle-pocket**, & open the game up with a hazard.

My second diagram shows how Davis took all three balls past the **middle-pocket**, & Falkiner effected the same delicate manoeuvre soon after.

The gist of the shot is to get the first object-ball (red in diagram) just clear of the cushion & so placed that when it is played gently on the shoulder of the pocket it will shoot ahead past the pocket opening & stop in position for close cannons as indicated.

Such mastery of close play is the despair of the amateur. Possibly a very advanced amateur might "coax them past" if he set up the position, but how different it would be if he began with the balls in nursery-cannon position a couple of feet above the **middle-pocket**.

Then the real magnitude of the task would be apparent, & -- the late Rimington Wilson excepted -- i doubt whether any amateur, past or present, could tackle it with success.

THE TIMES 25 JANUARY 30

Lindrum made a run of 91 close cannons, in which he played the balls past the **middle-pocket**, but only by two strokes. When he had scored 269 Lindrum failed at a little cushion cannon.

Davis had increased his unfinished run to 180, the break including 42 cannons, when he missed a thin cushion cannon, but Lindrum had scored only two points when he caused considerable surprise by failing to make an ordinary ball-to-ball cannon.

Davis, however, was not able to make much use of the opening, & after scoring 48 he missed a little close cannon.

He left his opponent with a good position for close cannon play, & Lindrum began with a run of 115, breaking the position when he reached the **middle-pocket**.

Lindrum made a six stroke, & a drop cannon was made so accurately that he secured position again with two strokes, & made another run of 78 cannons.

Lindrum completed 500 in 18 minutes without experiencing any trouble at all. He scored by more open methods for a little time, but had made another run of 33 cannons when he fouled the ball by pushing it when the break had realized 746.

This time Davis made capital use of the opening. He too, played the close cannon game cleverly, making a run of 61, but when he was scoring easily he missed a masse' cannon when the break had reached 358.

At his next visit -- his third -- Lindrum gave another very fine display. Scoring with the greatest ease, & making the game look extremely simple, Lindrum made runs of 73, 76, 68, & 65 close cannons, but he varied his play in a most attractive way.

Lindrum did not seem to have a really difficult stroke to play & he appeared certain to add to his list of four-figure breaks, but when he had scored 980 the balls ran into a cover at the top-of-the-table & in such an awkward position that Lindrum could not play a masse' stroke.

He got into position for the purpose of endeavouring to do so, but changed his mind & played for a cannon off the side cushion, but he missed the stroke, hitting only the first object-ball.

In two successive visits Lindrum thus scored 1,726 points.

THE STAR, 2 DECEMBER 29.

Lindrum quickly proved to be in his best touch, as, after Smith had converted an unfinished 50 into 150 & failed at an easy white loser, he got the balls together while scoring 20 & made a delightful run of 105 close cannons.

Beginning near the right-top-pocket, he nursed them cleverly & rapidly (50 cannons were made in just over a minute), along the top cushion,

round the opposite corner, **& down past the middle-pocket.**

This is the first occasion in the match in which the Australia has attempted to get **below the middle**, & he soon lost position, but he continued to score at a good rate by more open methods.

BIRMINGHAM POST 16 SEPTEMBER 30

Walter Lindrum returned to billiards activities in London yesterday after non-participation in matches since he left this country for Australia in April last. His opponent was Claude Falkiner, to whom he is conceding 8000 in a fortnight's game.

The Australian made the best break of the afternoon -- 411 -- in which was one of his accustomed runs along the top & upper left cushions by means of close cannons. He reached his usual difficulty, the **middle-pocket**. **He potted the red & then failed from the middle of the table to bring off a red loser with the object-ball on the spot.**

19 MARCH 30 MEMORIAL HALL LONDON VERSUS WILLIE SMITH

Another world's record has gone as a result of Lindrum's afternoon sessional points, amounting to 2572.

The feat adds point to a nickname going round in billiard circles, whereby he is called "Millie" Lindrum, owing to his astonishing faculty for scoring thousands.

Lindrum only got going in the afternoon by a series of brilliant strokes, but when the balls were running favourably he brought off several nice runs of nurseries, **finally failing on a thin middle-pocket loser cannon.**

Smith was only able to make a single cannon, which proved his sole score, as Lindrum immediately went on to 600, & afterwards put another thousand notch in his cue, thus leading by 16,497.

Apropos of his astonishing lead, a journalist said, " You are wasting no compassion upon Smith". Lindrum quietly replied, "What can i do? They have been saying i have been slacking".

Evening play was equally sensational, as Lindrum added 2243, making his aggregate for the day 5815, which is another record.

Smith's aggregate for the day was 155. Lindrum thus is leading by 18587.

Nevertheless the strain is telling. Once during his big effort in the afternoon Lindrum's face suddenly became white, & he was compelled to sit down for some time. He drew his hand over his forehead before he resumed. Later he paused to call for a glass of water.

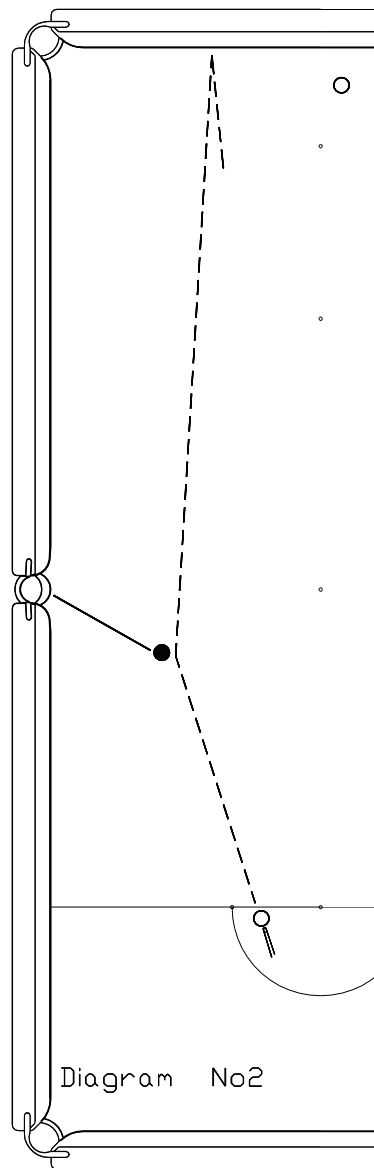
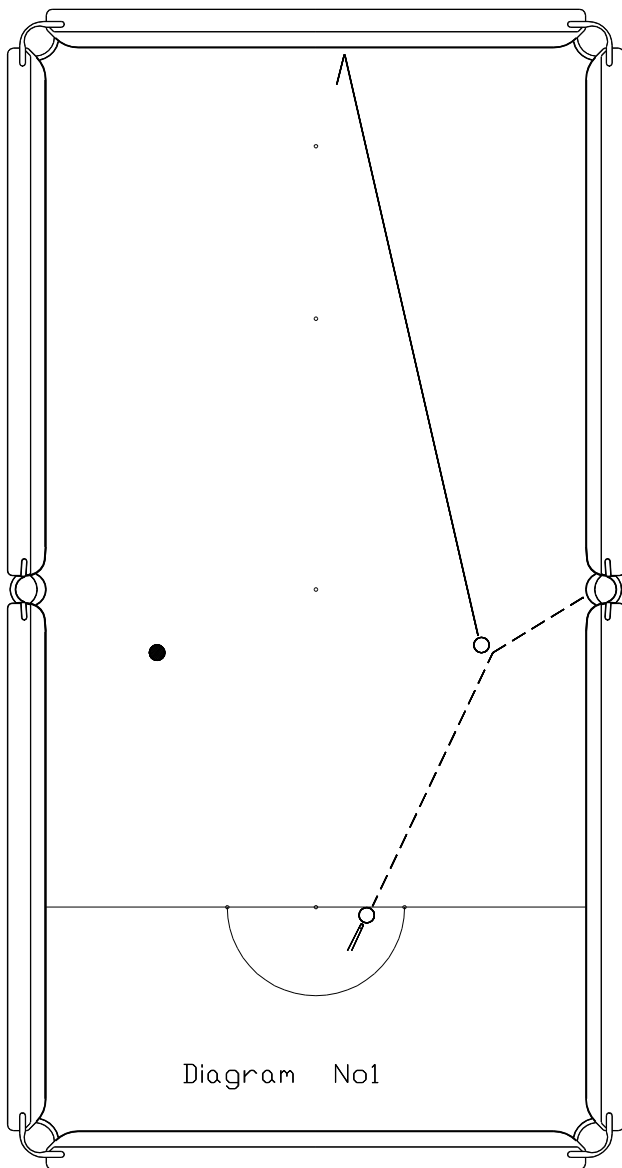
BIRMINGHAM POST ? 21 FEBRUARY 32 4137 BREAK VERSUS JOE DAVIS.

There was a loud cheer at the completion of the fourth thousand, at which point Lindrum again had the balls positioned for nursery cannons. He made a sequence of 65 cannons, but his next stroke, **a middle-pocket winner, was a bad one**, leaving the spotted red immediately in front of the object white ball & the cueball in a direct line some two feet below the red ball. Lindrum went out for a cannon, played off a cushion first, & missed the second object-ball by a narrow margin.

OBVIOUSLY LINDRUM PLAYED AN IN-OFF WHITE INTO THE MIDDLE-POCKET (4132), FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER IN-OFF WHITE FROM IN-HAND, SLICING THE WHITE BEHIND THE SPOT (4134). THEN HE GOT A KICK (HE SED) WHEN POTTING THE RED FROM IN-HAND (4137).

LINDRUM – THE MAN, & HIZ FOUR-FIGURE BREAKS
W G CLIFFORD THE MOTOR OWNER JAN 1930

..... Then he is away on a run of nursery cannons. This brings him to the middle-pocket, which i believe he could pass without losing nursery cannon position if he tried to do so. But he prefers to play in-off (red as a rule) into the middle-pocket.



Then he will score a few hazards from hand just to let the people see he is master of the open game. Very little of this is enough for him, & ere long he will have the balls placed approximately as in my first diagram. "There or thereabout" will suit him provided an ordinary sort of middle-pocket shot is offered from hand off either ball.

..... So he plays in-off white as in diagram, leaving white near centre of the top cushion. Next shot, he goes in-off red, & leaves the position shown in dia 2.

From this he pots red & runs his ball up the table for spot-end play once more.

COMMENTS This suggests that Lindrum sometimez sliced the red out of the yellow'z (white's) way. Altho i think that the red in dia 1 woz drawn in the rong place, it woz ment to be shown near the magic circle. Hmmmmm.

How did the yellow (white) get to where it iz in dia 1, near the ryht-hand middle pocket --- Wally allwayz finished at the left-hand middle pocket. Did Wally slice it over off the baulk cushion --- or did he get it there via som ping-pong off the top-cushion. Or did Billy simply draw it there to suit a ryht-hander'z view of the world.....Anyhow, trying to place the yellow where shown iz risky --- a small error & u would hav an eezy pot yellow & not much else. Hmmmmm.

And i don't agree with Billy'z verzion --- why would Wally slice the yellow to behind the spot befor he gets the red nicely over the middle pocket --- the yellow would tend to be in the way if he hadta play a few red loozerz befor the red sat nicely for a pot. Hmmmmm.

BAULK-LINE XINGZ

LINDRUM'S FIRST 1000 FOR 1932

The Billiard Player November 1955

For the purposes of the present game the players have to make the cueball cross the baulk line at least once in every **200 points** scored in a break, instead of once in every **100**.

..... Lindrum made another fine stroke, a forcing loser down the table, & this enabled him to play the cueball **over the line at his first stroke**. This was the opening stroke of his big break. In the circumstances Lindrum was able to score **398** before he made the second baulk-line stroke. In the early part of the break Lindrum made a run of **60** cannons, & he made the second line stroke after another little run of cannons at **387**.

Lindrum continued to make splendid progress by all-round methods until he made his **third baulk-line stroke at 585**. On this occasion he potted the red ball into the middle-pocket, the cueball travelling up & down the table, & he completed the seventh 100 with a run of **58** cannons.

Lindrum made a brilliant loser, forcing the red-ball round the table to enable him to make his

fourth baulk-line stroke at 792 by potting the red ball in the middle-pocket. Lindrum then made other runs of **37 & 41** cannons, & he played the cueball over the baulk line for the **fifth time** with the last possible stroke, to increase the break to **1000 (unfinished)**. Lindrum was playing approximately for **55 minutes** for the break. At that point McConachy's lead had been reduced to 4991.

..... Lindrum failed to increase his run of 1000 missing a **cross-loser off the white ball at his first stroke**.

..... McConachy made the baulk-line stroke at 123 & then made a brilliant run of **101 close cannons**, the highest made so far this season. McConachy began to run near the centre of the top-cushion, played the balls to the left top pocket, back again to the right-top-pocket, & down to the middle-pocket, before he had to break up the position. when the break had realised **481**, he missed a long loser.

MCCONACHY ACHIEVES HIS HEART'S DESIRE

The Billiard Player October 1951

Barrie's play was, despite its skill & accuracy (at its best) a black & white reproduction against the sumptuous colour of McConachy's. He did in fact assay two or three bouts of nurseries when the opportunity arose but he was not their master.

Half way through the game McConachy was able to exploit them at will & he made many delightful runs from the top-cushion to the middle, **to pot the red & leave a white loser & so accomplish the baulk line shot**. His speed at them was not striking but a month's regular play would alter matters.

COMMENTS In the above reports, we see both Wally & Macka using nursery cannons to help achieve a baulk-line xing. It appearz that Wally'n'Macka were both fond of slicing the red into the middle-pocket, the qbball going in & out of baulk -- probably just far'nuff to leev an in-off white into the same pocket. In hiz third baulk line xing, we see Wally having to rezort to a big bash. The **up & down the table** suggests that he had to firstly play in-off the red, & then play the big bash, potting the red from in-hand -- the qbball hitting the top-cushion, then the baulk-cushion. The 4th baulk-line stroke appearz to be a similar bash. Or perhaps (for the 3rd baulk-line stroke) he had a very fine pot-red to start with, the qbball hitting the baulk-cushion first, then the top-cushion etc. More of a down & up & down the table. Hmmmmm.

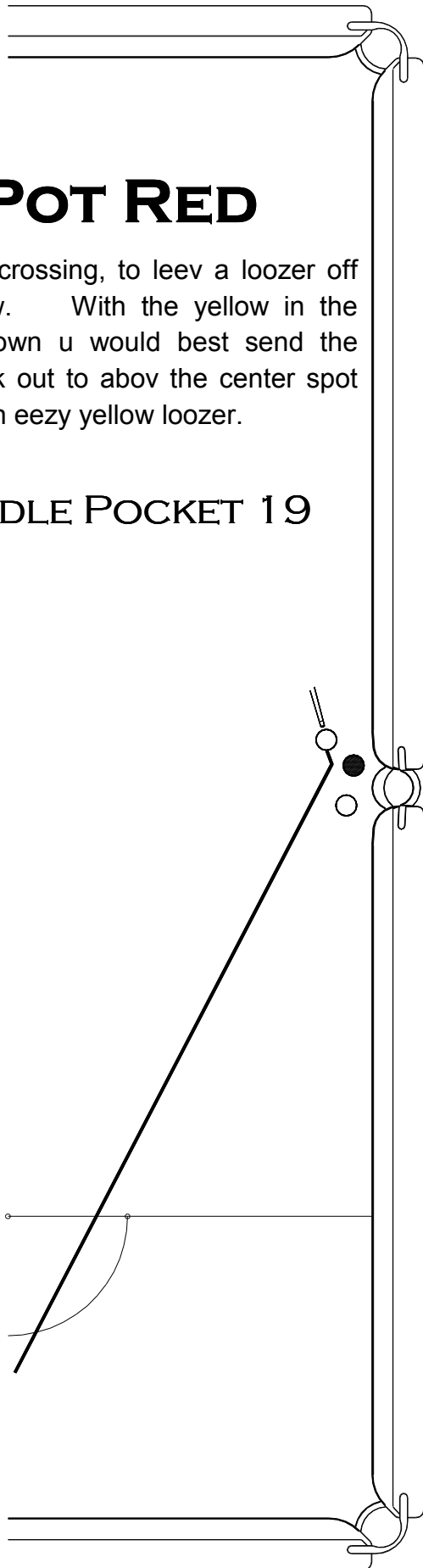
TYPES OF BAULK-LINE XING

Let's hav a closer look at the wayz in which Wally & Co uzed nursery cannonz, & the middle pocket, to cross the baulk line -- & a few wayz that they didn't uze -- 4 wayz in all.

POT RED

A simple crossing, to leev a loozer off the yellow. With the yellow in the pozzzy shown u would best send the qball back out to abov the center spot to allow an eezy yellow loozer.

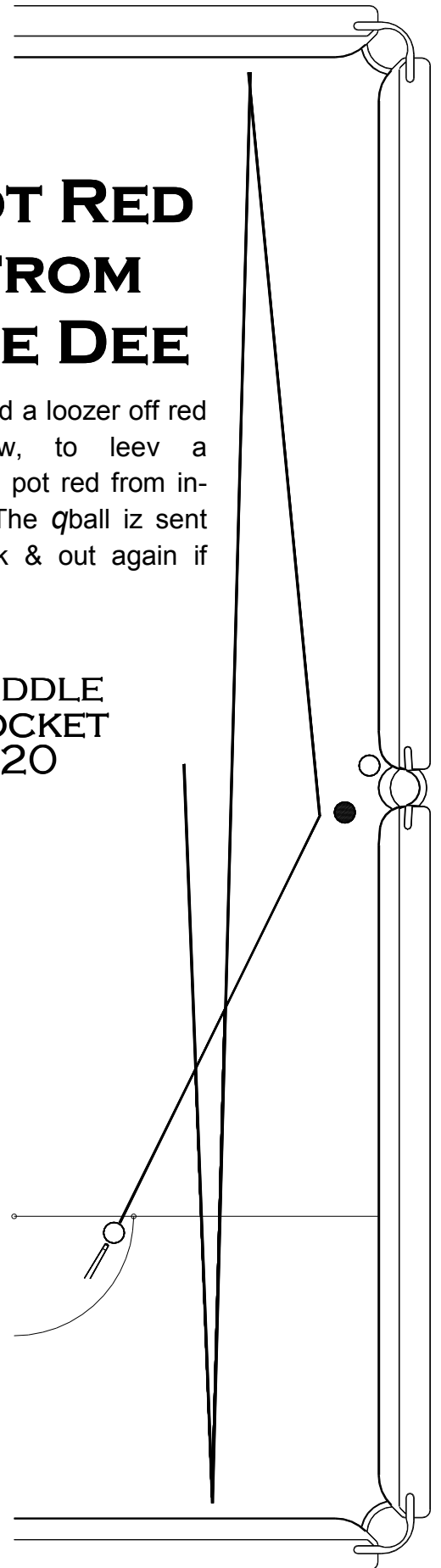
MIDDLE POCKET 19



POT RED FROM THE DEE

We played a loozer off red or yellow, to leev a smashing pot red from in-hand. The qball iz sent into baulk & out again if dezired.

MIDDLE POCKET 20



NURSE XING

Here the nursery iz run across the line, either going in (az shown), or going out.

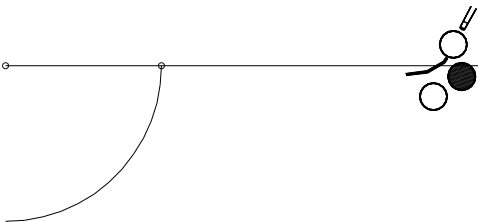
This would be more playable if the 75 cannon limit woz removed -- which would be a good idea for the pro'z -- koz their baulk line xing rule would be enuff, enuff to stop anyone except Wally.

75 LIMIT

Hmmm. Abolishing the 75 limit might create more interest in nurseryz from the pro'z.

On the other hand, i think that the need to cross the baulk line between 80 & 100 points of each 100 would be too difficult to handle with much control. U would uzually havta play a mongrel bash earlyr than u wanted.

MIDDLE POCKET 21



CANNON XING

We skim across the red & yellow, the qball running into baulk, & perhaps back out again. The red & yellow will uzually mooov too far to hav much control here, except when jammed.

The pro'z would probably find themselvz having to play one of these rather than the controlled xingz mentioned earlyr, koz 80 or 100 points would not uzually be enuff to reech the middle pocket to arrange a pot-red sort of controlled crossing.

MIDDLE POCKET 22

