



The USBA Newsletter 3-Cushion Billiard News

www.USBA.net

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Doral Billiards • Regional Qualifier Carlos Hallon & Mercedes Gonzales Qualify

High-Noon, Sunday started out peacefully at Doral Billiards with House-Pro Mercedes Gonzales opening the doors early for our event. Once all salutations along with a brief practice session were concluded and the players meeting was held, it was all but peaceful.

The format with 10 participants was two 5 man round robin flights, winner of flight A plays 2nd place winner of flight B and vice versa for a 2 out of 3 single elimination semifinal round followed by the same semi format for the final match.

In **Flight B**, Carlos Hallon got to work right away making it look easy by dispelling all but Mercedes (25-22) with convincing wins to take first in his flight. Mercedes showed similar prowess by taking second with a 3-1 record. Other notables of this flight were Jim Bishop (Already Qualified at Louisville, KY) 3rd place, Alfonso Torres 4th place, Michael Brodie 5th place.

Flight A was a different story as Robert Raiford sat out the first round to help get our livestream up & running (Thanks Rob!) while newly appointed SE Region Director Victor Cuzzi upset flight favorite Roberto Arana. Rob Raiford showed why he's considered one of the best "B" players as he went back to back winning all 4 of his matches to take first place in this hard fought flight. Our USBA President Henry Ugartechea was certainly not his best having dropped all of his matches while trying to stay awake due to flu symptoms from night before. Other notable was Chris O'Brien



Top 4: Southeast Region Director Victor Cuzzi (4th), Mercedes Gonzales (2nd), Carlos Hallon (1st), Robert Raiford (3rd) and USBA President Henry Ugartechea.

who came in 4th place but played with much heart showing us how much his game has improved.

The semi-final round found 3 time USBA champion Carlos Hallon convincingly defeating up & comer Victor Cuzzi 2 games to nil. Rob Raiford appeared to continue his undefeated streak by defeating Mercedes Gonzales in game 1 of their semi match 15-8 but Mercedes would not be denied and showed why she is a force to be reckoned with having come back to win the next 2 games and defeating Rob 3 games to 2 in their semi-final match. The final match was agreed by both players to simply be one game to 15 points for sake of completing the event. Carlos defeated Mercedes 15-14, much to the chagrin of our 40+ viewers on our livestream.

Many thanks go out to Alex Karavias, mgr. & the owners of Doral Billiards for their warm hospitality, as always.

Mercedes is not playing in the Nationals, so Robert Raiford is the replacement.

Regional Qualifiers

Atherton Club • San Luis Menlo Park, CA • Frank Torres Wins the Atherton Club Qualifier

by Raye Raskin,
Tournament Director

Going into the next-to-last round Frank Torres and Khalil Diab were undefeated. Rigoberto Cuevas had one loss and had to play Frank Torres. If Rigoberto Cuevas won, there could have been a 3 way tie for first place (based on games won) if Frank Torres beat Khalil Diab in the final round. Alas, this was not to happen and Frank Torres beat Rigoberto Cuevas.

In the final round Frank Torres and Khalil Diab were both undefeated so the match was for the qualification spot. Diab was just a little off his game and Frank bore down, concentrating well.

Final result: 30-22 Frank Torres.

Centro 3-Cushion Corner • Jackson Heights, NY "B" Tournament

Lloyd Wallace Wins the Centro "B" Tournament

24 players, 4 groups of 6 to 20 pts. Top 2 from each group + 2 wild cards (best 3rd place finishers) advance to finals. Finals: 2 groups of 5 players to 25 pts.

1st place finisher of each group plays each other in one final match for 1st & 2nd place overall in the tournament. Same for the two 2nd place finishers, etc.

2011 USBA Tour B Tournament

Centro 3-Cushion Corner January 28-30, 2011

Final Ranking

FINAL RANK	NAME	TOTAL POINTS	TOTAL INNINGS	GRAND AVERAGE	HIGH RUN	BEST GAME
1	Lloyd Wallace	213	329	0.647	8	0.893
2	Won Sik Kang	205	271	0.756	7	1.176
3	Arturo Herrera	214	277	0.773	9	1.471
4	Dan Kolacz	216	303	0.713	5	0.909
5	Jae Cheon Seong	213	260	0.819	6	1.316
6	Armando Rodriguez	206	262	0.786	6	1.333
7	John Kim	163	250	0.652	5	0.833
8	Han Jun Shin	177	275	0.644	5	0.769
9	Sun Shin	174	273	0.637	4	0.800
10	Seong Hyun Lee	127	225	0.564	3	1.333

More Regional Qualifiers page 28



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President's Desk

Dear Members,
2011 marks an exciting year for carom billiards in the US. Here is a brief report of what has been accomplished during the 90 days since I've been in office:

1. Our Constitution has been amended, cutting down the time it takes to make decisions, from 18 days to 6 days.

2. Our Director vacancies have been filled by my appointment & the Board's approval of the following individuals: Victor Cuzzi, SE Region, Pedro Piedrabuena, SW Region, and Tommy Thomsen, NW Region.

3. We have become "closer" so to speak, to the CPB, with improved relations. CPB President Jorge Aranedo is extremely happy with my new appointment and will be traveling to Miami to meet with me.

4. I have established a "Back Up Plan" with Jim Shovak. He will be downloading all USBA data onto a flash drive and mail it to me so I have a backup on my computer.

5. With Mazin Shooni's assistance and our BOD's approval, we have established a legal advice platform with our new "Andrew Janquitto Forum".

6. We have implemented a "USBA Room Membership Program" which I believe will have a profound impact leading to membership growth and much needed revenues for our organization.

With these and many more ideas along with our determination to be more productive, our organization is poised for continued growth and success in the coming years.

Sincerely,
Henry Ugartechea
USBA President

**The Carom Club
Wyoming, Michigan**

**Felipe Razon & Gary Elias Qualify
for the 2011 USBA Nationals**



Left to right: Finalists: Jamil Isreal (4th), Bassel Elshaar (5th), Rafael Hernandez (3rd), Felipe Razon (1st), Steve Andersen (6th), Gary Elias (2nd)

**Ken Higgins Memorial
Tacoma Elks, WA
Neal Olson Wins the Ken Higgins Memorial**

by Tommy Thomsen
Northwest Region Director

We had a 14 man field, 2 groups of 7 players, 2 players from each flight to the finals. We usually play "carry forward" on wins and losses so in effect each match is a final match.

The red flight had Neal Olson and Walt Scott go to the finals, Walt with one loss. I lost to a player that played the best game of his life as he ran 6 and out for 30 billiards in 29 innings. Way to go Al Speidel!

In the white flight Jesus Quinonez and Darrel Stutesman

made the finals with Jesus carrying forward one loss.

The finals came down to the final match between Olson and Stutesman.

Neal won the \$220 first prize with Darrel getting \$170 for 2nd, Jesus getting \$120 for 3rd and Walt getting \$80 for 4th.

Harvey Wixman had a nice 8 run for high run.

I want to especially thank "Mac" for all his work in making this tournament run smoothly and Darrel and the Tacoma Elks club for coffee, doughnuts and the use of their 5 great Verhoevan tables.

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Tommy Park Wins USBA Tour "C" Tournament at Carom Cafe Billiards

Final Ranking



FINAL RANK	NAME	TOTAL POINTS	TOTAL INNINGS	GRAND AVERAGE	HIGH RUN	BEST GAME
1	Tommy Park	188	398	0.472	5	0.652
2	Jorge Gonzales	176	399	0.441	5	0.741
3	Seong Sil Park	171	378	0.452	5	0.909
4	Chan Kim	174	440	0.395	4	0.833
5	Andre Cho	185	405	0.457	4	0.833
6	Steve Shtepenko	146	452	0.323	4	0.625
7	Ester Park	179	357	0.501	4	1.154
8	Sang Ho Shin	170	410	0.415	4	0.513
9	Nick Bonavita	146	308	0.474	4	0.714
10	Luis Miguel Valdovino	126	391	0.322	5	0.571
11	Armando Flores	133	350	0.380	4	0.577
12	Emiliano Chavez	122	368	0.332	3	0.882



World Class Billiards • Peabody, Massachusetts
David Van Lokeren Qualifies for USBA Nationals

Constitutional Amendment Room Memberships Established/Sanction Fees Raised/Commissions Ended

The USBA Board has approved a Room Membership Program which will provide certain benefits to Room Members including cloth & balls discounts and certain commissions while holding USBA Tournaments.

The details are private and are only available to Room Members.

The sanction fees for all USBA Tournaments will be raised from \$5 to \$10 per player.

The Constitution is amended as follows:

Previous

Section 7.02

Sanction Fee

Sanctioned tournaments require that other than the National Championship a fee of \$5.00 per player be remitted to the organization unless waived by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Amended as follows

Section 7.02

Sanction Fee

Sanctioned tournaments require that other than the National Championship a fee of \$10.00 per player be remitted to the organization unless waived by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

The USBA has previously been giving a \$15 one-time commission for any member that signs up a brand-new member. This practice is now ended.

Simonis Cloth Discounts & More/Room Memberships

The USBA is now offering Simonis Cloth, Aramith Balls and some other billiard supplies to ALL room owners at substantial discounts. USBA Room Members receive even greater discounts. ANY room can participate in these savings, even rooms without carom tables. For more information, contact Merrill Hughes at 631-338-9698 or Mazin Shooni at 248-910-4466.

Piedrabuena and Champion of Champions.....

Pedro Piedrabuena of San Diego wowed three-cushion enthusiasts, thousands of pool players and internet viewers with a career-best performance and clear domination of the field at the Invitational Champion of Champions three-cushion billiards tournament at the Allen Hopkins Super Billiards Expo held at the Valley Forge Convention Center.

A buzz was in the air as the country's champion three-cushion players arrived for a showdown that promised to keep the viewers on the edges of their seats. Sponsored by Allen Hopkins Productions and Professor-Q-Ball Promotions, Champion of Champions invited the eight most recent U.S. National Champions and asked them to show what they were made of in forty-point matches in a round-robin to see who was the best of the best. Show us they did, history was made as Piedrabuena outplayed the entire field with a dominance that we haven't seen at a national championship or other open tournaments in the U.S. since the passing of the great Sang Chun Lee in 2004.

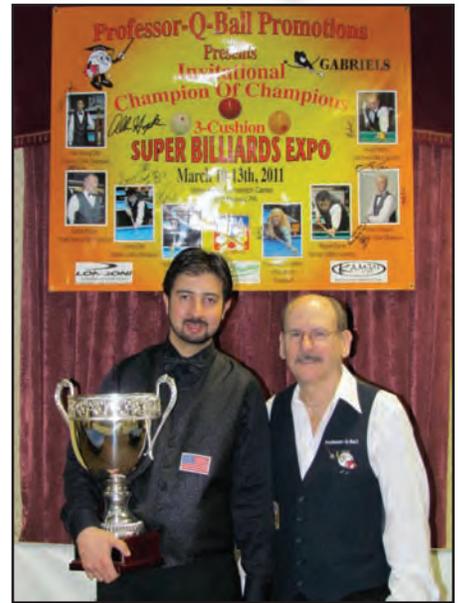
The players performed magic with their cues on two top-of-the-line *Imperator Gabriel Tables*, which are the most renowned tables in Gabriel's history. The craftsmanship and superior technique of this table exceeds the demanding play standards of billiard players around the world. Mechanic Yura Ra of New Jersey made sure the tables were set up a day before the event, complete with new *Simonis 300* cloth, so players had enough time to practice before the action started.

The first round began with a blast as Piedrabuena put the field on notice that he was there to play. Matched up against Mercedes Gonzales, the 2008 U.S. Women's National Champion, Piedrabuena

scored his 40 points in 19 innings! He then amazed the crowds by maintaining this unbelievable level of play and winning two more matches—both of them also in 19 innings. Miguel Torres also started strong in the first round, winning 40-13 in 23 innings over Mazin Shooni. Torres posted another win in the second round while Shooni incurred another loss facing Piedrabuena. Sonny Cho won his first round match against Hugo Patiño and Jae Hyung Cho prevailed over Carlos Hallon. However, in the second round Hallon and Patiño picked up the wins and Sonny Cho and Jae Cho losses.

Third round action started in dramatic style with another 19 inning game by Piedrabuena, this time against Patiño who shot first and scored only one point. Piedrabuena made a definitive statement with a run of 14 to open the match in his first inning. While he certainly was well prepared for the tournament and in good form, the question on everyone's minds was could he endure against such a strong field. Miguel Torres faltered over the next few rounds losing three straight while both Patiño and Jae Cho continued to win and Hallon, Shooni, and Sonny Cho putting ticks in both the wins and losses columns and Mercedes still struggling to find her first win.

After three 19 inning matches Piedrabuena then proceeded to win two



Pedro with Trophy presented by Paul Frankel

consecutive matches in 21 innings each against Hallon and Sonny Cho. With two rounds left he still had to face Torres and Jae Cho who only had the one loss early against Patiño. However, the sixth round proved to be decisive. Sonny Cho handed Jae Cho his second loss and Piedrabuena managed to fend off a late surge by Torres winning 40-37, this time in 29 innings.

With the title already in hand, Piedrabuena lost to Jae Cho in the final round. Patiño held on for second place with a win over Shooni and Mercedes Gonzales ran five-and-out for a 40-39 victory over Carlos Hallon.

Piedrabuena, the undisputed Champion of Champions, also had the tournament high run of 14 points. A three-time U.S. National Champion winning the title in '02, '04, and '07, he is the only current player to have won the title while Sang Lee, who dominated the game in the '90's, was still active. Will Piedrabuena maintain his dominance and start another legacy in the style of Sang Lee? This will be an interesting challenge in the coming years.



back Row: 1-r Charlie Brown (Tournament Director), 7th Carlos Hallon, 5th Miguel Torres, 8th Mercedes Gonzales, 6th Sonny Cho, Paul "Professor-Q-Ball" Frankel front row: 4th Mazin Shooni, 3rd Jae Hyung Cho, 2nd Hugo Patiño, 1st Pedro Piedrabuena

.....Set a New Standard for 3-Cushion Billiards

Champion of Champions will certainly attract new blood to the sport.

While Piedrabuena was at his peak, all of the players wielded a mean cue at the tournament. The final finishers were 2nd–Hugo Patiño, 3rd –Jae Cho, 4th–Mazin Shooni, 5th– Miguel Torres, 6th–Sonny Cho, 7th–Carlos Hellon and 8th–Mercedes Gonzales.

The Champion of Champions has set the bar high for the future of three-cushion Billiards in the United States. Not only was the tournament flawlessly and professionally run by Director Charlie Brown of New York, the players set a new standard for performance. Over the course of seven forty-point matches, Piedrabuena posted six straight wins in 19, 19, 19, 21, 21, & 29 innings and one loss scoring 33 in 31 innings for a grand average of 1.717. Has the Champion of Champions ushered in a new era where

spectators can expect to see phenomenal averages and fearsome competition at every match? Years ago, a player could average 1.000 and win several titles. He or she could probably expect 1.717 for one match – not the whole tournament. The Champion of Champions and Piedrabuena have changed all that – we hope! Can't wait for the Nationals under the neon lights of Las Vegas in May to see if these competitors show us more!

Champion of Champions was live-streamed by Mi Billiards (Steve Elzinga and Mike (Curly) Christenson). All matches have been archived here, www.ustream.tv/user/Mi_Billiards/videos and can be watched as PPV, PalPal required. DVDs of all matches on the feature table, also, available, contact Mi_Billiards@yahoo.com for information. Steve and Curly donate their time and efforts to bring you these live streams, please consider purchasing the PPV archives or DVDs to support their continuing quest to provide live streams.

Paul Frankel would like to thank all who donated their time by keeping score, commentating, setting up and taking down tables, etc., to help make the tournament run smoothly. To the Champion of Champions official sponsors - Simonis, Kamui, Longoni Cues, Gabriels - all the people who donated financially and Allen Hopkins Productions, Paul extends “a big thank you from the bottom of my heart.”

Proud winner of the Longoni Cue Award – Sonny Cho
All eight champions competing were eligible and all had an equal chance by a random draw to win this spectacular carom cue by Longoni Cues.



“It was first class all the way, from the chandeliers lighting the room to the elite players working the tables at the “Champion of Champions” in Valley Forge. Above, USA’s Women’s 3-Cushion Champion Mercedes Gonzales studies her options, while the country’s 2006 Men’s Champion Mazin Shooni (background) takes a shot. The audience was captivated by the skill and showmanship of the country’s top 3-cushion players as they battled it out in one of the most memorable 3-Cushion tournaments of all time.”




 Professor-Q-Ball Promotions and Allen Hopkins Productions
Champion of Champions
 March 10 to 13, 2011 Valley Forge Convention Center

	Cho	Patiño	Torres	Gonzales	Piedrabuena	Shooni	Cho	Hellon	WIN LOSS	TOTAL POINTS	TOTAL INNING	GRAND AVERAGE	WORLD RANK	BEST GAME	FINAL RANKING
Jae Hyung Cho		29	40	40	40	40	40	31	2	260	235	1.106	8	1.687	3
Hugo Patiño	40		40	40	13	40	40	19	2	232	198	1.172	9	1.818	2
Miguel Torres	33	35		40	37	40	40	24	3	249	231	1.078	9	1.739	5
Mercedes Gonzales	18	13	9		7	16	14	40	1	117	221	0.529	5	0.714	8
Pablo Piedrabuena	33	40	40	40		40	40	40	6	273	159	1.717	14	2.105	1
Mazin Shooni	28	33	13	40	21		40	35	4	215	193	1.114	6	1.290	4
Sonny Cho	40	40	27	40	14	29		38	4	224	229	0.978	7	1.379	6
Carlos Hellon	30	23	40	40	39	16	36		5	224	251	0.892	10	1.000	7
TOURNAMENT AVERAGE:											1.045				





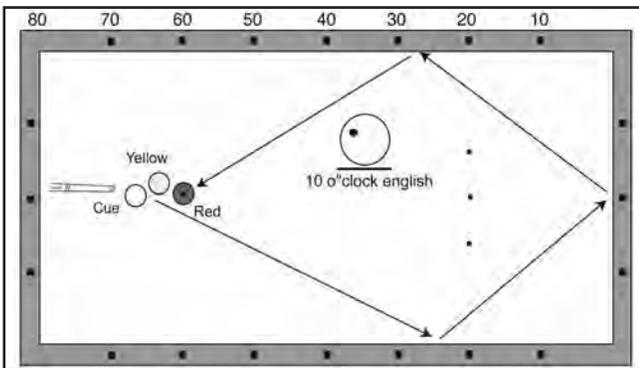

Rip's Tips

The Baseball Shot



Place the Red Ball on the center spot, Cue Ball in line with Red Ball, and Yellow Ball in between the two in half ball position 1/4" from either ball. Using 10 o'clock english, use a quick 3" level stroke and hit a home run.

"George Rippe is a former billiard room proprietor and artistic billiard enthusiast," He can be reached at 978 975-9958



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Upcoming Tournaments

April 15-17:

USBA TOUR "Handicapped" - Cue & Cushion - Hooksett, NH

Contact: Mazin Shooni – 248-910-4466

April 15-17:

Mike Kelley Memorial - Marshalltown, IA

Contact: John Jacobson – 641-751-4696

April 29-May 1:

Medford Elks - Medford, OR

Contact: Tommy Thomsen – 509-240-2027

May 9-13:

USBA National Championship

Tropicana Hotel - Las Vegas, NV

Contact: Jim Shovak – 516-238-6193

USBA National Championship to be held at Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas

The 2011 USBA Nationals will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada at the Tropicana Hotel. Our event will be held alongside the ACS (American Cue Alliance) National 8-ball & 9-ball Championships. This venue will allow 3-cushion to receive major exposure to thousands of pool players.

The Architect of this event is Professor-Q-Ball (Paul Frankel), who had been working on this for many months with John Lewis, the Executive Director of the ACS and the table manufacturer, Gabriels, who will be providing 6 heated tables for the event.

The official dates are May 9-13. For more information, please visit usba.net and click "Tournaments-Calendar" or contact Jim Shovak at 516-238-6193.



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The Spin Shot

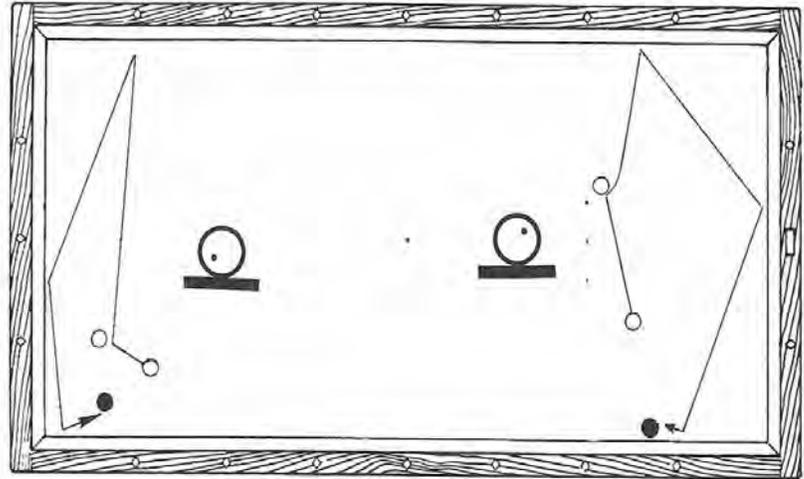
by Robert Byrne

Contributing Writer • from Byrne's "Advanced Techniques in Pool & Billiards" with permission



At the left of Diagram is a short-angle shot that could be made with no English or slight running English, but the third rail would have to be contacted with great precision. A spin shot greatly improves the chance of scoring. An authoritative stroke rather than precision is called for. The cueball in the given position must go slightly "uphill" into the first rail; a perpendicular path into the first rail would cause the cueball to hit the second rail too far from the red ball.

At the right of Diagram is a shot I saw Ceulemans make. The red ball was almost frozen, which meant that the target on the third rail was extremely small. A force follow with spin, as drawn, sent the cueball into the third rail slowly while spinning at high speed, providing a target couple of inches wide. A slippery new cloth is best for this kind of action because the spin doesn't die out as quickly.



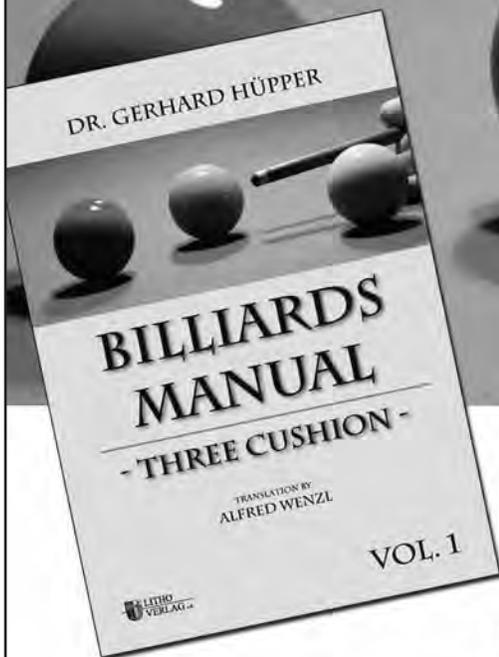
Robert Byrne has a new book, "Behold My Shorts - The Best of Robert Byrne".

To see him in his polka-dot shorts, go to: <http://www.thonline.com/store/bookBrowse.cfm>

To view his new book's Press Release, go to: [http://www.usba.net/BreakingNews/Byrne PressRelease-11-2-09.pdf](http://www.usba.net/BreakingNews/Byrne%20PressRelease-11-2-09.pdf)

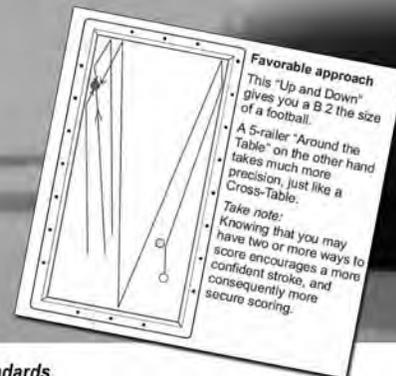
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After years of efforts to satisfy the high standards of the author we are pleased to offer this long-awaited translation into English. The discipline of Three-Cushion, considered by many to be the highest form of carom billiards, is explained, analyzed and discussed in great depth, supported by more than 800 graphic illustrations.

It addresses all elementary components of the game, and also presents innovative solutions to difficult positions. Sound technical advice is offered, in a work designed to improve every serious three-cushion player's game.



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