



The USBA Newsletter
3-Cushion Billiard News

www.USBA.net

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Fifth Annual Marti Tracy Memorial 3 Cushion Billiard Tournament

**by Mark Williams,
 Tournament Chairman**

The Fifth Annual Marti Tracy Memorial 3 Cushion Billiard Tournament, a USBA B/C Tour Event, took place again this year during the first weekend in October, at the Ashland Elks Lodge in Ashland, Oregon. As we did last year, this event was scheduled to follow the 54th Annual Southern Oregon Invitational 3 Cushion Billiard Tournament, a non-USBA team event that has been played annually since 1963.

This format allows the participants to choose to attend only the team tournament or the USBA singles tournament, or to attend both events stretching over nine days.

This year, in order to include as many players as possible, we moved the original limit from 32 players to 36. To make this work, we made a few adjustments to the schedule and we did manage to finish on time, but it required

more effort than usual both from the players and from those of us running the tournament, so I am unsure whether we will decide to exceed our 32 player limit next year.

Players were divided into four preliminary flights of nine players, with each flight consisting of players of mixed abilities, from C through B+. (One player dropped out at the last minute, so one flight ended up with 8 players.) The tournament format called for the top two B/B+ finishers in each flight to move into an eight-person single-elimination B final, and for the top two C/C+ finishers from each flight to move to an eight-person single-elimination C final. All games were played to 25 points with no handicaps, but when two C/C+ players were at the table, each would add 5 points to their string before they began in order to shorten the games so we could finish on time. All of the innings reported were later adjusted upwards to more accurately reflect the averages.



**Top, Final Four B Finalists: L to R: Robert Spicknall, Allen Castillo, Jesus Quinonez, Antonio Rivera
 Bottom, Final Four C Finalists: L to R: Rudy Vigil, Bob Horecky, Alfred Wenzl, Marc Smith**



Overall, the level of play was higher than it has ever been at this tournament. Twelve players had games with fewer than 30 innings, many of those turning in multiple excellent games. All together, there were 24 games played in 29 innings or less, and 17 of those games had 25 innings or less. Quite a showing for a B/C tournament!

At the B level, this tournament again drew many very strong players from both the Pacific Northwest and from Northern California. Allen Castillo, the young player from Northern California who won first place last year, again dominated in the finals, finishing in first place by winning his final two games in 21 and 18 innings. Allen was also undefeated in the prelim round and had the best grand average of 0.778. Jesus Quinonez, who plays at the Tacoma, WA Elks Lodge, came back from behind in the first finals round against Jose Castillo, Allen's father, who attended this event for the first time, and then Jesus finished the tournament in second place. Third place went to Antonio Rivera, who beat Robert Spicknall in a very tight finish. Antonio plays at Edgie's Billiards in Milpitas, CA, and Rob now plays at the Tacoma Elks Lodge. Besides taking 4th Place, Rob won the High Run prize in the B's with his run of 10.

In the C Finals, Marc Smith from the Ashland Elks Lodge finished first with single point wins in both of his last two matches. (Marc was hoping to make it through the entire tour-

namment in spite of an injury to his right shoulder, which was scheduled for corrective surgery the day after the tournament ended. Fortunately, his shoulder held up fine, and he reports that the surgery was a success.) Bob Horecky, who plays at Aurora Billiards in Colorado, finished second. Third place went to our own Rudy Vigil, who recently moved to Southern Oregon from the San Francisco Bay Area. Fourth place went to Alfred Wenzl, also of the Ashland Elks. Dave Ehlers, another of the eight finalists, again won the High Run prize in the C's with a 6 run, just as he had done the year before.

Thanks to all the players who participated, and to the members, officers, and staff of the Ashland Elks Lodge who hosted the event and provided such a friendly, comfortable venue for our tournament. Much gratitude is also owed to Bob Tracy, a continuing sponsor of this event, which is dedicated to the memory of his wife, Marti. Bob again donated \$3,000 to this year's tournament prize fund. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend this year due to poor health. Thanks are also due to Mazin Shooni, Merrill Hughes, and Tom Paley, officers of the US Billiard Association, which sponsored this tour event and provided matching donations for the prize fund, trophies, and a cue to raffle off. And finally, I personally want to thank Marc Smith and Tommy Thomsen for helping me run the tournament desk, and to everyone who pitched in to help with the event.

President's Desk

In two months, the USBA will hold the first of what will hopefully be many tournaments at the Casino Del Sol Resort, a luxury getaway in Tucson, Arizona. Starting January 16, 2017, the USBA and its official title sponsor, Gabriels, will hold a B Tournament followed immediately by an A Tournament at the Casino. Each tournament will accommodate 42 players and will be played on five Gabriels tables. The response has been fantastic, and both tournaments are fully enrolled. There is already a wait list.

In related news, the USBA will hold its 2017 national championship in 3-Cushion billiards at the Casino Del Sol Resort from June 6 to 11, 2017. There is a special room rate for the tournament. The Casino will also be offering other perks to make the players welcome and comfortable. More

information will be posted soon on our website (www.USBA.net).

Speaking of the USBA website, I am very happy to report that former Board member Doug Dietel has become the new webmaster. He has been working hard to improve our website's infrastructure and content. His work is readily apparent to anyone who has visited the site since November 1.

Finally, our membership drive has ended. As we had hoped, we had many members renew at the discounted rate, and, more importantly, we gained new members. More members! New tournaments! Billiards in America is looking up!

Have a happy holiday season, and I hope to see everyone in Tucson next year!



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GABRIELS



Kiss Backs are just Big Chocolate Chip Cookies

by Phil Panzera
Contributing Writer

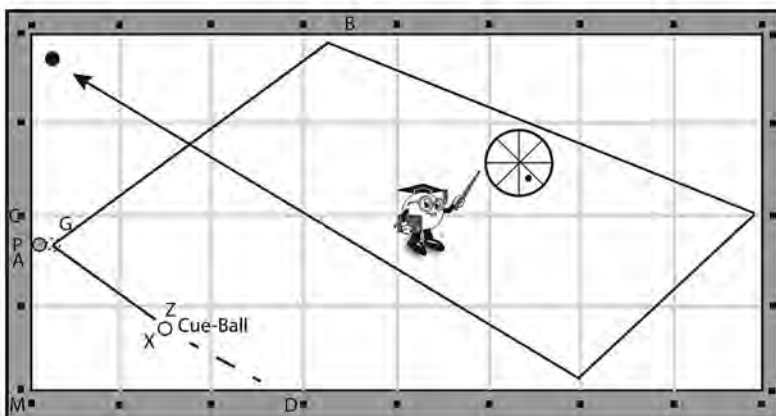


I rarely see room players play a kiss-back, but in actuality they're not difficult at all if they're "sitting good." Basically, if the first object ball (the yellow) is frozen to the rail you can predict the kiss-back angle accurately by just driving the yellow directly perpendicular into the rail, towards P. Then the cue ball (CB) angle leaving the first rail will be near identical to the angle into the rail.

To see whether the shot is "sitting good," just imagine a ghost ball at point G, and then find your first rail target. A good rule of thumb to come around to the corner (from the short rail) is to just add 1 to however far you are from the corner ($2.5+1=3.5$). This 1 addition varies from table to table, and will be a little lower the better the table. As you get closer to the corner, this additional amount gets gradually smaller, down to about $+0.7$ if leaving from the first diamond.

Then imagine a mirror angle back towards the CB (it is best to do this standing at point P). The first rail line is from A to B, so you determine the line C-D, where D is also $+1$ more than C (here about 1.9 and 2.9 from corner M). If the CB happens to be on or near the CD line (as it is here), you should run to the table to gobble up this delicious cookie. If the CB is a little to the left of C-D (at X), then just drive the yellow a hair to the right of P (or a hair to the left of P if leaving from point Z).

Kiss-backs are almost always struck with a low ball (although high can be used to bend the CB if necessary). You also generally want some running English. Don't think you have to whack this! All you need (and usually want for better posi-



tion) is just a touch more than the same speed you would use if the yellow wasn't there, and you were just rolling the CB four rails to the red.

If you're a 600 player or under, I suggest not aiming immediately with English. Aim with center ball, and take extra time to make sure you're driving the yellow precisely perpendicular into the rail. Then just parallel over a bit and give it low right.

Finally, you can still play this shot if the yellow is slightly off the rail, but it's noticeably harder. You have to allow for the CB to travel a tiny bit to the right before the object ball rebounds, so you aim a very tiny bit to the left of the hit-point when frozen. To see some advanced (and pretty!) kiss-backs, check out the "Kissbacks" video on my ROCKETCEO YouTube channel (with special guest appearance by top player Gilbert Najm).

Hugo Patino the 2016 Pan-American Individual 3-Cushion Champion.

Three players from the USA were sent to the Pan-American Championships this year. Hugo Patino topped a field of 64 players from the Americas to win the 2016 Pan-American individual 3-cushion championship. The tournament was held this year in Lima, Peru from September 24-26. Patino had recently won his third USBA National 3-Cushion title. With momentum from his March USBA championship performance, Patino was able to win all his matches on his way to taking his first individual Pan-American crown. He had previously won the Team Championship title in '13 with partner Mazin Shooni.

Three players from the USA were sent to the Pan-American Championships this year. Joining Hugo Patino were 8-time USBA National Champion and 2016 USBA runner-up Pedro Piedrabuena and Michael Kang. Michael, as you may know, is not only a top player himself, but is also owner of the famous Carom Cafe Billiards in Flushing, New York.

With steady play and a combination of both offense and defense, it was all Patino who breezed to a 40-21 victory. His 20 inning final match with a solid 2.000 performance earned Hugo the well-deserved championship crown.



Pedro, Hugo & Michael Kang

Tables are now on sale and offered to first come buyers at a discounted price.



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**Ricardo Carranco, Wins the George
Theobald Memorial Tournament
Chris's Billiards Chicago, IL**

20 players - 4 Group of 5

2-Advance from each flight and 2 best 3rd place finishers going into a 10-man Round Robin.

Payout

1st \$1,725 Ricardo Carranco 2nd \$1,300 Luis Parra
3rd \$900 Manuel Figueroa 4th \$575 Vickie Pineda
5th \$300 Paul Navarrete



Upcoming USBA Tournaments

December 2-4, 2016

Dick Takano Memorial USBA Open Tournament
Tacoma Elks Lodge No.174- Tacoma Washington
(253) 272-1117 Ed Brasfield, bfasteddie@aol.com

March 9-12th 2017

The Rushville Spring Professor-Q-Ball 3-Cushion
First 32 Players - Entry Fee is \$150.00. Contact: Gary Eake
(920) 420-1304

March 30 to April 2 2017

Professor-Q-Ball presents at the Super Billiard Expo a
USBA National Qualifier.
Also 3-Cushion events in the evenings - Contact Paul
Frankel (901) 210 7251

June 6-11

USBA 2017 National Championships will be held at the
Del Sol Casino, Tucson, Az. Any room that wants to hold a
3-Cushion National Qualifier Contact Mazin Shooni right
away at: (248) 910-4466

The Professor-Q-Ball Fall 2016 3-Cushion Tournament

On Thursday October 13th, 2016 3-Cushion Billiard Players from 11 states converged on Rushville, Illinois to battle for fame and fortune.

The Preliminaries featured 30 players, two brackets of 8 players and two brackets of 7 players. One player was seeded in each bracket (Fred Lamers, Lupe Cruz, George Ashby & Brian Haff). Two players advanced from each bracket to an 8-man Round Robin Finals.

Noel Mendoza donated a beautiful \$850.00 "Schuler Cue by Noel Mendoza" to be raffled off. The raffle generated \$960.00 to the Prize Fund. Fred Lamers was the lucky winner of the Schuler Cue by Noel Mendoza.

Four rounds of the 8-Player Finals were completed Saturday afternoon and evening with the last three rounds of the finals wrapping up about 2:30 p.m. Sunday. The Awards ceremony transpired immediately thereafter.

BRACKET A: The A-Bracket featured the always-strong Fred Lamers (seeded), Felipe Razon who is always a contender and never to be overlooked Jim Bishop. In A-Bracket Lamers had the Best Game average "twice" of 20 points in 13 innings to Avg. 1.538. He also had a high run of 6 but remarkably could only muster 3rd place in the bracket. The aforementioned Jim Bishop played strong and consistent throughout the bracket to go undefeated 7-0 and claimed the top spot. Felipe Razon took 2nd edging out Lamers on points scored 135 to Lamer's 132. Razon and Lamers both had 5-2 records and Bishop and Razon had high runs of 7. Bracket Average 0.419.

BRACKET B: The B-Bracket featured the gentle giant killer from Des Moines IA, Lupe Cruz (seeded) who easily captured 1st in the bracket going 7-0. 2nd Place went to Rick Schryack, a local Rushville area contender playing in his first 3-C tournament ever. Shryack topped the evenly matched remainder of the B-Bracket with a 4-2 record and 107 total points, which included the bracket high run of 6. Cruz also captured the B-Bracket Best Game average of 1.250 with 20 points in 18 innings for a Avg. 1.250. His high run was 5. USBA Secretary Tom Paley took 3rd. Bracket Average 0.368.

BRACKET C: Tournament Host George Ashby (seeded) easily dominated the C-Bracket allowing only 56 Points Against to be scored collectively by his 6 opponents. The 8-time former National Champ delivered a Best Game average of 1.429 and a Grand Average for the bracket of 0.930. A rela-

tive newcomer to 3-C from Minneapolis, John Logan, garnered 2nd in the C-Bracket losing to Ashby and only by 3 points. Chicago gentleman Luis Milan went 3-3 with two of his losses on the hill. Milan placed 3rd. Bracket Average was 0.485.

BRACKET D: The D-Bracket was a real dogfight right to



Felipe Razon, Lupe Cruz, George Ashby

the end. Brian Haff, who was seeded, was one of four players in this 8-man bracket that went 5-2 but with a 20 to 6 trouncing by James Richards Mr. Haff barely captured 3rd place by just 2 points. James Richards placed 1st with a most impressive performance against his very talented competition. James lost 18-20 to Tournament Sponsor Professor-Q-Ball Paul Frankel and 19-20 to Madison Wisconsin's finest, Nam Cho who placed 2nd in the D-Bracket. Bracket Average was 0.402.

FINALS: The 25-Point Final Matches began promptly at 4:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon and Lupe Cruz was ready. Cruz literally "cruised" over the competition going undefeated. His journey featured a Best Game Average of 1.190 and Grand Average of 0.774. High Run of 8. 2nd place Felipe Razon was the player to come within striking distance of Cruz. Even though he also had a Best Game Average of 1.190 and a better Grand Average of 0.800 Razon lost to Cruz 22-25. George Ashby finished a very strong 3rd and John Logan grabbed 4th. The Bracket Average was 0.544. Not bad for a quaint little town in southern Illinois.

Our Thanks and Appreciation to all of the following who contribute money, time, food or labor to make the Rushville

Tournaments continually successful: Steve Jones-building owner, Professor-Q-Ball's National Pool & 3-Cushion News by Paul Frankel - lead sponsor, Green Gables Motel - sponsor, Carson Klitz - Mayor of Rushville & Bob Keller - Gabriel's Table, George Ashby & Rich Shryack- table installations, maintenance and recovery, Noel Mendoza - Cue Donations, Dale Saunder - computer program design and data entry, United States Billiard Association and David Levine, Nam Cho - cash donation, Mickey Campbell - cash donation, Dennis Dieckman - Ernie Presto Sportsmanship Award, George Theobald Estate - Hi-Run Prizes (In & Out of the Money), All the players who continue to support the Rushville Events and keep Three-Cushion Billiards alive and well in Mid-America.

FINALS	BISHOP	CRUZ	ASHBY	RAZON	RICHARDS	LOGAN	CHO	SHRYACK	WINS	LOSSES	TOTAL POINTS	TOTAL INNINGS	GRAND AVERAGE	HIGH RUN	BEST GAME	FINAL RANKING
JAMES BISHOP	21	5	17	11	25	19	20	25	2	5	122	230	0.530	5	0.810	6
LUPE CRUZ	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	7	0	175	226	0.774	8	1.190	1
GEORGE ASHBY	25	14	21	25	25	25	25	25	5	2	160	200	0.800	6	1.136	3
FELIPE RAZON	25	22	25	25	25	25	25	25	6	1	172	215	0.800	7	1.190	2
JAMES RICHARDS	16	11	22	10	25	25	25	25	3	4	134	312	0.429	6	0.815	5
JOHN LOGAN	44	16	17	13	17	27	25	25	3	4	138	289	0.478	6	0.926	4
NAM CHO	25	10	16	5	22	16	25	25	2	5	119	252	0.472	6	0.862	7
RICK SHRYACK	10	9	10	15	20	15	15	15	0	7	94	324	0.290	4	0.441	8
Points Against	151	87	132	100	159	150	160	175	TOURNAMENT AVERAGE:			0.544				

Prize Breakdown:

- 1st - Lupe Cruz - \$1,100,
- 2nd - Felipe Razon - \$900
- 3rd - George Ashby - \$800,
- 4th - John Logan - \$700
- 5th - James Richards - \$550,
- 6th - James Bishop - \$450
- 7th - Nam Cho - \$375,
- 8th - Rich Shryack - \$215.00
- 9th - Fred Lamers - \$100,
- 10th - Luis Milan - \$100

- Hi-Run in the Money Lupe Cruz - \$75
- Hi-Run out of the Money \$75
- Ernie Presto Sportsmanship Award George Ashby - \$50

USBA Presents

Special Attraction Artistic 3-Cushion Billiards



Professor-Q-Ball



January 21st, 2017

Miguel Torres and Mazin Shooni USBA Champions
Both will demonstrate the art of 3-cushion Artistic Billiards

Don't miss this unique presentation

