



The Snooker Gym's Email Coaching Files.

This is a collection of email question and answers that I provided for my clients before we had The Snooker Gym Coaching Forum up as part of the bronze membership.

They give an idea of the kind of responses you would get if we were to talk together to help your game on the forum.

I hope you enjoy these answers as much as I enjoyed providing them, and that we can meet face to face one day.

Sincerely,

Nic Barrow.

AIMING:

Hi D

Hope your nerve gets better soon.
Have you gone to the forum yet?
There is a lot of info there on your sighting issue.
But basically if you want to not aim easily every time then get involved with trying to judge 1/2 and 1/4 ball angles etc.
I cant do it and Ive made 147!
In fact there is never any need to do it.
If you disagree please give me one situation where you would need to know whether you are hitting 1/4 or 1/2 or 3/4..
The fact is you never actually need to know the angle, but you do need to be able to see the back of the ball.
Your brain then judges the angle (with improved results over time) based on experience.

Hi Nic,

Again, thank you very much for offering to give me advise on the phone.

My biggest problem is potting between \ddot{Y} - and α -balls. I always struggle in seeing the right angle and then finding the right spot of aim on the contact ball. Therefore, I practice \ddot{Y} -ball on brown with screw, stun and follow-through to get position on blue. Unfortunately, I can just pot something like 6 out of 10 brown balls. Another exercise is the ?cutting circle? around the black spot: from α -ball above black to α -ball below black. Again, the \ddot{Y} -balls take the most effort even though they should be somehow simple.

I have tried to find a mathematical solution for that by calculating the angles the object ball will travel after impact. (Since you can construct a right angle triangle with all side length determined by the balls diameter and the overlapping distance of the balls centres; α -ball: 48.6° , α -ball: 30.0° , \ddot{Y} -ball: 14.5°) I have tried to map this angles on a clock face (1h units are 30°) but failed to realise the angels on the table.

However, I have gone back to book 3 and the corresponding DVDs and have worked on the comfortable principle of my stance, bridge arm and hand. I am applying that to potting a straight blue from the spot into the corner pocket with the white on the baulk line using maximum screw and follow-through.

Best wishes,
D

Hi D

Finding the Back of The Ball (BOB) is very simple.

It should be done when you are stood up.

Don't get down to the shot before you can see the exact BOB.

Don't stand behind the object ball to do this - do it standing behind the object ball as this is the line and angle you will be playing the shot from.

To make it simpler, just when you watch someone else's game and you are sitting down, practice looking at and finding the BOB to a certain pocket on every ball on this table.

Give yourself one second to find it and if you don't then move on to the next ball. Keep going until you can find the Bob quickly on any and every shot without thinking. It is not complicated.

If you can only pot 6/10 browns then playing long blues are too difficult for you and your cue ball should be much closer to the blue.

You should never practice something that you achieve LESS than 5 or 6 out of ten because you won't learn that much. Make it a bit easier so you get at least some benefit.

Also don't play that shot with maximum screw as it is not achieving anything apart from ruining your soft shots. Play a stop shot at most. You never really need to screw this ball back anyway and if you do then it probably means you are playing with too much power to keep control.

Master the soft shots - power shots and nice cueing are easier.

Practice power shots - learn nothing and ruin your touch!

Also mathematics has NO PLACE in snooker and should be left in the science laboratory.

No professional thinks about angles.

They go by their judgement and experience.

They did not get this judgement and experience by working out the angles.

They did it by just playing the shots.

The other thing you must remember is that you have to know if you did not pot the ball due to:

Aiming not correct

Cueing not going through straight

Technique wobbly

Trying to think of cue ball position

Concentration/pressure/anger!

You don't always miss the ball by aiming.

If you cannot or will not diagnose the answer to the above question then you have no clue what happened, and therefore cannot improve.

You WILL miss balls - but please just work out what you need to do better to pot it next time to make sure you learn from every shot.

MOTIVATION:

Hello Mohamed
Congratulations again on your great victory.

Here are the four questions your team promised to complete before traveling:

When you have potted the winning ball to win the Championships, then directly after the match and also when you go back to your home country,

1. What WILL happen if you WIN?
2. What WILL NOT happen if you WIN?
3. What WILL happen if you DO NOT WIN?
4. What WILL NOT happen if you DO NOT WIN?

Think of these questions VERY carefully and keep them with each player in their pocket so they can add answers to each one as the ideas come to their mind.

Remember only 10% of people in the world have any target in their life. If you all have the very clear target of potting the winning ball in this tournament you are in this 10%.

But in this 10% of people, only 1% know WHY they must have what they want. Knowing the answers to the above questions will put you in this 1%.

But the reasons must be so huge (remember I told you about my sister) that nothing can or will stop you.

It is answers of this power and strength that will let you feel totally satisfied after you came back from the Championships that you gave every millimeter of your effort – if you pot the winning ball or not.

Don't stop answering these questions with the boys until they have these kind of powerful answers and if anyone can not find any tell him not to bother going!

One other tip – with the players we mentioned if you make a fluke and act as if you played the shot, they can get angry!

Let me know you get this email.

Nic

THANKS AND HOPE:

Hi Nic,
got your DVDs, and books for which I thank you. Hopefully this time next year (at the ripe age of 62) I will become THE world champion by watching your videos and reading your books. Once again thanks.
Best regards Jack..

Thanks Jack
(PS the watching unfortunately is only the 5% - the DOING of what's in them is the 95%!)
If you have any questions on your game I am offering my Silver Membership Forum free until 25th June when I launch my new products.
Find it at www.thesnookergym.com/forums
Nic

AIMING:

Hello Nic,

(NIC'S REPLIES IN CAPITAL LETTERS BELOW)

Nic - Analyzed the 'Potting Angle vs Object Ball Contact' table from your book, and based on my calculations analysis (my background is in Physics and Engineering from the University, and I've worked on Space Programs) show the following cut angles:

- o 0.5 ball-hit fraction = 30.0 degrees
- o 0.25 ball-hit fraction = 48.59 degrees
- o 0.75 ball-hit fraction = 14.478 degrees

MOST THINK IT IS 30,45 AND 15!

The numbers match up so we are on the correct Billiards science principles. If you like, In the future we can discuss the cue ball final deflected angle based on the potting angles.

THIS DEPENDS ON POWER, HUMIDITY, CLOTH, CLEANLINESS OF BALLS, PURITY OF SPIN ON BALL ETC.

However, these extended principles are more important to Professional Billiard Coaches like ourselves to know than to Professional players during competition.

YES – KNOWING THIS HELPS US TO HELP OTHERS. HELPING OTHERS IS NOT NECESSARILY FILLING THEM WITH INFORMATION!

I do not believe that players like Stephen Hendry when he won his seventh World Championship was calculating angles as a science. Let me know your thoughts on this and if you agree with this philosophy.

ITS ALL JUDGEMENT WITH THEM

Anyway, I'm looking forward to continue to work with you. Also, I would like to commend you on your DVD production quality (I've only analyzed 1 & 2 at this time) and 'Professionalism'! It is organized and presented in a very Professional manner.

Mr J.

THANKYOU MY FRIEND.

IT TOOK EIGHT YEARS TO PLAN, EIGHT DASYS TO FILM AND EIGHT MONTHS TO EDIT!

BEING A COACH:

Nic,

Why I wanna be a coach for the normal player?

I think I have to start their. Seeing and learning from them (and with them) and to watch them grow. I think that's the best gift for a snooker teacher can get. And maybe I'm lucky enough to get a normal student where I can make a champion off. You never know !!

Why do you ask ? Do you find it strange ?

M

Dear M,

I want to know WHY because as Ronnie Coleman says: "Everyone wants to have a great body, but ain't no one want to lift no heavy ass weights!"

I don't care about the what my clients tell me. I care about the why.

That will tell me if they will do it or not, and therefore I will know if I should work with them because I will know what results they will get.

Keep watching the DVDs and if you want to book me over for say two days (you and one other person ok) we can go a lot deeper into your game and get you ready for the coaches programme later on if you want.

Then we can video you and do some dartfish videos for your game like on the website.

I will then work with you after this on email etc to support you in getting your targets.

Let me know if you want to do that and also tell me what happened on Saturday and are you married.

I hope she came to the church!

Nic

ABOUT COACHING:

Hi Nic,
(Nic in bold below)

If I understand you good your goal in life is the learn the people play snooker who really need it, so that you can learn to from them. And if these people are amazed they tell their friends and than you can learn them to ? Is that correct ?

Yes

That's a nice way to earn your money, you help people good and see the world.

Yes - its also what i am best at in life. So I should do this!

It is a waste of someones time if they are just half interested in something

I'm 27 now and I have a great job.

What is it.

I know enough people that you can help, but I think they don't got enough money to pay you. Also they don't think they need help if you know what I mean. But I can cure them, I'm sure. I think I've got the same vision like you : first I want to be good enough you will never be good enough or totally 'ready' - so start now!

I first helped people before i made 50 break! I help people and then when I'm really sure I really want to help them to play snooker like it should be played. Help the normal players !!!

I have enough spare time to learn for becoming a snooker coach and to be a snooker coach. The question is that I'm good enough. I'm smart enough, that's not the problem but being smart is not enough.

What is IBSF , and is that degree also valid here?

The International Billiards & Snooker Association is valid all over the world!

Can I use it to be a coach here, does in count?

Yes - it will help you to market your services and get more clients.

My girlfriend name is.... and I love her with all my hart,
Nice

Kind regards
M

BEING A PLAYER:

Hi Nic,
(NIC IN BOLD BELOW)

It's true that it gets very 'clinical' sometimes at home but I always play with the radio on so never in complete silence.
RADIO IS A BIT TOO PREDICTABLE AND NOT LIKE SILLY PEOPLE WALKING IN FORNT ON YOUR SHOT WHEN YOU HAVE A PINK ON 94!

There are bigger tallents in the world that maybe need your advice or is that not important for you?

I PREFER WORKING WITH COMMITTED PEOPLE MORE THAN A WORLD CHAMPION WHO IS NOT COMMITTED AND WANTS TO JUST WALK ALONG AND COLLECT MONEY (COS THEN I DO NOT LEARN ANYTHING AND CANNOT HELP THEM GROW LIKE CRAZY SO THEIR FRIENDS ARE CONVINCED I CAN ALSO HELP THEM!)

I WANT TO LEAVE A LEGACY BEHIND ME OF PEOPLE WHO LOVE TH EGAME, WANTED TO LEARN AND REALLY 'KICKED ASS' AND TRANSFORMED THEIR GAME – OR I GIVE THE MONEY BACK!

OTHERWISE WE CAN DO TWO OR THREE DAYS TOGETHER – SAY ***GBP PER DAY (MONEY BACK IF NOT TOTALLY AMAZED AND SATISFIED IN EVERY SINGLE WAY!)

BEING A PLAYER, AND IMPROVING...

Hi Nic,

The books and DVD's are very good. I have made notes with the DVD's. I have seen 1 till 6.

The most difficult is creating a consistent movement (straight) at the cue ball.

I HAVE BEEN LEARNING TO PLAY LEFT HANDED AT THE MOMENT.

THE ONLY WAY I CAN MOVE STRAIGHT IS BY MOVING THE CUE AS SLOW AS A SNAIL.

OVER A FEW WEEKS OR MONTHS IT WILL GET A BIT QUICKER.

I LOOK LIKE AN IDIOT DOING THIS BUT I DON'T CARE BECAUSE I HAVE CONTROL!

It all starts from there. And that's difficult; Practice and practice and practice....

The OPP is a good trick and some of your videos really helped me.

First I'm gonna read and watch everything and then I'm gonna interpretate all the things. Because it's so much...

TAKES NOTES AND MAKE QUESTIONS.

I WILL BE OPENING A FORUM SOON – MAY BE PAID IN A MEMBERSHIP AREA BUT NOW ADDING TO MY BLOG SLOWLY SO SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS CAN BE ANSWERED THERE.

Then I'm gonna set up my training starting with basics of course. And then learning from my mistakes.. like you say : seeing is learning!!

How many days or hours do you think I have to train a week to make progress??

4-6 HOURS MINIMUM

I have a snooker table at home so that's easy.

BIG TABLE?

But too much is also not good and too little...

TOO MUCH WITHOUT FOCUS IS WORSE THAN TOO LITTLE WITH FOCUS

Or is this different from person to person?

If you got more tips... let them come...

How do I have to sign up with the course?

GO TO WWW.THESNOOKERGYM.COM SIGN UP FOR THE COURSE ON THE FRONT PAGE!

COACHING PRINCIPLES:

Hi,

I have some questions for Nick.

On the ibsf website following is mentioned about the coaching. Are all of the four coaching techniques mentioned below included in his video or books. If I buy the books or video will it tell me something different than what is mentioned on the some of the snooker coaching websites? Also I live in US. how much would it charge for shipping here in US. Also there is ibsf world team championship in San Jose in US this year. would all the material mentioned on the website be available there?

Let me know. Thanks.

- The world's most powerful learning techniques your student's body can use to acquire all the skill they need. One of these techniques was used to teach a ten year old newcomer to the game how to deliver the cue like a pro in sixty seconds!
- The quintet of first session checks you must make, to save you hours of guaranteed frustration later on down the road if these checks aren't made...
- The four vital elements to any coaching session, and what order to place them in... get one of these steps wrong and it will be like dialing an incorrect phone number.
- Three completely counter-intuitive coaching methods that seem to make no sense but will work faster in helping your clients than anything you have ever seen before.

Mr S

S,

Yes to all the above!

-Nic

THE SECRET:

From: Michael

Dear Nic, yes the break will continue to grow as I learn more and develop consistency. I used to think there was some "big" secret that good players had and did not share with new players. Now I think that's just daft.

Michael

The secret is that there is no secret!

Nic

POTTING:

Subject: Potting

Dear Nic,
(NIC IN CAPS BELOW)

I have had a quick read of all of the books and they look quite good. I have a question for you though: If my cue action, judgement of power, and choice of shot, are about 95% there (An A grade player thinks they are) what else can I do to improve my potting?
PLAY POTS THAT ARE AT 80% OF YOUR ABILITY (IE YOU SHOULD POT 8/10)
PLAY EXACTLY THE SAME SHOT IN BATCHES OF TEN.
RECORD YOUR PROGRESS!
WHEN YOU GET TO 9/10 CONSISTENTLY, MAKE THE SHOT A BIT HARDER
IE INCREASE ANGLE OR ISTANCE A BIT.
THEN KEEP PLAYING IN BATCHES OF TEN.
BORING AND UNEXCITING BUT THE ONLY WAY!
THIS WILL UP YOUR CONSISTENCY WHICH IS THE ONLY THING YOU NEED
NOW - BOTHIGN MORE THAN THIS.

The scenario is that I do a line up routine, with only 5 reds and the black potting a red then a black and starting over when I miss. The white ball spot is marked, and I have this terrible problem of once I miss on say the second black, that I will subsequently miss the first red (despite having just been able to pot it).
REDS AND BLACKS ARE TOO ADVANCED FOR YOU AT PRESENT - WORK
WITH THRER REDS AND THREE PINKS UNTIL YOU CAN DO THAT
CONSISNTENTLY THEN ADD REDS ONE BY ONE

I realise that you have said that it should come over time (but in the last six months I have made no improvement in this part of my game, and whoever I ask has no idea of what I can do to improve).
OF COURSE THEY CANT - THAT'S WHAT IM HERE FOR!

I am able to identify where I should hit the object ball, but have no reliable approach to understanding where the white must hit it. I have tried ghost ball, etc etc, and none have helped.
POTTING IS ONLY GUESSWORK - READ THE AIMING BOOK TOTALLY!

Subject: Re: Potting

Dear Nic,
thanks for the reply. I have read the book entirely and with practise I shall get there.

IT'S THE ONLY WAY!
PETER EBDON ETC ARE STILL IMPROVING THEIR OWN GAME WITH EVERY
SHOT THEY PLAY....

MORE ON POTTING AND AIMING:

Dear Nic,

thanks for these, I have listened to one of them and there is much to learn from them.
I have an issue though.

I have lost the last six comp matches as I cannot make any improvement in my potting.
YOU CAN. JUST DON'T KNOW HOW YET!□

I have realised that if I determine the line through the object ball, and am able to keep my eye on, that I cannot simply hit the white to that spot as it will be to think a hit. I have spent 7 hours a day practising the things you suggested, to no avail.

DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS. LOOK AT THE BACK OF THE BALL AND RELY ON GUESSWORK. IF THE CUE HAS GONE STRAIGHT AND YOU MISS, YOUR GUESS WORK IS NOT YET REFINED ENOUGH.

DVD'S COMING OUT SOON THAT WILL EXPLAIN ALL THIS VERY WELL!□

And it is doing my head in.

I KNOW THE FEELING.

I have tried to put the white ball, with chalk marks, around the blue ball as you recommended. I have moved on to the next shot when I fail it to may time and so on. The worry I have is that even when I get one angle right, move on to the next, and return to the "good shot" I miss more often than not.

ONLY MOVE TO THE NEXT ANGLE WHEN YOU POT 9 OUT OF TEN ON ONE ANGLE.

My safety game is improving out of sight, and people at the club are amazed at how well I am able to do that, and just as amazed that I fail to pot easy balls. They have looked over the stance, the cue action, and all agree that it is mostly there (translation, not much wrong with it but on some shots there is a small amount of movement, but that does not account for the percentage of misses I get). I am potting at about 15% success and 85% fail rate at the moment.

I would estimate that poor cueing contributes to about 5% of my misses.

I WOULD PROBABLY DIFFER IN OPINION IF I SAW YOU PLAY. MAY BE MORE OR LESS.

I have become quite frustrated, and am even considering not playing again (I have even withdrawn from the comp team).

I KNOW THE FEELING!

Is there any thing I can do to improve the percentages of my pots?

SEE ABOVE!

Perhaps if you could relate to me how it is that you know the right angle, what you look for and the like, for I have become disconsolate by the whole thing.

PURE GUESSWORK. LIKE A CHILD LEARNING TO WRITE, THE SKILL IS ALWAYS BEING REFINED – MY DOCTOR CAN LEARN FROM THIS AS WELL ON THE HANDWRITING FRONT!

'BREAKING MY CUE UP':

Dear Mr W

I liked when you said you want to break up your cue!!!!

LOOOOOOL

I know the feeling

But I never did it in the end.

Eventually when you understand the game better this feeling will fade away.

Most pros don't find it hard to look at the back of the ball because they are not focused on controlling the cue like you are now - they moved past that and when you become automatically good at controlling your cue action you will be more comfortable at this also - int eh meantime it is ok to do what you are doing if it gives you a greater sense of control - just be open to this shifting naturally in the future.

Nic

DECIDING ON A CUE:

F

the actual reason why im sending this email is that i need your help to decide on cue. im looking for a new cue. currently im using o'min classic cue (10mm tip). need your advise here on how to choose a cue. should i go for 10mm or 9-9.5mm? whether it's maple or ash.. which one is better? i m considering buying parris cue. what do you think? thank you.

best regards.

Hi F!

Thanks for getting in touch again.

Re the cue: I think a 10mm is a bit big to easily get spin and 9mm too small to see the centre of the cue ball.

9.5 is what most pros seem to go for.

Ash or maple is only personal preference.

John Parris is great but with any new cue you cannot feel it before you buy it. So if you can go to Johns shop in London and pick a few cues up I would always prefer this.

If you don't mind waiting a few months for the cue to come or taking the risk of the cue not being perfect from the beginning (you should get used to it even if it is not perfect for you in the beginning) then order one – you cant buy better than John!

Also keep picking cues up as you see them and you may find one that feels perfect – just make sure it is a bit long and not a bit short – that extra half inch/inch on the end of the cue coming out from your grip hand will help you hold the cue nicely at the end of the backswing (otherwise the fingers will be hanging in the air at the end of the backswing and not controlling the cue).

Nic