

at the far end. Then a second disk B is aimed at the first disk but is played to stop about a foot short of the first disk.

By carefully and intently watching the sideward movement of the shooting disk, shown curving to the left in Figure 234, especially at the end of its movement, the player uses the first disk as an assistance in judging the number of inches of sideward movement.

Several such shots along this line are desirable, and a rough

average may be taken as a standard figure for the drift along the line.

If the shooting disk fails to stop short of the first disk and hits it, the shot should be disregarded, as it indicates nothing.

Whenever practicable the drift should be determined by shooting at targets along several lines, Figure 234, such as the axis or center line of the court to X, the extreme outer sides of the court to V and Z, and between the center line and the outer lines to

W and Y. This makes five test lines across the court. Most of the lines should be diagonal. Two additional lines along the court sides may well be added, through T and U.

The drift should be determined separately for each end of the court.

On strange courts it is well also to ask those familiar with the courts about the existence, direction and amount of drift, or more simply which color to select.

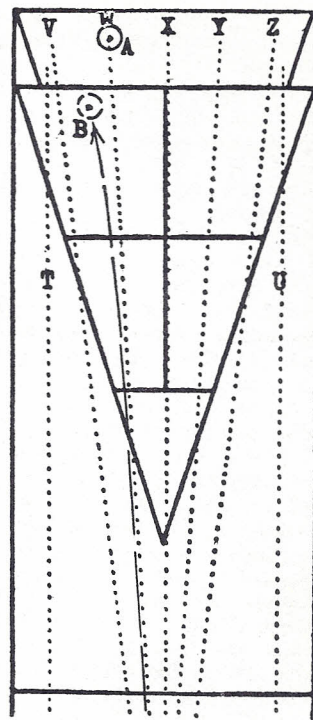


Figure 234

PART 120: COURT PECULIARITIES (E) DRIFT

On a drifty court the shooting disk does not go to the point at which it is aimed. Hence precautions must be taken to insure that the disk does go to the right spot.

CORRECTION FOR DRIFT. Having determined the direction and amount of drift, the general method of correction is to aim by a corresponding amount toward the side opposite the drift.

For example, suppose that in Figure 235 the shooter Red, on the right, wishes to place a disk at B, and that the drift is six inches to the left. He should therefore aim at a point P, six inches to the right of target spot B. The swerve of the disk will then lead the disk to the desired spot.

Also, because the amount and even the direction of drift may be different in different parts of the court, the shuffler must re-

member these differences and make corresponding corrections for them.

FAST SHOT. When the shooter is playing a fast shot, the drift will be less. When there is a three-inch drift with a slow shot, the drift for a fairly fast shot may amount to about one inch. Similarly a six-inch drift might be reduced to about two inches. These drifts have not been measured; they are merely estimated.

Suppose that the shooter plays to spoil kitchen disk C, Figure 235. The normal aiming point is at one edge of the kitchen disk at W, as shown in Figures 235 and 236. (See also Part 81.)

With the six-inch drift assumed for the court in Figure 235, and

with this drift reduced to about two inches for a fast shot to clear the kitchen, the aiming point would be about two inches to the right of W, as at V.

GENTLE HIT. For a gentle hit, such as one to put E in the kitchen, Figure 235, with the same assumed drift of six inches to the left, approximately the full six-inch correction should be made. For a full hit this means using an aiming point at R, six inches to the right of the ordinary aiming point.

However, such shots should be selected only with caution and played with care when the drift is as wide as six inches. It has frequently happened that a shot to put a disk in the kitchen has drifted past the target disk without hitting it and has itself stopped in the kitchen. See parts 72, 111-114 and 122.

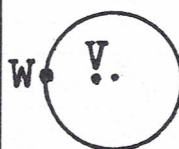


Figure 236

PART 121: COURT PECULIARITIES (F) DRIFT

The effect of drift is especially important when shooting past a guard to hide a disk beyond it, in fact this aspect of drift often decides the outcome of shuffleboard matches.

In Figure 237 assume again a drift of six inches to the left. The shuffler on the right can hide a disk at B beyond the guard disk A with greater ease than on a normal court. The aiming point P is six inches to the right of the desired stopping point B.

The shooting disk is aimed at

P, and has a wide margin for missing the guard A, yet it curves around into position at B, beyond and in line with A.

Yet the situation is not without its hazards for this player, for if he fails to adjust his aiming point to P and forgetfully uses a normal aiming point at B as for a driftless court, his shooting disk is liable to curve into the guard A and spoil the shot as well as the guard.

AGAINST THE DRIFT. For

the other player, on the left, the difficulties are great. Suppose he wants to hide a disk at Y, directly beyond the guard E. If he aims at the point Y, the drift will cause the shooting disk to swerve to the left and its eventual stopping place at X will be six inches to the left of point Y, and not hidden by the guard E.

In order to stop at point Y, the aiming point is theoretically at Z, six inches to the right of Y, but this would throw the curved shooting line so far to the right

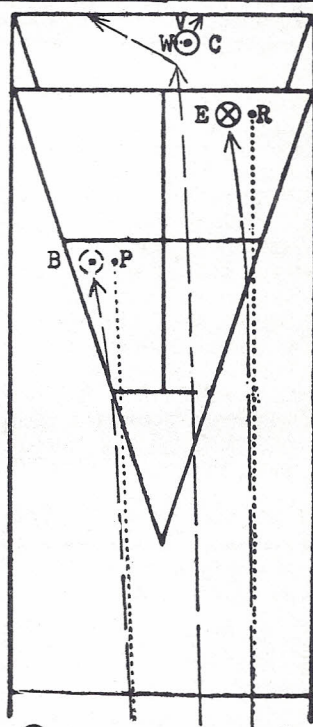


Figure 235

as to strike the guard E, as shown, and this would be an impossible shot with the six-inch drift. For a three-inch drift, hiding at Y might be barely possible, but there would be such a small margin of space in pass-

ing E that the chances of hiding would be poor.

It would be preferable in the first place to try to hide in the 7-area, as at V, using an aiming point at W. With the six-inch drift this shot might be just barely possible, but there are chances that the shooting disk would swerve into the open at or near U or hit the guard E in passing.

In making this shot it might be desirable to direct the shooting disk at some point, as R, at or close to the left edge of the guard E, expecting that the disk would drift to the left and pass by it without hitting it, then moving on to the desired hiding point. However, it is usually best to keep the eye on a suitable aiming point near the target spot, as discussed in Part 38.

Another difficulty of the shuffler who has the drift against him is that if the guard disk were at F-1, Figure 238, leaving

only about four to six inches between the guard and the point of the triangle, and if an attempt were made by Black to hide beyond the guard F-1, the drift would probably send the shooting disk onto the center line as at G, with consequent failure of the shot.

CROSS-GUARD WIDE. In order to improve his chances of hiding, the player who has the drift against him should place his cross-guards more widely from the point of the triangle, as at F-2.

In contrast, the player favored by the drift is not inconvenienced for hiding if his cross-guards happen to be placed somewhat close to the center of the court, as at B in Figure 238.

A related effect of the drift is that the shuffler favored by the drift, again assumed as being six inches toward the left, Figure 239, has a better chance of hid-

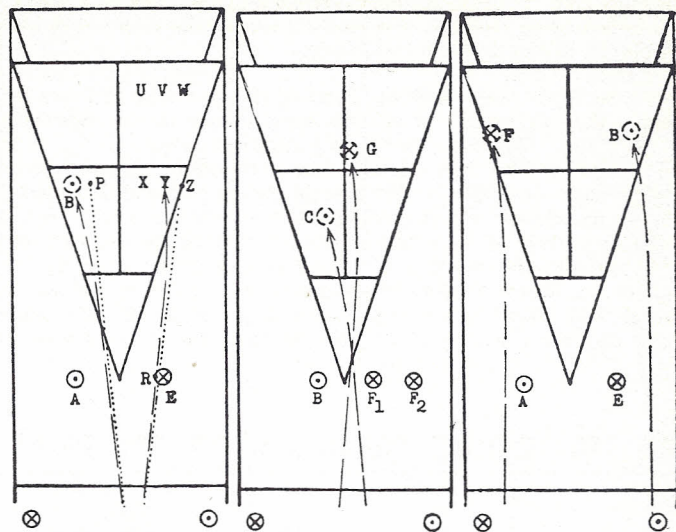


Figure 237 Figure 238 Figure 239

ing along the outer edge of the court on his own side (Part 39) similarly trying to hide near F at or near B, while the opponent has little chance to do so.

PART 122: COURT PECULIARITIES (G) DRIFT

In shooting past a guard to hit and spoil a partly hidden disk beyond it, if there is drift the result will vary with the speed of the shot.

For a fast shot, as we have seen, the drift is materially reduced. On a court which has a drift of about six inches for a slow shot, the effect on a fast shot may be reduced to one, two or three inches, depending upon the speed used. For this reduced drift, some adjustment of aiming point may be needed, but it is much less than for a slow shot.

For example, in Figure 240, with an assumed six-inch drift to the left, there is a disk E in the position of a cross-guard, and also a disk F, farther on but almost completely visible to the shooter Red.

If he attempts to put F in the kitchen, for which he must use a slow shot, he will see his shooting disk pass the guard E and curve gently away to miss F, as shown in Figure 240. And since kitchen speed is used, his disk will probably stop in the kitchen.

But he can hit F with a fast shot, in which there is little drift, as shown in Figure 241.

SPOIL HIDDEN DISK. Again, in Figure 242, with the same drift, let it be assumed that a

line (dotted) from the center of the shooter's starting area passes through the centers of G and F. Therefore, the shooter can see exactly the same amount of disk F when sighting from each of the extreme edges of his starting area.

If a shot is played to the left of G to try to hit F and to put it in the kitchen, the shot would necessarily be gentle, and it would therefore curve away. It would miss F and probably go in the kitchen, as described in the foregoing case.

On the other hand, a shot to the right of G would curve inward to the left and toward F, and the drift would actually assist in making the hit.

CONSTANT ADJUSTMENT. On courts where there is drift, constant attention must be paid to adjusting for the drift. This is particularly important in shots requiring accuracy, such as combinations, kitchen shots, guarding disks already in position, doubling, tripling, bunting, snuggling, etc.

Drift may easily ruin such shots, especially since the adjustments for drift may be different in different parts of the court and must vary with different speeds.

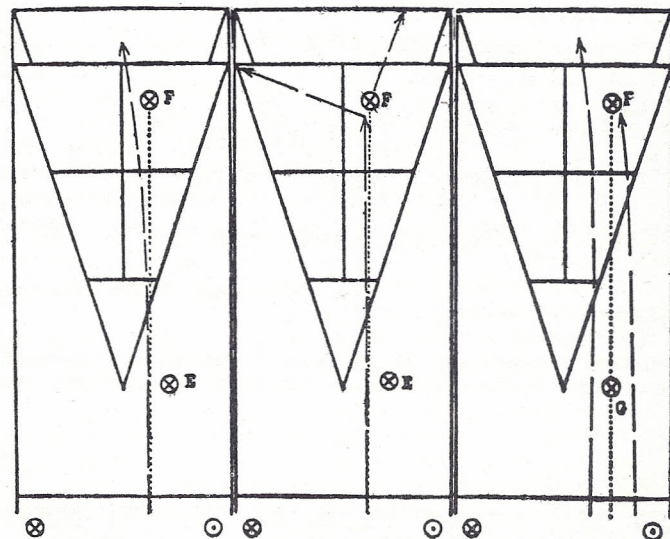


Figure 240 Figure 241 Figure 242

An influence of drift is that there is increased importance for the player who has the drift against him to keep the board clear of guards behind which his opponent can suitably hide.

In the cases that have been shown, the player on the right has the advantage. If the drift were to the right, the corrections

would be to the other side and the player on the left would have the advantage.

The six-inch drift assumed is large, but is more easily seen and understood in the diagrams. Of course, for lesser drifts, the effect and the corrections would be correspondingly reduced.

PART 123: COURT PECULIARTIES (H) COLOR CHOICE

Under the rule governing the lagging for choice of color and side of the court, it is customary to play three practice shots to the farther deadline, the practice disks being progressively removed by the court referee. Most shufflers customarily lag on their own side of the court and thus avoid interfering with their opponents.

The fourth shot by each player is left in place, as at H and D, Figure 243. The one which is nearer to the line, as at D, gives its owner the right to the color choice.

In lagging for color, it helps to avoid uncertainties and irregularities of the court by playing the four disks successively over the same shooting line. Also corrections of the successive shots should be made as described in Part 7 for over-shooting or under-shooting.

CHOICE. Having won the right to the choice, the most important element in deciding which side to select is the drift, and the player should select the side favored by the drift.

If the drift is to the left and toward black, as in Figure 243, he should choose the right side of the court, or red. Of course, black should be selected if the drift is to the opposite side.

In order to make this selection he should have determined the direction and amount of the drift before lagging, as described in Part 119.

Occasionally a marked difference in speed of the court as between the two sides, as described in Part 117, may affect the choice.

If the drift or other court peculiarities do not afford a material advantage for either side of the court, the selection should be made so as to gain an ad-

vantage of last-shots.

In such a case, the shuffler who has won the choice should select the color black for the standard game. He thus obtains the initial last-shot in the first game, and in the third game if there are three games, and he may thereby be able to establish an early lead in score in those games. Also he gets at least as many lastshots as the opponent and perhaps one more.

For the doubles game, the choice of the black color gives the increased advantage of having two last-shots before the opponents have any, with perhaps one or two more last-shots than the opponents will have in the game.

A number of tournament players keep personal notebooks showing which side of the court to select for many of the courts throughout the state where large tournaments are conducted.

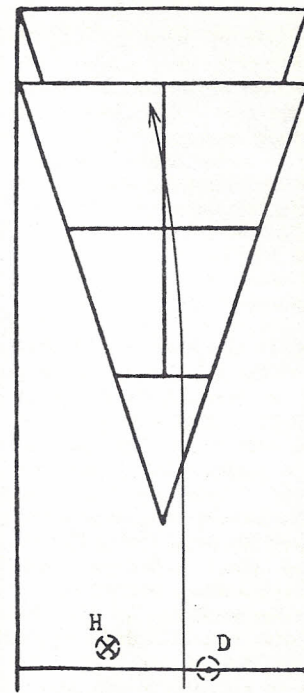


Figure 243

PART 124: TACTICS, GENERAL (A)

We now come to the most interesting aspect of shuffleboard play, that of tactics.

In military operations, tactics conduct the operations on the field of battle. Strategy is concerned with the grand maneuvers that lead armies to the battlefield. Tactics in shuffleboard require a general plan of action, and involve a series of decisions as to the correct play to make for each shot as it comes up.

BASIC TACTICAL PLAN. A sound general plan of action is as follows:

Every shot should be selected on the basis of the score existing at the moment.

If the shooter is ahead or about even in score and if he is to have the last-shot, he should keep the board clear and expect to score with the last-shot. This action includes the case when the opponent plays kitchen-bait.

If the shooter is behind in the score by about 10 or 15 points or more, and is to have the last-shot, he should try to even the score by playing kitchen-bait and kitchen shots.

If the shooter is to have the first shot in the frame, and if he is not as much as about 20 or 25 points behind, he should place a series of guards and hope to be able later to hide beyond one of them for a score. He should expect the opponent to clear them

away and he should replace them with others. For the seventh shot of a frame with board clear, the center-short is suitable.

If the shooter is to have the first shot and is behind by about 20 to 25 points or more, he should play kitchen-bait and kitchen shots consistently. He should expect to have his bait cleared away, and should usually repeat it except for the seventh shot. With clear board at the seventh shot, a center-short is suitable.

If the opponent is on the verge of winning, kitchen play should usually be employed to save the game.

Since the situation will not always develop in accordance with the foregoing, but will involve many varied and sometimes complicated situations, the shooter should study each case and select the best shot in accordance with the score and other considerations.

When a good opportunity to hide develops, the shooter should usually take advantage of it.

He should be prepared to take advantage of opportunities afforded by mistakes of the opponent.

In doubles matches, both partners should play in accordance with the score, and should both follow the same line of action called for by the situation.

PART 125: TACTICS, GENERAL (B)

We have heretofore discussed various types of shots or sequences and the situations to which they are suitable. Our very interesting task is now to examine situations in each of which there is a choice of several shots that may be played, to compare the various possible plays, and to try to select that play that is

most suitable to the situation.

It is in this selection that the real use of judgment lies, the tactics of the game.

PLANNING, EXECUTION. A player may be relatively poor in planning, yet he may succeed in winning by reason of the accuracy of his shooting.

But the more usual case is that of the player who plans his shots fairly well, but does not have the accuracy necessary to execute them. The shots do not go where they are aimed.

We can almost hear the reader say: "That's me." In fact, each player usually feels that his planning is satisfactory, and that

if he could shoot as he plans and where he aims, he would be an excellent shuffler.

This has a large element of truth, but if most players were to watch top-level shufflers in action and were to plan each shot as if they themselves were playing, and were then to compare their own selections of plays with

those actually used by the expert shufflers, they would quickly discover important weaknesses in their own planning, as well as in their execution.

The tournament situation shown in Figure 244 is exceptionally difficult as concerning selection, but the reader is invited to choose Red's last-shot which actually won the game. Part 135 will show his selection.

HABITUAL PLAYS. Although practically every play involves some element of selection, yet it occurs most often that the situation is simple and that the appropriate type of shot is apparent at a glance.

Each shuffler has trained himself to use particular types of shots which he likes and upon which he relies, and he avoids others he dislikes. His selection in many cases is controlled by such habits.

This is suitable, since the use of standard actions for standard situations saves the trouble of spending time to consider numerous possibilities and to select from among them.

But on the other hand there are advantages in occasionally adding variety to the play, thus widening the capabilities of the shooter to use different types of shots.

THINK. It frequently happens that the situation is complicated, and some thought is necessary. Also it is interesting to note that in complicated situations, top-level shufflers may take considerable time to plan their shots.

For example, Larry Schoch, twice national singles champion and six times Florida State doubles champion, is very deliberate in his planning. Amy Close is outstanding in her ability to think over a situation and to select the best shot, and she takes time to do so.

The shuffler should cultivate the habit of thinking before shooting. Many errors in judgment are made because of hasty shooting.

The most important step in selection is, in any particular situation, to determine the various possible shots, and to compare these possible shots so as to select the best one.

CONSIDERATIONS to be weighed in the selection include the following:

Playing to the score, existing score and expected gain, Parts 129-132.

Ease or difficulty of each possible shot, Part 127.

Possible combining of several

ideas into a complex play, Part 126.

Turns remaining to be played and who is to play them, Parts 129, 131-135.

Who will have the last-shot in the next frame (or in the next two frames in doubles), Parts 129, 135.

Opponent's play, Parts 128, 137. Effect of a miss or error, Parts 111-114.

Court peculiarities, Parts 116-122.

Expected situation on the board after the play, Parts 133, 140, 142.

It would be idle to suggest that a shuffler should consciously check over all of the foregoing considerations for each of his shots. As mentioned above, many situations are so simple as to require only instant recognition and decision. Again, some of these various considerations are used by the shufflers without realizing they do so.

After weighing the various considerations applicable in a given situation, the shooter should make a firm decision as to the shot that he will play.

Although there may be, and frequently is, uncertainty as to whether the planned shot will be successful, the shooter should have a clear idea as to where he will aim, how hard he

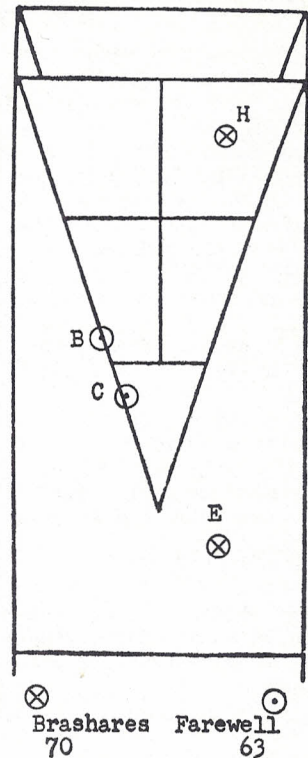


Figure 244

will shoot, and where he wants to go.

PART 126: TACTICS, GENERAL (C)

As previously mentioned, in selecting the most suitable shot for any particular situation, the best shot to use may be apparent at a glance and the decision may be made instantly.

For example, in Figure 245, the score is not critical, A is the only disk on the board, and it is the turn of the shooter Red to play the third shot of the frame. It is obvious that he should hide a disk at about point X.

On the other hand, if it were the turn of the opponent Black to play the fourth shot, the normal play would be to clear the board in order to prevent Red from hiding beyond A at the next shot.

POSSIBLE PLAYS. At the other extreme is the tournament situation shown in Figure 246. The shooter Red is to play the last shot. The score is not critical. There are at least four possible plays, requiring some thought. The development of this thought

is left to the reader. No answer will be presented.

In order to determine what are the various possible shots in a complicated situation, the shuffler must recognize which shots are suitable, and some may be overlooked. In searching for the various possible plays, the shooter may look at each disk on the board, both friendly and enemy, and consider what possible shots may be played with reference to each disk.

In this connection the shooter may well consider which disks are of value to the opponent, as scoring disks or as potential scoring disks, what scores the opponent may make by various shots, and which disks are the most important. He should also consider his own disks in the same way.

Overlooking a possible shot may develop, for example, as follows. A shuffler may be keeping the board clear, when a suitable chance to hide a disk ap-

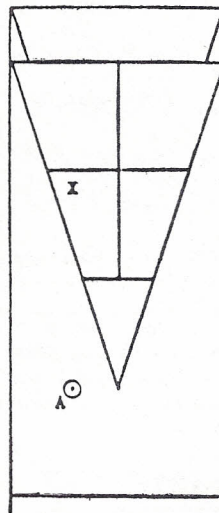


Figure 245

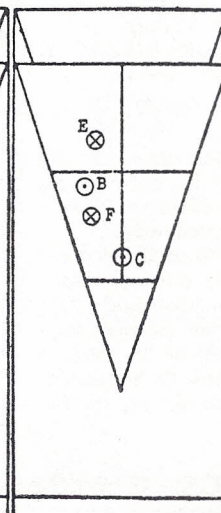


Figure 246

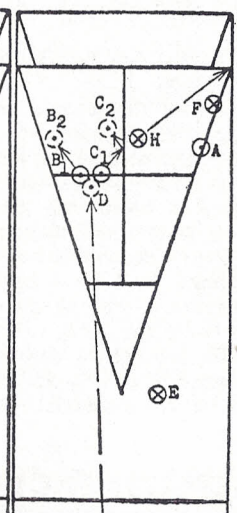


Figure 247

pears, yet he automatically continues his series of shots to keep the board clear without thinking of the other possibility.

Or, in a different situation he

may be expecting that his opponent will clear the board and leave him with an expected seventh shot for a center-short. When the appearance of a disk

at the edge of the scoring triangle happens to give the shooter a chance, even though not a good one, to hide in the corner of the 7-area, he may overlook the latter.

As mentioned in Parts 33 and 41, many players constantly overlook the possibility of hiding be-

yond a Tampa guard.
COMPLEX PLAYS. In planning shots it is often possible and advantageous to combine several ideas into a single play. For example, in the tournament case shown in Figure 247, the shot may include the following in one shot:

- (1) Backstop the shooting disk for a score.
- (2) Knock one or two friendly disks into scoring area.
- (3) Knock away an enemy scoring disk.

While an inexperienced shuf-

fler may include only one simple idea in each shot, it would be better to attempt complex shots, adding more elements to the play. Some of these elements may be possibilities that are hoped for rather than expected. This is further discussed in Part 129.

PART 127: TACTICS, GENERAL (D)

In the selection of a play to use, the ease or difficulty of the shot, or in effect the probability of success in accomplishing it, is an important consideration.

This involves, among other things, the skill of the shooter, his accuracy of the moment in direction and force (Part 7), and his having become used to the particular court and having attained the touch of it (Part 7).

EASE OR DIFFICULTY. If one play requires less accuracy in order to accomplish it than does another play, the former is obviously easier. Examples of this have been shown at various points in the text, and one is shown in Figure 248.

This situation came at a last-shot at the end of the first game of one of the semi-final matches of the State Gold Medal Tournament March 7, 1958.

There was much excited talk in the grandstand before the shot. Rex Farewell, the shooter Red, could gain about the same number of points for each of three shots: (1) to knock H aside and glance to the right for an 8, (2) to spoil H and F by a combination, or (3) to double on C. The easiest and surest was to double on C. Furthermore, it would, and did, win the game as he played it.

MORE COMPARISONS. A combination in a straight line is easier than one of the same length at an angle (Part 82). A combination against two disks near together is easier than against two that are widely separated (Parts 85, 87, and 91). A shot to score against a backstop is usually easier than is a shot for simple score (Part 16).

To knock into the kitchen a disk that is near the kitchen is easier than to dunk one that is

near the point of the triangle (Part 68). To guard a scoring disk is easier than to score another one (Part 25).

A front - and - rear double is easier than a double from a diagonal line (Parts 42 and 46). A direct shot to clear the kitchen is usually more accurate than a combination to do so unless the latter is a very short combination (Part 84.).

These comparisons could be multiplied, but it seems apparent that, other things being equal, the easiest shot is the best selection. But other things are usually not equal, so that the ease or difficulty of a shot must be treated as one of the considerations in selection.

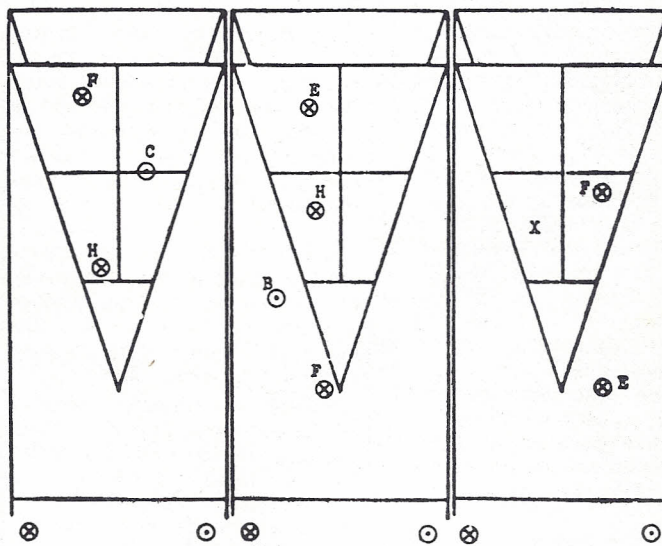
PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS or odds on success, as determined by observation of experts in playing various types of shots, are excellent indications as to the probabilities of success or as to the ease and certainty of making the shots.

Such observations have been recorded and analyzed for shots for simple score (Parts 14 and 15), kitchen shooting (Parts 67, 71, 77), combinations (Part 86) and center-short and high 10 (Part 104).

A similar benefit is gained by analysis of the measures of accuracy required for certain shots: Combinations (Part 85), and caroms (Part 96).

COMPARISON. Figure 249 shows a tournament case in which there were two possible combinations by the shooter Red, (1) to knock F against H at about five feet, center to center, or (2) to knock B against H at about two and one-half feet, with the alternative possibility that B might hit E if it were to miss H.

The second choice, for the shorter distance, had a higher percentage of probable success,



Folberth	Farewell	Badum
67	68	
<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	
82	83	

Figure 248

Figure 249

Figure 250

and was therefore selected. It was accomplished successfully, to spoil H.

TAKING CHANCES. Because the first six shots of a half-round are so frequently spoiled by the two opposing players, they are of less value than the last-shot.

Accordingly with those first six shots shufflers frequently attempt more difficult plays and take greater chances, often with greater gains in view, with the expectation of having a later shot to recover from any loss or failure that may occur. This is usually sound practice.

Also chances are frequently taken with the seventh shot, because so often there is nothing else that can be done (Part 134).

On the other hand, fewer risks

are commonly taken with the eighth shot.

As an example, if an enemy scoring disk F lies hidden beyond a guard E, Figure 250, the shooter may in the earlier shots play a combination to spoil F, whereas on his last-shot he may abandon such attempts and shoot for a simple score, as at X.

The same considerations frequently apply to shooting at the thin edge of a partly hidden disk in the earlier shots, and for a simple score with the last-shot.

In practice games, when the shooter has a choice between an easy shot and a difficult one, he will often do well to select the difficult shot in order to develop his shooting skill.

PART 128: TACTICS, GENERAL (E)

Since each shuffler hopes to spoil and defeat the play of his opponent, he should study the play of the opponent carefully. The objective is to counteract the opponent's strong points and to take advantage of his weaknesses.

Most shufflers observe and analyze the play of their opponents in an incidental way, not realizing they are doing so. However, a conscious effort to do this should be beneficial.

PREDICT OPPONENT'S play. In observing and analyzing the opponent's play, a procedure that helps is, just before each of the shooter's plays, to try to predict what the opponent will do. This is of high value. Sighting from the opponent's side of the court is frequently a help in this connection (Parts 8, 23, 33). Such predictions can frequently be made with accuracy, and form a sound basis for the shooter's play.

Then again, after a play by the shooter and before the opponent's next play the shooter should again predict to himself what the opponent will probably do, in view of the changed situation. Most shufflers probably do this.

A simple case is shown in Figure 251. The shooter Red has a scoring disk at B, and the opponent has a liner at F. Unless prevented, Black is certain to try

to double with F and spoil B at the same time. Hence Red should place a guard at Z. After placing his guard well, Red will probably predict that Black will shoot to spoil the guard at least. If it were Black's last-shot he would probably play for a simple score.

Other cases of predicting and preventing the opponent's play have been discussed in Parts 79 and 94.

If the shooter has not yet learned what the opponent will probably do in a given situation, the shooter should usually assume that the opponent will use good judgment. However, the opposite course is, often taken, when the shooter makes a play that is not the best and hopes that the opponent will make a mistake and use poor judgment in playing against it.

REMEMBER. After the opponent has made a play, the shooter should note the type of play used for the particular situation and should expect it to be used in similar situations later.

Mental note should especially be made of the types of shots the opponent likes and frequently uses, and those in which he usually succeeds. Similarly noted should be the shots he dislikes and uses little, and those in which he tends to fail.

At the end of a match, a shuffler should be able, if he so

wishes, to catalog his opponent's strengths and weaknesses.

SPECIFIC POINTS. The shuffler should particularly consider the ability of the opponent to accomplish the various types of shots, with emphasis on the following:

- To place disks accurately, especially in hiding.
- To hit disks accurately, especially when partly hidden.
- To put disks in the kitchen, and to play kitchen-bait.
- To accomplish combinations successfully.
- To keep the board clear.

Especially against inexperienced opponents a shuffler should notice the types of plays of which the opponent is ignorant. Examples frequently found are the use of the Tampa guard (Parts 33, 41), doubling on the diagonal line (Part 46), triple (Parts 49-51), kitchen play in some of its forms, such as kitchen-bait (Parts 74-77), and keeping the board clear (Parts 99-101).

There are many cases described throughout the text showing action to be taken against specific plays of the opponent, too many to cite here.

EMBARRASS HIS PLAY. The eventual advantages of this general procedure are to be able, as far as practicable, to avoid al-

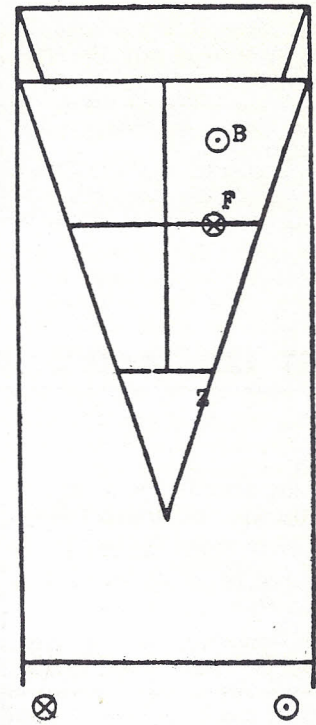


Figure 251

lowing the opponent opportunities to use the types of shots he likes and in which he usually succeeds, and instead to leave him situations involving types of shots he dislikes and in which he is weak.

As indicated in Part 112, a principal means of winning consists in taking advantages of the opponent's errors.

PART 129: TACTICS, PLAYING TO THE SCORE (A)

The idea of playing to the score is a necessary part of the tactics of many games. It means that the type of play to be used in any situation should be selected in view of the score as it exists at the time.

There is nothing new in this idea as applied to shuffleboard. Most experienced shufflers realize that they must know the score whenever they shoot and must select their shots accordingly. The best way to know the score is to glance at the scoreboard habitually before each shot.

The basic tactical plan outlined in Part 124 is founded upon selecting each particular shot in accordance with the existing score.

CALCULATE GAIN. In order

to select from the various possible shots the one to be used, the shooter should weigh the results to be expected from each of the shots under consideration.

In any given situation it is easy to calculate the expected gain for each possible shot and also for the half-round. Numerous examples of this have been shown.

When the end of the game is in sight, the shooter should especially calculate the over-all score that would result to each of the players from the shots under consideration, and whether either player may win or come close to winning. Examples of this are shown in Parts 28, 72, 73, 76, 88, 91, 102, 108, 109, 111 and many from 130 to 153.

In Figure 252 there is shown a situation from a statewide tour-

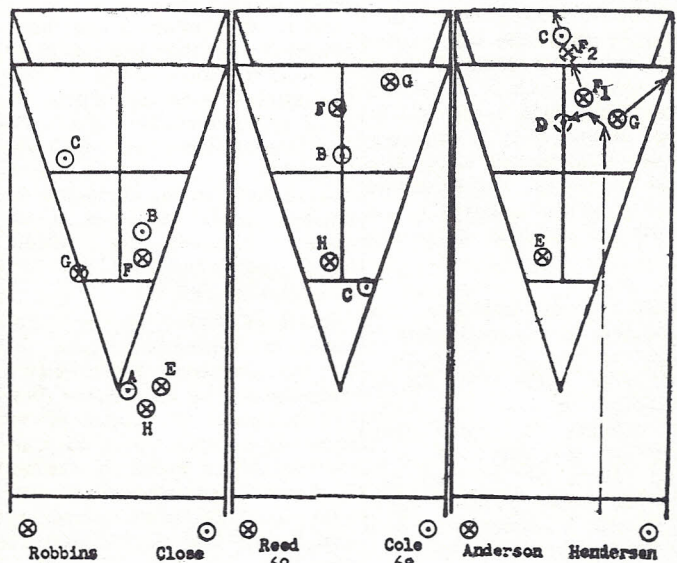


Figure 252

Figure 253

Figure 254

nement in which Amy Close was to play the last-shot. The reader should see that there were at least six different shots that might be played, with varying scores to result, one of which shots appeared to be the most reasonable and actually won the game.

Again, in the statewide tournament situation of Figure 253, the reader may well calculate and compare the gains from various possible last-shots which Red might attempt in order to save the game or to win the game.

The actual plays selected in the two foregoing problems will be described in Part 131.

ADDED POSSIBILITIES. In addition to calculating the definite expectations of gains, the shooter should also consider what

may be called added possibilities.

For example, a tournament shot played as a last-shot by Frank Henderson, who was Florida closed singles champion at the time, is shown in Figure 254.

It appears that his main plan was for the carom, which he doubtless counted on accomplishing for a gain of 14 points. To this could be added 10 probable points for knocking C out of the kitchen, 10 more possible points for leaving F-2 in the kitchen, and perhaps 7 more points for scoring with D, which last did not finally occur.

Thus, he could reasonably count on 14 points and might possibly make as many as 41 points, of which he did actually gain 34 points.

Accordingly, some points are expectations, and some of them are merely hopes or added possibilities.

MORE EXAMPLES. In a number of examples, shown elsewhere in the text, it appears that certain of the elements of the play were considered as added possibilities in the manner indicated above. Such cases are shown in Parts 91-94, 98, 115, 130, 138, 147, 148, 151, 153 and 154.

Moreover, there are cases in which the scoring effects of alternative developments should be considered.

For example, as in the cases shown in Parts 88, 89, 111, 112, 148, 151 and 154, a combination or carom shot may have two targets lying beyond the first tar-

get disk and not far apart, and the shooter may plan his shot so that the first target disk will be aimed between them, not with the expectation of passing between them, but with the hope of hitting one or the other or both.

There are other examples of calculations and comparisons in many other Parts.

LAST-SHOT, NEXT FRAME. In addition to calculating gains, as discussed in the foregoing, the shooter should also often consider who will have the last-shot in the next half-round, or in the next two half-rounds of doubles, and the probable effect on the score. This applies especially toward the end of a game. Examples of this consideration are shown in Parts 76, 130, 140 and 143.

PART 130: TACTICS, PLAYING TO THE SCORE (B)

A series of examples of playing to the score and of failure to do so are included in this and the following articles.

FAILURE. A critical failure to carry out the principle of playing to the score occurred in the Sunshine Skyway Tournament at St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club on Aug. 26, 1954.

In one of the matches the players had a game apiece, with the score in the third and deciding game at about 16 to 71 in favor of shooter Red.

As shown in Figure 255, Black had an 8 on the board at G, partially protected by a guard disk at H. The rest of the board was open.

Red was about to play the last-shot. He could see enough of Black's scoring disk to hit it and spoil it. But to leave G in place and allow the opponent to raise his score from 16 to 24 would be hardly any disadvantage to the shooter. Furthermore, in spoiling G the shooter could not score with his shooting disk.

Instead of that, he could readily score with a winning disk on the open left side of the board and finish the game and match with victory. However, he chose to knock away the black disk G, which he accomplished successfully.

He thus failed to win when he had the chance to do so. He did not play to the score. In other parts of the play he repeated this

same fault several times. It eventually developed that Black succeeded in overcoming Red's lead and in winning the game and match.

After the match was over we asked Red, "Why didn't you shoot for a score on the open side of the board; it was all you needed to win?"

He replied that he had not looked at the score during the entire match. But he learned, and he probably never committed that fault again.

SHOOT 10 TO WIN. When a 10 will win a game and an 8 will not do so, it is at times desirable to take a greater risk and play for a 10 instead of an 8. This is especially to be considered when the score is such that if the shooter doesn't win the game with the shot about to be played, he is liable to lose it in the next half-round when the opponent will have the last-shot. Also, in deciding to play for a 10, the shooter should feel he has sufficient accuracy at the moment to accomplish the shot.

For example, in the quarter-finals of the State Gold Medal Tournament at St. Petersburg, March 11, 1954, the shooter Red, Frank Henderson, then Florida closed singles champion, with a score of 72 to 65 against him, and with the last-shot to play, saw the board as shown in Figure 256.

He could expect his opponent, Gerald Anderson, also a top-level

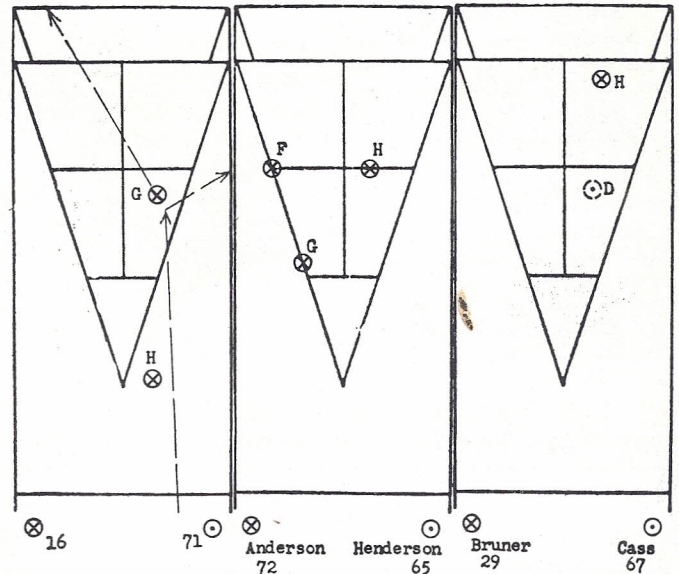


Figure 255

Figure 256

Figure 257

player, to make some score with his last-shot in the next half-round, and any score would win the game for Anderson.

On the other hand, Henderson would win the game if he made a 10. He shot for the 10 and accomplished it, winning the game.

In matches of the Florida State closed singles championship February 1955, we encountered three such opportunities to make game by means of this shot, and accomplished it for two of the three chances, winning two games with such shots.

However, at the third opportunity, which was in the quarter-

finals, when making a 10 would have won the game, match, and at least fourth place in the tournament, the shot stopped on a line and failed.

AVOID TRAP, SCORE 8. In the final match of the 1957 Orlando Doubles Tournament, Lyle Cass and R. H. Roby, playing Red, were pitted against Farrell Bruner and Joe Rowley. All four players are experts.

Toward the end of the first game the situation was as shown in Figure 257, with only disk H on the board. The score was 29 to 67, heavily in favor of Cass

and Roby, and Cass was about to play the last-shot.

put the disk H in the 7-area in order that Cass should shoot at it and score only a 7, whereas

Cass needed an 8 to win.

Cass avoided the trap, playing for an 8 at D, and accomplish-

ing it to win the game.

PART 131: TACTICS, PLAYING TO SCORE (C)

In the quarterfinals of the 1954 State Gold Medal Tournament, Carl Spillman, shooter Red, playing against Bill Klockner, the 1953 national closed champion, had a score of 54 to 71 in his favor.

At Red's last-shot, Black had a single disk G on the 7-8 cross-line, Figure 258. The shooter needed only four points to win the game, and the surest way to make a score was to use the black disk as a backstop, even though the play were to give the opponent a score.

Red's shot was successful for an 8, and although he gave his opponent a 7 he won the game 61 to 79, and with it the match.

PRESERVE SCORE. In one of the semifinal matches of the 1957 State Gold Medal Tournament, Gerald Anderson, a top-level shuffler, the shooter Red, was playing against Alton Vale, also an expert. Anderson had won the first game and had a commanding lead of 16 to 63 in the second game.

Vale was of course playing kitchen in order to cut down Anderson's lead, and had just put a red disk in the kitchen at C, while he also had an 8 at F, Figure 259

It was to be Red's seventh shot. He could spoil either F or C with reasonable certainty, but to spoil both by a combination driving F against C would have less probability of success, in fact about one chance in three for the distance of about six feet (Part 86).

Even though the opponent were to make seven or eight more points with the last-shot, totaling 15 or 16 points for the frame, it would be more important to preserve the shooter's score of 63, near to the winning game score, than to hold down the opponent's score, which was low.

Accordingly Anderson played a direct shot to spoil his kitchen disk, and succeeded.

PROBLEM. In Figure 260 there is shown a situation which occurred in a sociable game between four skillful shufflers. Red was to play the last-shot.

Her combination shot spoiled H and G, and also put E in the kitchen. The gain for the shot was 28 points. But a calculation should have shown that it was not the best shot. The reader should determine a better solution. One will be described in Part 133.

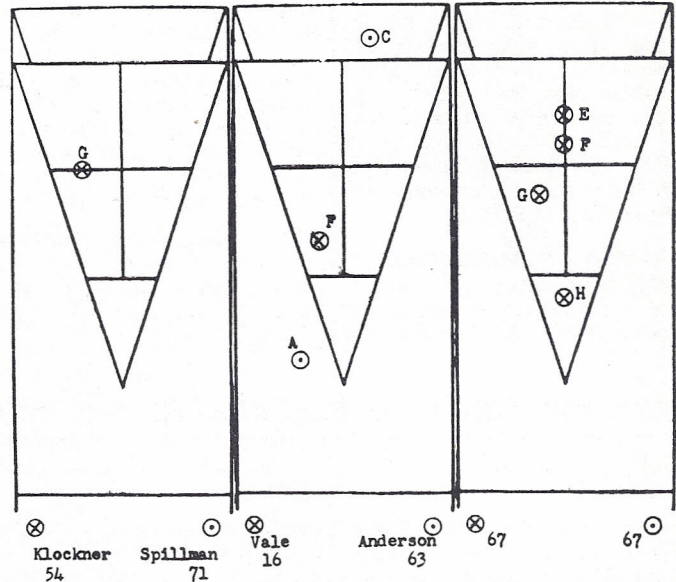


Figure 258 Figure 259 Figure 260

THE ANSWER to the problem presented in Figure 252 of Part 129 as regards the winning shot was for the shooter Red to bunt disk A into the 10-area and win the game at a score of: Black 81, Red 82.

THE ANSWER to the problem given in Figure 253 of Part 129

is less clear. The shooter tried for a double from the diagonal line with disk C, but made only one score. Several experts who observed the shot said that they would have played for a kitchen shot against G, also making a 7. Either play would have won the game if it had made two scores.

PART 132: TACTICS, PLAYING TO SCORE (D)

In the 1954 Florida State Championship Tournament at Bradenton, two experts had scores of: Black 41, Red 74, with Red therefore within one point of winning the game.

As shown in Figure 261, there was only one disk on the board, a high 10 at H which Black had just put there in order to divert Red from a winning score.

The shooter Red ignored that 10 and shot for a simple score, making a 7 at D to win the game.

In doing this, the shooter took no great risk. If he had failed to make any score, the opponent's 10 would not have given the latter a winning score, but would merely have reduced Red's lead from 33 points to 23 points.

TWO SITUATIONS, somewhat alike, developed in the 1957 Times — Mae Barber Tournament a districtwide tournament at Mirror Lake Club, in a match between Phil Ludt, the shooter Red, and Ralph Blackman, twice national closed champion, the opponent Black.

These two cases occurred at the end of the first and third games.

SCORE AN 8. In the first case, the score was: Black 70, Red 73. At the seventh shot, with the board clear, Blackman placed a medium 10 on the board H, as shown in Figure 262. It was possible for Red to score against it, but difficult to do so. If left in place, this disk H would give

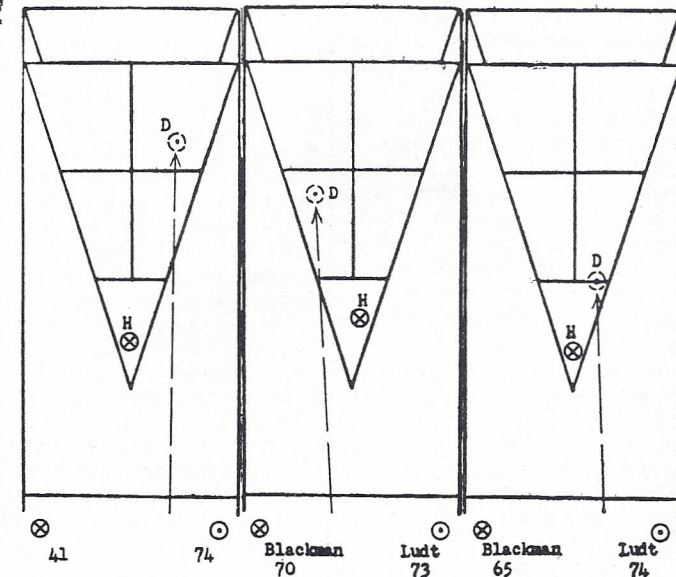


Figure 261 Figure 262 Figure 263

Black a score of 80, well over the game score of 75.

Red was about to have the last-shot. He could play to spoil the black 10 and to score against it for a 10. But while the chances of spoiling the 10 were good, the chances of scoring a 10 at the same time did not appear nearly so good.

Alternatively, Red might simply knock away the black 10 without also trying to score, a much surer shot. If he did this, the over-all score would remain unchanged, and the opponent's last-shot in the next frame would bring up a good chance for Black to win the game.

Instead of spoiling the black 10 Red could shoot for a simple score on the open side of the board. If he made an 8, he would have a score of 81 to Black's 80, and would win the game.

If he made a 7, the score would be tied, and there would be two more halfrounds in order to decide the tie. But if he failed to score at all, he would lose the game.

He could be practically sure of spoiling the black 10, but as mentioned above, he had low chances of winning the game with the same shot by making a 10. His chances of making a simple score, 8 or 7, should have been about 80 per cent, or about four to one. The situation was difficult, but it appeared that the shot for score had the best chances.

Phil took his courage in his hands, shot past the black 10, and made his 8 at D to win the first game, with the score of 80 to 81.

SPOIL THE 10. In the third and deciding game of the match, after Phil had been far behind at

43 to -18 and had recovered to a better than equal position at 65 to 74, much the same situation again occurred. Again Black had the seventh shot and Red the last-shot.

Blackman placed a fine high 10, well up in the point at H, Figure 263, impossible to score against or almost so. If left in place, this 10 would give Black a score of 75, apparently enough to win the game and match.

Again Phil shot for a score, but this time he stopped a little short, on a line at D, and failed to score. Blackman won the game and match.

However, as Phil remarked afterward, there was a material difference in the two situations. If Red had played merely to spoil the black 10 in the second case, the score at the start of the

next frame would have been 65 to 74 in favor of Red.

Black's last-shot in that next frame would not have been so decisive, because Phil could reasonably count on blocking the point of the triangle so as to prevent his opponent from scoring the 10 needed to make 75 and winning the game in that frame. After that, the following frame would again bring up the last-shot for Red and again a good chance of winning.

Of course the same situation might recur, but it did not seem probable that Blackman would make a high 10 every time.

In sum, the shot for a winning score to be made by Red would in the second case have been postponed to a time that should have been more favorable to Red, although not necessarily so.

PART 133: TACTICS, SIXTH SHOT

The sixth shot of the half-round, with the board clear, is played in many different ways. Among experts there is not much agreement in ideas as to how it should be played.

If the shooter is behind in the score to such an extent as to call for kitchen-bait, that is the usual play (Parts 74-77).

On the other hand, if the shooter is ahead in the score or about even and the board is clear, there are wide variations in the play. The writer has made a special effort to learn what the experts do, and has watched for this situation and the corresponding plays. Figure 264 shows some of the varied shots observed in this type of situation.

The board was clear or essentially clear before each shot, the plays were made in statewide tournaments, the players were all experts on the All-Time Roll of Champions, the opponents were all experts, and the shooters were ahead or essentially even in score.

The players whose shots have been recorded in Figure 264 are: Henry Badum, J N O P Q; W. H. Smith, K R; Gerald Anderson, S; Mae Hall, L; Henry Andringa, T; and Olive McArthur, M.

It is true that the majority of the shots were wasted, but there is no prevailing practice to this effect.

CONSIDERATIONS. Some of the considerations for the selec-

tion of the play for the sixth shot with the board clear are similar to those for the seventh and eighth shots, as discussed in the next two articles, Parts 134 and 135.

The shooter must be careful not to make a play that will hurt his chances of making a gain in score for his last-shot of the frame.

He should be especially careful not to place a disk in such a spot that the opponent could play with even a fair chance of hiding beyond it. For example, he should not play for a center-short (Part 105), as this would afford the opponent a hidden area for hiding in the 10-area or along his side of the center line (Parts 33 and 41).

There is no advantage in playing a cross-guard, as is often seen, as the shooter will obviously have no opportunity to hide beyond it, and at times the opponent might use it as cover for hiding along the outer edge of the court (Part 39).

If the opponent is afforded an opportunity to place a scoring disk that is only partly hidden, and does so, it would usually force the shooter to attempt to spoil it, or to leave it in place as being difficult or impracticable to spoil.

AVOID KITCHEN RISK. If the opponent has been playing kitchen-bait and kitchen shots, the op-

ponent would of course welcome another opportunity to make a kitchen shot. In these circumstances, the shooter should especially avoid placing a disk in scoring area or sufficiently near the kitchen in non-scoring area as to invite a kitchen shot by the opponent.

In fact, to place a scoring disk in the open except as kitchen-bait is frequently an invitation to put it in the kitchen.

If the board is essentially clear, but still has one or more disks near the edges, the shooter sometimes wastes his shot by snuggling as described in Part 110.

Each of the foregoing shots leaves the opponent free to shoot for a center-short (which has some advantage) or for a high 10 (which has a low percentage of success).

In general, it must be concluded that the sixth shot with board clear is of little value to accomplish anything.

ANSWER. In the situation shown in Figure 260 of Part 131, we have the conclusion by Carl Spillman, who was watching the game, that the best play would have been to shoot against the

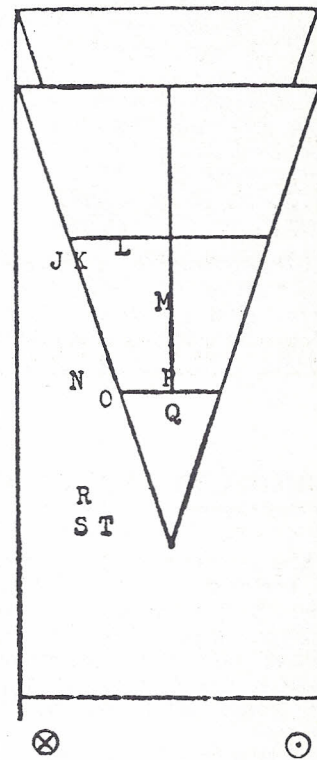


Figure 264

disk H as a backstop, put H gently on the center line, and score a 10, thus winning the game.

PART 134: TACTICS, SEVENTH SHOT

A situation that repeatedly arises at the time of the seventh shot of the half-round is that the board is clear or practically clear.

BOARD CLEAR. There is no good play that can be made. If a disk is placed in scoring area it is certain to be spoiled, and it is very liable to be put in the kitchen.

The best location to place a disk would be at the position of the high 10, but the chances of doing this effectively are so low that a somewhat better play is for the center-short, as described in Parts 103-104. It is recognized that this is not a play of high value, but it does some good as a hazard to the opponent's play.

BOARD NOT CLEAR. Obviously if the board is not clear, the disks on the board will affect or determine the shot to be made.

If there is a good play to be made, of course such a play should be attempted. For example, there may be a shot to protect a friendly scoring disk, to spoil an enemy scoring disk, to prevent the opponent from making an advantageous shot, etc.

As previously mentioned, it is important to avoid leaving a backstop for the opponent's last-shot (Part 18) or a target for a kitchen shot (Parts 75 and 80).

LAST-RESORT PLAY. If there are disks on the board but there is no good shot to be played, then a shot may be selected that

is in the nature of a last-resort play, one that is not expected to accomplish much if anything, but is better than wasting the shot.

An example of such a shot is one that takes advantage of any opportunity, even if not a good one, to make a score that is partly hidden, as discussed in Part 40.

Some of the methods that can be used include a shot to hide in the extreme corner of the 7-area by aiming at the side line of the kitchen as described in Part 39, hiding along the outer edge of the court as described also in Part 39, hiding beyond a defective guard as mentioned in Part 33, partially hiding in the 10-area as shown in Part 41, snuggling as covered in Parts 107-109, and a bunt such as the seventh-shot play by Carl Spillman as described in Part 66.

The use of one of these various methods may succeed only in partially hiding a disk, but if it is hidden enough so that the opponent cannot readily put it in the kitchen yet leads the opponent to shoot at it, there is an advantage. Thus the opponent may be unable to score against it, or may be led to glance his own disk into the kitchen, or may abandon any attempt to spoil it and leave the score to be counted for the shooter.

This is also a suitable time to dunk a disk lying at or near an outer edge of the scoring triangle, as shown in Part 73. Such a shot is not infrequently chosen by experts for use in this type

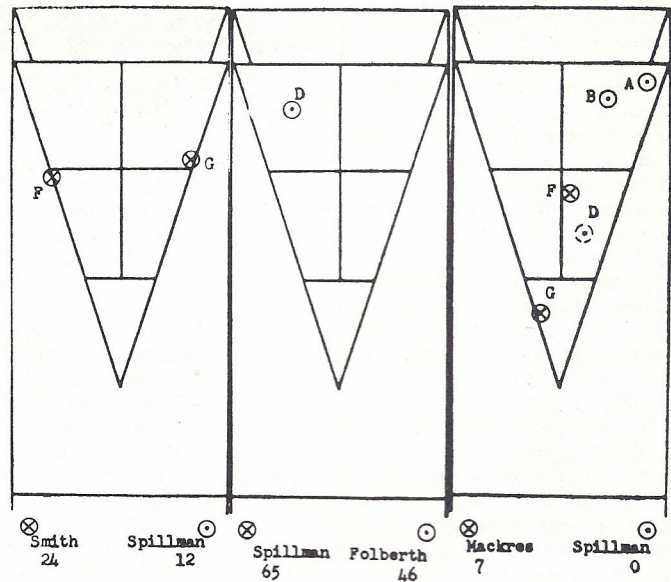


Figure 265

Figure 266

Figure 267

of situation.

For example, in the semifinals of the 1957 Sunshine City Doubles Tournament, at a seventh shot Carl Spillman shot to put in the kitchen a disk located at point G in Figure 265.

In contrast, this is not ordinarily a good time to put a cripple in the kitchen, because of the opponent's subsequent opportunity to reverse the situation with his last-shot and leave the shooter in the kitchen, as discussed in Part 79.

OTHER EXAMPLES. A play occasionally seen is to play a 7 in the open when the opponent needs an 8 to win, in the hope that the opponent will hit the 7

and score only a 7. An attempt at such a play was described in Part 130.

A similar shot is shown in Figure 266, when Billy Folberth played a 7 at D at the seventh shot. He thus led Carl Spillman to shoot at D instead of scoring a 10 to win the game. However, Spillman's shot was for a gain of 14 points for the shot, a far surer play than that for a 10.

Without studying details, which are left to the reader, we show in Figure 267 a seventh shot to D. This occurred in the final match of the 1955 Florida State Championship.

PART 135: TACTICS, LAST-SHOT

The last-shot or eighth shot of a half-round, also sometimes called the "hammer" is, as all shufflers know, the most important shot. The shuffler who plays it should expect to make the larger score and usually does so.

REFERENCES. The dominant value of the last-shot is discussed and illustrated time and again in this text. A number of the discussions are summarized below.

In Part 14 it was shown that the great bulk (96 per cent) of the last-shots with board clear as shot by experts are played for 8s, and that about 80 per cent of

such shots are successful. In Parts 14 and 104 it was shown that the average score for last-shots with board clear is 6.3, based on a record of 234 shots.

In Part 15 it was stated, among other points, that in many cases the effective scoring of a half-round is made by the last-shot, using a shot for simple score. Also that, when used as the last-shots of half-rounds, the plays for simple scores constitute the most regular and frequent standard score gainers. A shuffler who can reliably place scoring disks successfully for 70 or 80 per cent of his last-shots can usually count

on winning most of his games. A player who fails to score for the greater part of his last-shots may expect to lose most of his games.

In Part 15 it was also stated and illustrated that at the last-shot, when it is too difficult to spoil an enemy scoring disk or when the available shots are too difficult or risky, it is normal to neglect the enemy disk or other shot and play for a simple score.

In Parts 74, 75 and 77 there was discussed the great influence of the last-shot on the play of the kitchen-bait sequence.

In Part 79 there was shown the desirability of saving a cripple that lies in the open for use as a target at the last-shot.

In Parts 99 - 101 there was shown the considerable part played by last-shots in the procedure of clearing the board, especially that the main result of the sequence lies in the scoring with the last-shot.

In Part 125 there was mentioned the need to foresee which side will have the last-shot in the next frame (or the next two last-shots in doubles) and their effect on the selection of the pending play.