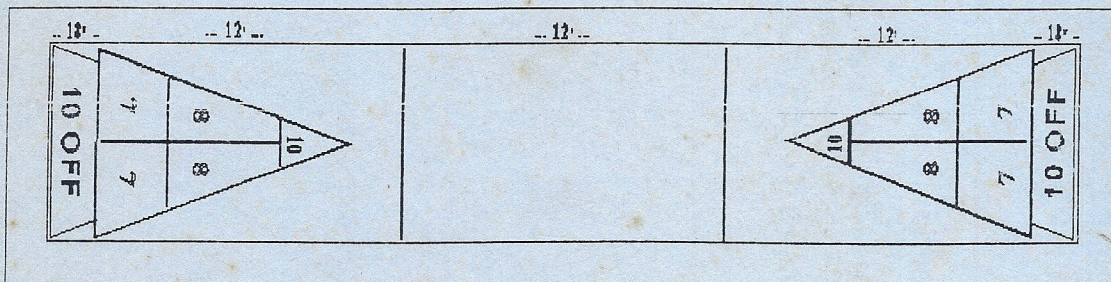


KEEP ON 'SHUFFLIN'

The First Book Ever Written For Play
On The Fast Western Court

THE PLAYING COURT



The Court size is six feet (6') wide by thirty-nine (39') long, plus a six foot six (6'-6") Standing area at each end.

By "Shuffleboard Bob"
Zaletel
10/20/2005

PROPERTY OF THE
US NATIONAL SHUFFLEBOARD ASSOC.
HALL OF FAME

CONTRIBUTED BY:

"SHUFFLEBOARD BOB" ZALETEL

Dedication

There are so many people to thank for bringing me this far in my 'Shuffleboard Life.' I've narrowed the list to what I'll call the "Big 6."

- Louis Zaletel - In 1955, my Dad got me started in this great game. He hand-painted a shuffleboard court in the basement of our home in Lorain, Ohio. It was about 15'x3'. My sister, Barb, and I played many a game on this court as did my neighborhood friends. Thanks, Dad.
- Mary Zaletel - In 1988, I officially became involved in the game on a yearly basis in Las Vegas, Nevada. My wife, Mary, has been there for me from that first championship at our Las Vegas Corporate Challenge, to this very day. Thanks, Mary.
- Russ Jacobson - In 1991, I began to really learn how to play this great game from Russ, a 4-time Texas State Champion. He came to Las Vegas and shared many of his secrets with me and other players at a Corporate Challenge Weekend. He also invited me to Mesa, AZ that fall to see the I.S.A. event at Venture Out. It was my first contact to what I call - real shuffleboard. Thanks, Russ.
- Harold Edmondson - In the fall of 1991, I met Harold in Mesa, AZ at the I.S.A. Tourney held at Venture Out. He was President of the National at the time. I was impressed with his friendliness and sincerity. He took me under his wing and introduced me to many of the players. He also gave me the inspiration and confidence to pursue my dreams. Thanks, Harold.
- Bud Walrath - In 1993, the I.S.A. came to the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas. I met Bud and we proceeded to do a lot of work readying the courts. I was impressed with his work ethic. Also, we spent a lot of time discussing the Shuffleboard Community from the I.S.A. to the National to the States and the Districts that play the game. I sure learned a lot. Thanks, Bud.
- Don Kleckner - In Las Vegas, in 1993, I had the privilege of meeting Don, who was the President of the I.S.A.. Those of you who know me know about my enthusiasm and love of the game. Believe me, it pales in comparison to what I saw from Don! He was one of the most positive and energetic people I had ever met when it came to shuffleboard. Thanks, Don.

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Introduction

A NEED

I have believed for a long time that a book has been needed that focuses on Shuffleboard Courts out West - namely, Arizona and California. In fact, of all the shuffleboard books ever written (Appendix B1 Page 39) *none* has ever been written expressly for Fast Boards. The book you are about to read, I hope, will remedy that.

FAST BOARDS

In shuffleboard, some of the terminology used tends to be confusing. The term "Fast Boards" will be described in detail a bit later. Suffice it to say at this point, that Fast Boards out West mean that the disc travels at very *slow* speed from one end of the court to the other. This text will address courts who's speed is 11 seconds to 22 seconds.

BEAUTY OF THE GAME

The game of shuffleboard is truly a wonderful sport. I believe it is one of the only games that "bridges" the generation gap; i.e., it is the only game where grandmas and grandpas, moms and dads, and children from age 5 on up can play competitively for fun, on an even basis. Size doesn't matter. Women can play equally against men. Fast Courts / Western Boards will allow this to happen.

THE GAME'S PERCEPTION

Ninety-nine and one-half percent of this booklet will be positive and I hope, uplifting. This section will not. Shuffleboard has a *real perception problem*. It has been an organized entity since 1931, and yet:

- 1.) Very few people under 50 play it.
- 2.) Most of the average public think you have to be over 80 before you can/should play it.

- 3.) It's a game for people who are unable to play any other sport.
- 4.) You get little or no exercise playing it.

I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS! Many of you may be unaware that in 1962 when Del Webb opened up the Sun City Retirement Community northwest of Phoenix, Arizona he was on the cover of Time Magazine and behind him was a Shuffleboard Triangle and Cue.



What has happened since then?! I'll admit, I don't know. But I do know that a concerted effort to change the game's current image *needs to happen!*

I've said for over 10 years now that shuffleboard needs the following:

- 1.) A High-Profile Spokesperson
- 2.) Business Support / Sponsorship
- 3.) A National Newsletter
- 4.) A National Registry of Clubs / Tournaments
- 5.) Television Exposure, Nationally

I'm sure that you can think of others. Give it some clear thought, I'm open for ideas on how to change some of these negative images.

THE SHUFFLE HIERARCHY (See Figure 0 Page 44)

This brief section is intended to inform and educate the reader on how shuffleboard is organized.

A.) The I.S.A.- (International Shuffleboard Association)

In 1981, the I.S.A. was formed. It included, and still does include, the United States, Canada, and Japan. Since then, Australia and Brazil have come on board. Tournaments are held annually and there are officers and by-laws. National organizations are independent of the I.S.A..

B.) THE N.S.A.- (National Shuffleboard Association)

In 1931, the N.S.A. was formed. Since that time, states in the U.S. have joined the association. Currently, 8 states are organized with officers and by-laws. Arizona and California have Fast Courts, and Texas, Ohio, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey and Florida play on Slow Boards. National Tournaments are held in all states. It should be noted that Canada, Japan, Australia, and Brazil also have National organizations. State organizations are independent of the N.S.A..

C.) STATE ORGANIZATIONS-

California Shuffleboard was first organized in 1959. It has grown to 13 Districts within the State, District VII in Hemet, is the most active at this time. Arizona Shuffleboard was first organized in 1963. It has grown to 5 Districts within the State, Districts I and IV in Mesa / Apache Junction are very active - with Tucson and Yuma holding many tournaments as well. Both states hold State Singles Tournaments for Men and Ladies annually, along with State Team Tournaments. It should be noted that the other 6 states have similar organizations.

THE DISTRICTS-

Finally, as has been shown, each state has Districts. Within each district there is League Organization and District Tournaments.

THE CLUBS-

The backbone of a shuffleboard community are the parks in each district which supply the players for the leagues and tournaments. Some districts are much more active than others.

Acknowledgements

A book of this magnitude cannot be written in isolation. At this time, I'd like to recognize and thank the following individuals for their input and feedback on the material you are about to read. My special thanks to:

Allen R. Shuffleboard- Sam and Jim Allen, Polyglide- Kathy Cullop, M & S- John Rosenkrans and Judy Martinez, Dura - Dress- Mike Walker. Besides these four businesses, thanks goes to the following Web-Persons: Larry Bell, Pat Lane, and Sandy Myers. Finally, thanks to the following individuals for their efforts to this manuscript: Steph Gorsuch, Sabra Fagetan, Roy McLure, Ron Krause, Ward Dowell, and Lyman Brown.

About the Author

I would like to spend a couple of paragraphs telling you about myself and how this book came to be. In 1988, almost by accident, I played my first matches at the Sands Hotel (12 courts) in Las Vegas, Nevada for the Clark County School District in the City's Corporate Challenge. I was still playing some basketball at the time and when I went to the Captain's Meeting, they needed some shuffleboard players. I said to myself, "I can do that" and so it began. Thanks to a miracle shot by my partner, Bruce Miller, we won our first game 94-93 and went on to win the Gold Medal. Shuffleboard play for me was an annual play through 1992 - 5 gold medals with three different partners. In 1993, I played in my first of five International Shuffleboard events at the Sands Hotel. The U.S. Men were the World Champs that year, I went 8 - 3. I wanted more, so in 1994 I went down to Mesa, Arizona and played in Towerpoint's Sports Days. Gust Reinsch took me under his wing and our other 5 Las Vegas players started to play *real* shuffleboard. In the Fall of '94, I played in the I.S.A. in Edmonton and started a project with Sam Allen to make a beginner's video for shuffleboard. "Shuffleboard - The Game of Your Future" (Appendix - A1 Page 33) came to fruition in early January of 1997. Brazil and some of the newer nations have used this video for their new players.

In 1997, I retired from 30 years of teaching and my wife Mary and I headed to Mesa in the Fall. I met Kathy Cullop at that time and we collaborated on an Internet Venture. In early 2000, Shuffleboard Segments appeared on her website - polyglide.com (Appendix - A2 Page 33). This project continues to be a work in progress.

In 2002, I began teaching strategy lessons at East Mesa Parks with 'Shuffleboard' Bill Visser. Our first season we visited 8 different parks with over 250 people taking in the sessions. I had sign-in sheets. Starting in the 2003 season, I expanded our territory to include District I in East Mesa with 'Shufflin' Ward Dowell at my side. In that season we visited 13 parks. I'm proud to say that this season we had 404 shufflers who came to listen and learn.

This brings me to the summer of 2003. All of a sudden it occurred to me to do a book *for western courts!* What follows is an incorporation of what I have described to the reader in the past few paragraphs. Enjoy the text, my hope is that it will *enlighten, inform, and excite* every level of shuffler.

Part 1 - THE BASICS / GETTING STARTED

The material that follows in this section is on video, developed in 1997 through the I.S.A. (Appendix A-1 Page 33). The narrative that follows is broken into 8 sections for the reader.

Section 1 - THE SHUFFLEBOARD COURT

A court is generally made of a patio green slab that is 52' in length and 6' in width (Fig.1 Page 44). The approach area is 6 ½' in length at each end of the court for a total of 13'. The total playing surface, baseline to baseline, is 39'. The starting area for the game is 18" in length followed by three 12' segments with another 18" 10-off area at the opposite end.

As we look at our scoring triangle, which is sometimes called 'the House', the points are designated as follows: the 10 area at the tip, followed by two 8 areas and two 7 areas ending with the 10 off area. These scoring areas are defined by white lines, which are generally ¾" to 1" in width. Finally, each court has a 2' wide alley/gutter on each side of the court that is recessed to collect discs which leave the court.

Section II - EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Lets talk briefly about the equipment needed to play the game (Fig. 2 Page 45). To play, very simply, a disc is propelled down the court using a cue. A shuffleboard cue is a metal device no longer than 6'3" / 75". The disc is made up of composition about 1" thick weighing no more than 15 ounces. A set of playing discs consists of 4 yellow and 4 black discs. Next there is the court dressing, which is used to give the discs the needed glide down the court. The court finish and type of dressing used will be discussed at length later in the book. Finally, there is the scoreboard which is used to track the score as the game progresses.

Section III - GAME ETIQUETTE

It's important to focus briefly on some do's and don'ts in this game. No attempt will be made here to cover all of the playing rules; rather, I'd like to just focus on some main thoughts that add to the enjoyment of the game and if followed, will put you well on the way to following many of its rules. If one looks at the opposite end of the court from where players are shooting, you should see two things- the players at that end should be seated quietly, concentrating on the shots coming toward them; holding their cues in an upright position. This is done so as not to

distract the players who are shooting. As play completes, these players then stand and begin to retrieve the discs. This is done with the handle end of the cue, to protect *the tips of the shooting end*. Now these players are ready for play. Their discs are within their shooting space, not touching any of the adjoining lines (Fig. 3 Page 45). In a singles game, yellow would go out or shoot first. The player shooting black should be standing back quietly with the cue in an upright position until the shot is delivered. Now the order changes, yellow stands back quietly with the cue in an upright position to allow black to shoot. You are now well on your way to playing and enjoying this great game.

Section IV - SHOOTING TECHNIQUES

This is one of the key sections for *all* shufflers, because in order to get the discs where you want them on the court, certain fundamentals need to be followed. A personal note here; in watching golf instruction, it seems 75% or more of these shows focus on aspects of the swing. Yet, in shuffleboard, once a player gets his/her first instruction- that's it. *Very seldom* is time spent on the stroke.

At this time, I'd like to focus on 2 approaches to shooting a disc. Lets talk about Footwork first. Many players use the one-step approach. If you are right-handed, generally you take one step out with your left foot and push the cue directly toward the target. Lefties obviously reverse this. The advantages of this style are two-fold: One, there's a minimum of motion needed, and two, once a player squares up for the shot, he/she simply steps forward with the opposite foot and extends the cue.

The second way to shoot a disc is to use the two-step approach. I'm left-handed, so my first step out is with my left foot, then my right. Note that the cue and arm stay still/motionless on that first step. There are two advantages to this style: One is that a player can get much closer to the target at the release point (because of that second step) and two- a player develops more of a rhythm in the shot. Try both approaches to develop the style that works best for you.

That is half of the equation. Now we will look at the two methods of Holding the Cue. The first method is used by over 95% of all players. In this method, the middle finger and ring-finger cup the cue and the swinging of ones locked arm, (pendulum motion) actually pushes the cue forward.

Style #2, used by your's truly, is a bit different. If the cue were lying on the ground and a player went to pick it up, he/she would have their entire hand on the top of the cue- pointer finger on top of the cue with the pinkie pushing the cue- again with proper arm swing. In making the shot, the hand comes straight forward and up, eliminating any side-to-side movement of the hand or arm. Again, try both styles and see just which one works best for you. Also, refer to Appendix A-1 Page 33, to visually see what has just been explained. One final tip to keep in mind. Always remember that

once the cue tips have been placed on the disc, everything after that is a forward motion in the shot.

Section V - SHUFFLEBOARD TERMINOLOGY

At this time I'd like to briefly define 6 terms often used in shuffleboard circles:

- 1.) The Baseline - This is basically the foul line; in taking a shot, a player must not step on this line or a 10 point penalty can be assessed.
- 2.) The Lag Line - This is the far line from the shooter (about 24' away), a line that is just before the far triangle. A shot disc must make contact with this line or it is removed from the court as a dead disc. The lag line is also used to determine color prior to a game's beginning. This will be discussed a bit later.
- 3.) The Gutters - These are located on both sides of the court, are generally 2' wide, and are recessed 2-6 inches to collect discs which leave the court.
- 4.) The Kitchen - This is the 18" section (the 10-off) located in the back end of the far triangle. Shuffleboard is one of the few games, if not the only game in the world, in which you can actually *lose* points you already have! A final clarification - if a disc ends up on the upside-down V (in the Kitchen area), the V you see *does not exist*. For scoring purposes, then, it is counted as a -10 if all shots have been taken.
- 5.) The Starting Area - When a player is shooting discs from the -10 area, the upside-down V *does exist* - you must shoot from your $\frac{1}{2}$ of the court.
- 6.) The Hammer Shot - This is the last disc - eighth disc shot in a frame. After this shot, the scores are posted. You need to make this shot!

Section VI - PLAYING SINGLES/DOUBLES

Playing Singles simply means that the person standing next to you is your opponent. So, there are 2 matches per court, one at the head and one at the foot. After 16 frames (64 shots) the player with the most points wins the match.

Playing Doubles simply means that you play with a partner - the person directly across from you. Down and back is considered one frame and both scores are added together.

Section VII - SCOREKEEPING

This brief section is for only one reason, and that is that all players need to know how to keep score! It is important to help the game along by doing your part and to protect yourself in knowing your game score. Please refer to Appendix A-3 Page 33, for a further look on scorekeeping.

Part VIII - OBJECTIVE OF THE GAME

Now we will talk briefly about how to play this great game. There are 2 ends of the court -the Head and the Foot. A game always begins at the head, where the scoreboard is located. Looking at the discs, yellow is always on the right and black is always on the left. The scoreboard shows us that to begin a game, yellow goes out or shoots first (Fig. 4 Page 46). We know this because where we mark the first set of scores has a yellow marking on top of the scoreboard. Following the shooting rotating then, you can see that black has the last shot/hammer; hence, the advantage this frame. The game/scoreboard is designed to give both players 8 hammers in a traditional 16 frame game. If there are no board referees, black makes all calls at the opposite end of the court. The player then calls out the final score to be put on the scoreboard. Now the discs are at the foot. As the player looks at them, yellow is on the left and black is on the right. Don't let this confuse you! Just remember where the discs are at the head and be sure they are directly across from you if you are playing the foot. To begin a game, yellow also shoots first from the foot. After the frame at the foot, the score is put on the scoreboard in 2 places. The top row of the scoreboard is much easier for the players to see their scores (Fig.4 Page 46). In frame 2 now, black shoots first giving yellow the hammer. Under I.S.A., Arizona, and California rules, at the conclusion of 16 frames the game is over. Simply put, this means that after 64 shots have been taken by each player, whoever has the most points wins the match.

One final note here - please review Appendix A-3 Page 33 to see what happens after 8 frames (half of the game) is over. It's slightly different in California. One thing is the same , however, in all play - the player is now on the other side (same end) of the court. This is crucial, because the more you play, you'll begin to notice that most Western Courts drift or curve, which seems to give one side an advantage over the other. So, again in fairness, each player has to play both sides.

PART 2 - WESTERN COURTS/FAST BOARDS

Section I - MEASURING COURT SPEED

The following chapter is the essence of this entire book! Anywhere in the world, shuffleboard has the following constants: Court size, discs, and basic cues. *However*, Arizona and California Shuffleboard drastically departs from the rest of the world regarding the speed of the court. In both of these places, during the '70's and '80's, a concerted effort was made to increase court speed. I can't tell you why, I'm still researching that one.

To measure court speed you'll need a stop watch to time your discs - from a player's first movement of delivery until the disc stops in the kitchen at the opposite end. Here's where many players, and especially people who don't play, get confused. Very simply, a fast court is generally defined as a disc taking 11-17 seconds to get to this other end. Note, it is called a Fast Board, yet the disc is actually traveling very slowly. Conversely, Eastern courts (Florida) and most courts in the world are Slow Courts - from 6-10 seconds. Remember now, if the disc is getting to the other end in this time, it's moving rather fast. Hopefully this will explain some about the difference.

Now, how does this happen with the Western Courts! Polyglide.com (Appendix D Page 42-43) explains this. Suffice to say at this point, that the courts are very smooth, much more polished, and many times buffed. As Kathy Cullop of Polyglide says, "Slick, shiny, and smooth" is what her products deliver.

Section II - ARIZONA COURTS

In general, the speed of most courts in Arizona's 5 shuffle districts is 11-16 seconds. The courts are slick, smooth, shiny and they are all outdoors. Because of this heat, wind and dirt are major factors in keeping the speed consistent. Polyglide and Dura Dress (M & S in Mesa) provide regular and wind wax as well as other court products (Appendix D Page 42-43). Rules continue to be important in defining how the game is played. Every shuffler wishes for consistent speed as the game unfolds. In this author's opinion, waxing rules need more clarity and tournament play *may need* speed control, i.e. a 12-14 second condition. This obviously gets into the politics of play, which is not in the scope of this book.

Section III - CALIFORNIA COURTS

Keeping in mind that California has 13 districts, this section will mainly focus on District VII, Hemet. Hemet, which I call "Shuffleboard Heaven", is by far the most

active district in the state. Why "Shuffleboard Heaven?" A number of reasons come to mind beginning with court speed, which is generally 16-22 + seconds. All of the courts in this district are indoors (25 or so parks), so that heat, wind and (for the most part) dirt do not come into play. The gutters are carpeted and most houses have 4-8 courts. The biggest reason that Hemet courts are enjoyed by most shufflers, however, is that court speed never varies as the game unfolds. Once a shuffler captures the speed he/she is there. Also, in most houses, once the game begins there is no waxing allowed until half-time.

Section IV - EASTERN COURTS

Reference to the Eastern Courts encompasses the following: Florida, North Carolina, New Jersey, Ohio, Michigan, Texas, as well as the Canadian Provinces of; Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec and Ontario. Also included are clubs in: Japan, Brazil and Australia. For the most part, courts are outdoors and point games are played to 75 points with the best 2 out of 3 games winning the match. I realize that this is a generality as Texas plays frames, Alberta plays on indoor courts, etc. The point is that the game is different on all of these courts.

Eastern Courts are standard size but they look different than the Western Courts (Figure 5 Page 47). For one thing the texture/finish of the court is rougher to the touch. Generally, products from Allen R. Shuffleboard are different from the standpoint of application (Appendix D Page 42-43). The court dressing is generally made up of glass beads, so the player can hear the disc going down the court. The biggest difference, however, is that court speed is very slow by Western standards, roughly between 6-10 seconds. I've played these conditions, and the big plus to the game is that court speed seldom varies or changes during the course of a match. In fact, the beads once applied, literally last all day! This has obvious implications as to the cost factor involved in tournament play.

Section V - DIFFERENT COURTS / DIFFERENT STRATEGY

I have gone to great lengths to compare the two court conditions for one obvious reason - the *Strategy of Play* is very different on Eastern Courts than it is on Western Courts. The difference being that Eastern Court conditions allow the player to read the court much easier, because the disc is traveling much faster down the court. (I liken it to a putt in golf - if the golfer strikes the ball firmly it stays on line.) For shuffleboard purposes, then, it allows the player to play a much more offensive game. As a player must reach 75 points to win the game, with 2 of 3 games winning the match, you can see my point.

Western Courts in Arizona and California are a different story! The main

reason being that, because of the court speed, the disc travels very slowly down the court; hence, it picks up much more of the court's nuances - bends and curves. Again, likening it to golf; if the golfer strikes the ball lightly/slowly, the nuances of the green come into play regarding the break and curve of the putt. Suffice to say, at this point, the Western game needs to be played very *defensively* as far as strategy goes, in this author's opinion. As 16 frames dictates the game, not game score, there are very strong implications for defense - a player only needs to beat the opponent by 1 point, no matter what the score. One final note to the reader. I am not judging one style of play over another; rather, I am merely trying to point out that court conditions vary/differ. It stands to reason then that since conditions differ, then strategies should differ.

Part 3 - OVERALL GAME STRATEGY / HAVING A PLAN

Section I - GOALS IN A SHUFFLEBOARD MATCH

I always begin my Shuffleboard Strategy session with the same question, "What are the goals in your game?" Generally responses range from "I want to win" to "Play a more solid game" to "Having better shot selection." I try to get the group to see that although these are good goals to aim for, they are much too general. Specifically, I feel that there are 7 specific items to strive for - realizing we are all human and to attain them all would be perfection! None the less, I feel that it is worth striving toward these.

- GOAL #1 - Thinking on shots 1-64

We all do it! Upon the loss of a game, most, if not all shufflers, talk about wrong or poor shot selections bringing about their demise. On our Western Courts points are at a premium and even 1 mistake can cause a loss. I cannot stress *conservative play* strongly enough. Are we thinking of the safest shot to take? Are we thinking *Defense*? I, like you, have lost games on shot #1 and shot #64 alike. The point to remember here is to stay calm, be patient and focus on the shot at hand.

- GOAL #2 - Leave Gambling for the People in Vegas!

I contend, and will continue to contend, that more games are *lost* on our Western Courts because of this factor than any other. My wife, Mary, was a Blackjack Dealer in Reno and Vegas for 30 years. To this day, she continues to

tell those who ask for advice on "How to Win" the following, "In the long run when you gamble you'll eventually lose - the casinos don't have those chandeliers up there from the winners!" Yet, I, like you only ever have people tell me about their winnings - *never their losses!* The same holds true in the game of Shuffleboard. The problem most shufflers have with their gamble is - *they don't know or will admit that they are doing it!* I have 2 suggestions, at this point, to cue you in to the gamble (most of the rest of this book will talk about it). The easiest one for all of us to recognize is the feeling in the pit of our stomach, *after* a certain shot is taken. I contend that 90%, or so, of the time that a gamble has been taken. Remember - this is a tough one, because sometimes a gamble does work. The problem I see here is that if the *wrong shot* is taken in a given situation, chances are that the player will continue to take this wrong shot. The second suggestion is to look at shot selection. My rule of thumb is think *defense*, instead of offense when faced with a choice. Remember, please, that we are talking about Western Court play - where defense wins games!

- GOAL #3 - No Giving Points to My Opponent

At first this tip seems like a no-brainer, but I can't count the number of games I've watched where this happens. Again, like I've already pointed out in games in Arizona and California points are precious - you can't afford to give your opponent even one score. Why, then, you may say does this happen? I contend that there are 2 main reasons. One is that many times a player doesn't think *before* the shot. The other is that the player gambles - instead of taking the safest shot, he or she tries a risky shot. You'll see many examples in the pages that follow.

- GOAL #4 - No Misses on Take - Outs

I've won many games, and lost some too, on this item. I suggest 4 things to look at if this is a problem for you. Being human, we all miss - and as we know *when* the miss occurs is big. Number One reason for many misses is mental. Confidence in the game is *very fragile!* I've seen, and played against, some very fine shufflers who have this affliction. You can't be ready to take a shot thinking "Gee, I hope I don't miss this one!" My best suggestion is practice and more practice. Number Two reason for misses is bad mechanics. Many players have a nice shot with good tempo on an open court, yet they tense up and either bring their arm across their body or lift the cue off the court, etc. Number Three reason for misses is proper speed. I suggest early in the game to shoot a bit harder to hold the line. As the match progresses and the player

begins to settle in he/she should move to take out speed (a medium speed shot) if the player needs to stick. Reason Number Four, I feel, is responsible for many more misses than players think - that is the inability to pick up the bend/drift in the court along with *where* the shot should come from (more on this later). Many times I, like you, have a court that I do not feel comfortable on - it's a struggle just to hit my opponent's disc. If this is the case I simply keep the speed up for the entire game, if necessary. Remember, first and foremost, the aim of the take out is just that!

- GOAL #5 - No Opponent Double Scores

On the fast Western Courts where points are very hard to come by, a player cannot afford to give up a double score, yet it happens quite often. I see three reasons - you will note that all 3 go back to earlier goals. Number one is many times a player will not think before the shot or the player will say there's no way my opponent will even try that shot. You know what, I say, if there is only a 1: 100 chance it can happen I don't want to give the player that chance. I've seen very deep 7's split on the last shot of a game! The second reason goes back to gambling by a player - instead of taking the safest shot, the player tries to get cute and ends up paying. Reason number three goes back to the missed take out, enabling the opponent to make the double.

- GOAL #6 - No Kitchening Myself

I think one of the biggest sins/errors in shuffleboard is kitchening the hammer shot. Psychologically, it really works on even the best shuffler, and I look upon it as an 18 point swing in the game - I kitchen instead of scoring that 8. There are 3 other reasons a kitchen happens. Number One is that a shuffler fails to recognize and adapt to court speed - especially early in the match. Add to this is the fact that disc position is an important factor in court speed. Number Two goes back to gambling again - thinking *offense* and trying to make a tough shot instead of playing a safe *defensive* shot. Another gamble we all try at times is trying to kitchen the opponent, instead of scoring our hammer, missing the shot and going in ourselves. Reason Number 3 happens in many matches I play and many I watch and that is the take out of your opponent's deep 7's. The rule of thumb I use revolves around a number of things. Do I need to clear that deep 7? Can I score in front of it? I suggest you trying the following when clearing deep 7's. First, shoot very hard to hit the side of the disc - sometimes a miss is better than a kitchen. Also, try to hit the deep 7 disc on the side closest to the gutter to get your disc off the court as soon as possible. I've been tracking my kitchens by the opponent and myself for 4 seasons, and

those to myself average about 1 in every 9 games.

- GOAL #7 - Having Patience in Singles and Doubles

This is a goal I've recently added to the list - perhaps it should be #1. I say this because the rank and file shuffler, I feel, generally begins to panic as the game unfolds if he/she falls behind or if the game stays close and they can't pull away. The players having the most success in shuffleboard keep emotions under control and mentally stay focused. I still contend that in singles play the shuffler who has the most success stays in the game! Now; here we go again - very simply *don't gamble*. Doubles play is a little trickier. Let me cite an example. I know very little about tennis - to me tennis doubles is simply putting another player on my side of the net. Wrong - in talking with various tennis pros, I find that game strategy, ball placement, is dramatically different in doubles play. The same is true for shuffleboard. I still have a lot to learn on this one. In talking with successful doubles teams, they don't have answers either. Suggestions at this time, are two-fold. One is to play your end and take care of beating or staying close to your opponent. The other thought will sound very familiar to the reader - don't gamble too early; remember, in doubles, scores can change very dramatically - try your best to stay within your capabilities and keep your chancy shots to a minimum.

PART 4 - "SITUATIONAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW" - DEFINING A PLAN

Section I - THE THREE STAGES OF A GAME

In reality, a game of shuffleboard can be thought of very similarly to a game of chess. In this part of the narrative I want to define for the reader the three stages of a game (this will be talked about in Part 5 - 8 of this book) and *how* to ready yourself for this (the aim of Part 4).

I break the game into 3 distinct stages:

- A. THE BEGINNING OF GAME - including the Pre-game, Practice shots, and Frames 1-4
- B. THE MID-GAME - which are Frames 5-10, including the practice shots on the turn around

C. THE END GAME - the moment of truth in Frames 11-16, i.e., how to preserve the win or, if behind, how to try and win

Now, before we can talk about the above, the remainder of Part 4 (Sections 2-8) will deal with preparations I attend to *before* I step onto a court for tournament or league play. I strongly urge the reader to study/look at the following closely; incorporating many of the items into their shuffle repertoire!

Section II - YOUR PHYSICAL PREPARATION

Unfortunately, every shuffle book ever written (Appendix B-1 Page 39) focuses on *how to play the game* from the shotmaking aspect. Don't get me wrong, these are great books. I've read them all and have every one in my shuffle library. The book that you are reading will do much the same; *but*, I promise you this - *my second book will be devoted entirely to the mental/emotional aspects in a game of shuffleboard.* (Please look forward to it around 2008).

Now, getting back to my physical preparation, I keep it very simple - I practice, then practice some more. Be advised, practice means practice - not jackpot or potluck play. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy the above; *but*, I enjoy practice more! Many times at Las Palmas, in Mesa, I'm the odd man out. It's okay by me, I just go to a vacant court and practice; whether it be taking out and sticking, making doubles, or shooting straight hammers. Many times I'll shoot with another shuffler who is at the other end of the court. This makes the above much easier. What better way to build your confidence - I can't think of any! In fact, I've developed 2 games to simulate a game condition. One is called ADD IT UP - very simply I'll shoot 1 color the other way and count all scoring discs on the scoreboard for 8 frames. My partner shoots back and does the same. Another fun one is called CALL YOUR SHOT. Shooting 4 discs of a color I must call where the disc will end up for a score or it doesn't count. What better way to shoot hammer after hammer.

Section III - YOUR MENTAL/EMOTIONAL PREPARATION

As was mentioned in the last section, there are currently no books devoted to this aspect of shuffleboard. I did the next best thing and read a number of golf books devoted to this (Appendix B-2 Page 40). I highly recommend any of them. A number of themes echoed through almost every book including building self-confidence, staying in the present, and letting the feel or touch dominate the stroke - rather than sheer mechanics. Personally, I feel that the mental/emotional aspect of the game is just as important, if not more so, in producing more wins in your game. Besides reading some of these books, I also suggest watching other accomplished players to

see how they handle/react to certain crucial situations. Don't be afraid to talk to them about what you see after their match. Remember one thing, what some shufflers refer to as luck could actually be a player showing good patience and sound thinking.

Section IV - TRACKING YOUR MATCH

I must admit that the following section is still in the early stages of experimentation. I mention it here for two main reasons - to educate and to get you thinking a bit more about your game (Appendix A-4 Page 34). The idea came to me a couple of years ago. I'll bet many of you reading this know how to keep a scorebook/track a game of baseball. I thought about this possibility in a game of shuffleboard. I realize that there are difficulties in doing this. Initially, in some of my practice games, I tried to do the tallies (at bottom ½ of page) after I played a frame. It was a bad idea for 2 reasons: Believe it or not, I had trouble remembering the 4 shots I had taken and more importantly, I found it interfered with my concentration in playing the frame.

The other way to use the form is to have somebody watching the game keep track. I have yet to try this for a couple of reasons: namely, it's hard to get someone to do it; and, more importantly, how does the tally person know what I am trying to do on a particular shot. One more point here. In the 2004 I.S.A. Tourney in Mesa, I had 2 of my games videotaped, this was a kick! I watched each game (about 30 minutes each) and charted it - very interesting. I thank Dave Obert of Venture Out for doing this - actually it was done for the I.S.A., but I got a few copies for my use. I'm not saying you need to do this. I will say for 2 years now, I have used this form after my game. I was able to fill the top part completely and track my 8 hammers (more detail on this in the next section).

There is another reason I mention all of this at this time. If you will look closely again: the bottom ½ of Appendix A-4 Page 34, you will notice that there are only really 6 shots in the game. You are either successful or unsuccessful with each shot. / *never realized this* - and chances are you didn't either. The 6 shots are:

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 1. Block | 4. Take-out with stick |
| 2. Hide | 5. Score |
| 3. Take-out | 6. Shoot through |

Give this form some consideration as it relates to your game.

Section V - TRACKING YOUR HAMMERS

On Eastern Courts, there would be little need for this, because a top shuffler makes about 90% of his/hers hammers. On Western Courts, where scoring is at a premium, this *never* happens - period. Do you know how many hammers of the 8 you get in a game are successful? You should. Players who know me, and those who attend my strategy sessions, are familiar with my quote, "If any shuffler on our Western/Fast Courts could consistently make just 4 of 8 (50 %), that shuffler would be the Tiger Woods of Shuffleboard." Please read that last sentence again, because I believe it with all my heart. I've purchased a clicker used by baseball umpires at a sporting goods store for under \$5.00 and tracked my hammers for the past 3 shuffle seasons (Appendix A-5 Page35). I'll use the 2002-03 as my best example. My goal that year was to play 100 tourney and league games. Out of the 104 games played that season, I won 84 of them - for an 81% winning average. I am telling you this for a reason. Even though I had great success, my hammer % for the year was *only* 32%(3 of 8 is 38%). To go a bit further, I keep track of 2 types of hammers. The top 2 parts of the clicker shows draw hammer made on the left - attempted on the right - in this case 2 of 4. Then, I also kept track of take-out hammers with a successful stick - again the top counter on the bottom ½ of the clicker shows 1 made out of 4 attempts - the bottom clicker. I urge the reader to use some way of tracking hammers - it'll surprise you!

Section VI - THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CUE

Have you ever thought of this one? Now I don't mean the type of cue you use, although that's something to think about; I mean the length of the cue being used (Appendix A-6 Page 36-37). Ron Crause of Crescent Run in Mesa and I have been working on this aspect of the game for almost 3 seasons now. The full narrative from both of us appears in the Appendix. I strongly urge you to look at this for your game. On these fast Western Courts, where speed control is *crucial*, wouldn't it be a godsend to be able to take the same stroke and have the disc travel longer or shorter simply by adjusting the length of cue. We are still working on this as we go to print.

Section VII - THE MAGNETIC STRATEGY BOARD

Roy McClure, a fine shuffler and a good friend of mine, from Hemet, CA developed this board in 2002 (Appendix A-7 Page 38). I've used it in my strategy sessions for the past 3 seasons. It measures 16"x12" and has a variety of uses. Roy originally designed it for the visually impaired players in our sport. His idea, a good one, was to have a non-player show the visually impaired player where the discs are at the far triangle. This *is not* coaching, because no words are exchanged, and the opposing

player sees the board, too. (Roy has since used it with the hearing impaired). Besides these uses, the board is a great teaching tool for strategy - turned one way it's the far triangle - turned the other it's the going out area. I've talked to many shufflers, and I'll bet you have too, who want to tell you about their great shot to win a great game - the board can be used to visually show this, too. Currently, it's available from Roy, Yours Truly, and M & S Trophies and Engraving in Mesa, AZ. I urge the avid shuffler to give this board a look for your shuffle repertoire.

Section VIII - BEING MECHANICAL TO USING FEEL/TOUCH

You've heard of players in all sports being "in the zone," where everything is working. I, like you, pray for these days and sometimes weeks! But, being human, perfection seems to be a fleeting thing. Obviously, the mechanics of the stroke including the footwork, can only be refined so much. In fact, I've made it a point to talk with as many accomplished players - many of them Hall of Famers - and to a person the players say after the mid to late 70's the skills seem to decline. Now the opposite end of the scale is the feel/touch of the shot. I liken this to the mental/emotional part of one's game - the shots simply flow without worrying so much about shot mechanics. As you can imagine, *balance* in your game is the key here; too much attention to mechanics can cause tension, whereas too much attention to just letting feel take over can cause sloppiness of execution. To put it in plain words, if you are not playing well look at the above 2 factors and bring balance back into your game.

PART 5 - PRE-GAME THOUGHTS / GAME PREPARATION

We are now at the courts ready to play our league or tournament game. The following sections are designed to prepare the player for the push of that first disc.

Section I - COURT ASSIGNMENTS

Most of the tips that follow are designed for the *tournament player*; yet, they can be adapted to even help the novice shuffler. Generally, the charting of a tournament is posted early, and even court assignments are listed about half-way into the game before your's. Let's say you've drawn the second game of the day. I have 3 basic suggestions. One is to try and watch the court you will play for speed and drift of both yellow and black. There are players who refuse to do this and I still wonder

why. Try to get an edge if this is a possibility. Better yet, try to talk to players after their match to get their thoughts on a given court. I once lost a Finals Championship Match at Good Life, because I didn't do this. I won the lag and on this particular court, I needed to start yellow. I didn't do this and it cost me. A third suggestion is to chart/take brief notes on courts you play - you might play them in another tourney. True story here. The very next year at Good Life, I played a Top Flight player on this same court in the quarter finals - the game to get into the trophies. I remembered from the previous year, took yellow, and not only won that match, but went on to win the tourney.

Section II - THE LAG

In tourney play, if you are on the upper line of the chart you lag yellow, meaning lower line lags black. Whether in Arizona or California, you generally want to win the lag. Here are a few tips. I never shoot first; i.e., I look at adjacent court speed. Each player gets one practice shot before the lag that counts. If I am lagging yellow, I always try to lag *short* of the line, because as you probably know, if black hits yellow, yellow automatically wins. If I am shooting black, my first concern is not to hit yellow - possibly trying another line. One other point for both colors; sometimes you'll play courts where the discs go in the gutter. *Important point* - remember, either color just needs to move the disc out of the starting area - many times that produces a winning lag! One final note - there are some shufflers who believe the lag is meaningless - they contend that reading the court is the important thing. They use their 2 lag shots as practice shots. Think about that one!

Section III - MY FOUR PRACTICE SHOTS

The remaining sections of Part 5 are on the net at polyglide.com - give it a look. Out west, in frame games, a player is allowed 4 practice shots before the start of the game. Game strategy begins here! Let's say I'm shooting yellow. I'm trying to determine two key things: Court Speed and Court Curve/Drift.

First we will look at disc placement (Figure 6 Page 48). Starting at the upside-down V the discs are called 1-2-3-4. Let's look at each shot:

SHOT 1 - (Figure 7 Page 49) Try to shoot all discs into the deep 7, or better yet, the kitchen - why shoot for 10's and 8's if I'm trying to see the entire court. Look at Figure 7. On my first shot, I shoot from the #1 position aiming at the middle 7 on my side of the court. Let's say that the disc drifts 3 discs left and ends up on the center line - what does this shot tell me? I feel that it tells me 2 things:

1. The court drifts 3 discs left from #1 position.
2. My court speed was 2' off - I didn't make the deep 7.

SHOT 2 - (Figure 8 Page 49) On my second shot, I shoot from the #1 position again aiming at the middle 7 on my opponent's side of the court. Let's say that the disc ends up going exactly where I shot, and it goes into the kitchen - what does this shot tell me?

1. Direction and speed were perfect.
2. This is my preferred hammer shot - with a slight cutback on my speed.

SHOT 3 - (Figure 9 Page 50) On my third shot, I shoot from the #4 position aiming at the middle 7 on my side of the court. Let's say that the disc ends up going 3 discs left of my aiming point, but it ends up this time on the upside-down V in the kitchen - what does this shot tell me?

1. The court drifts 3 discs left from the #4 position.
2. My court speed was perfect.

SHOT 4 - (Figure 10 Page 50) On my fourth shot, I shoot from the #4 position aiming at the middle 7 on my opponent's side of the court. Let's say the disc goes one disc left of my aiming point to the back line of the kitchen - what does this shot tell me?

1. The court drifts one disc left.
2. My speed is still very good.

The more I play, the more I contend that being able to *read* a court for *speed* and *drift* will bring about a victory as much as anything! The faster that you can establish *predictability* of your shots, the more success you will have.

Section IV - MY OPPONENT'S FOUR PRACTICE SHOTS

All good shufflers know the following - don't go to sleep when your opponent is shooting! Quite the opposite - pay very close attention to even their practice shots. There are 4 basic reasons you should do this:

1. Does the court react the same for them; i.e., they may watch your line on practice shots and may try to copy it - does the court allow them to do this?
2. Watch for the line/path that works for them into a score.

3. Watch for the lines/disc position(s) they *do not* shoot from. Remember - if they are *not/cannot* score from where they are shooting, you need to know this.
4. Finally, as you all know, in the second half of the game, you will need to shoot from that side. Being watchful will serve you well when you get to the other shooting area.

Section V - THE TWO TYPES OF COURTS OUT WEST

I am going to spend quite a bit of time on this section, because of my whole-hearted belief, which is, a player/the player who wins most games is the one who can figure out/adapt to the court quicker and more efficiently than their opponent. Let me use bowling as an example. The bowler with a 200+ average sometimes only needs a shot or two to figure the line and speed. You know what - I think the same is true of a really expert shuffler! The following narrative, I hope, will be as beneficial to you as any material you read in this book. Most of it will be devoted to the first type of court we will look at. So here goes:

1. The Easy/Playable Court - By definition, this is a court that a player is on that he/she can figure out. You reach a comfort zone on at least 1 side/color. In plain terms, you can capture both the *speed* and *drift* of the court.

I am a great believer in *spot shooting*. I've talked with many players more accomplished than I, and they believe in it, too. Like so many theories in sports, however, there are two schools of thought on *where* to look for the spot. One theory is to look down at the far triangle for a spot or entry point. The other theory focuses on looking at spots on one's own triangle. I, personally follow the second theory. I liken it to the bowling we first talked about earlier. When I first started to bowl, I looked down at the pins, hoping to hit a few of them. As I became a bit more accomplished, I looked at the *spots* on the lane, 12' - 15' away from the foul line. I feel that the same can be applied to shuffleboard. For example, shooting from the #1 position - that nearest the upside-down V, let's say I'm shooting yellow from the head. I look at the T of my triangle where the base of the 10 joins both 8 areas (Figure 11 Page 51). From the left part of the T, I number in my head 1,2,3,4,5 with 3 being where the T intersects. I also assign numbers 6 and 7 to the outside of the 8-7 line where it intersects with the outside of the triangle. Let's say on this court that I shoot from my #1 position over the 3 spot (T intersection) and the disc goes right

through the far 10, into the 8, and stops in the deep 7. With proper speed, then, I can hit any of my 3 scoring areas - so the number I need to remember is 13 (#1 meaning my #1 shooting position and 3 meaning my spot). One final point here - the expert player just knows/remembers to shoot this spot; but, don't be afraid to think of the number to reinforce your choice of spot.

Now, one more piece of information I'll pass along about the scoring triangle I think you'll find most interesting. As in most games, the object of the game of Shuffleboard is to score more points than your opponent. So, just how many discs will fit into each scoring area (Figure 12-A Page 51)? The number that you see in each scoring

area is the total number of discs that can fit into that area; the 10 area will accommodate 8 discs, each 8 area will hold 13 each, each 7 area will hold 25, and the dreaded -10/kitchen area will hold 30. The game is indeed challenging in that there are times in which a player cannot get even 1 six inch disc into the positive scoring area when needed.

2. The Difficult/Unplayable Court - You will only understand this is you have played out west on lightning fast, drifty courts. There are times when 1 score will win the game! In fact, I, like some of you have even won games with no score - being that my opponent scored in the negative.

What do I do, you might ask. Well, for one thing you've got to play that court, they won't move you from it. But, you know what, your opponent must play it, too. Patience, and more patience, is the key to stay in and win matches on a court that is impossible. Secondly, speed is even more crucial, because these types of courts force you to give a harder stroke to hold the line. There are many more kitchens because of this. Thirdly, I believe that the strategy is different on very difficult courts (I'll refer to this in the chapters that follow). I suggest you consider two other thoughts. One is that I *never* leave discs lying around when it is time for my opponent's hammer. Many times the player will purposely or accidentally glance off a disc for a score. Because of this, I tend to shoot through much more often on these types of courts. Conversely, on my hammer I try to have one of my discs anywhere near the triangle so that I can hit it and try to roll in. The key here is to really never give up on impossible courts - strange things can and do happen!

PART 6 - FRAMES 1-4 / SETTLING IN

Section 1-A - Playing Without The Hammer

In a 16 frame game a player does this for 8 frames. Basically, there are 4 strategies a player can use to keep the opponent from scoring. Let's look at each one:

- A. Going On A Number - I feel 90% of all shufflers use this strategy, which is simply trying to score on every shot. (I personally don't use this strategy, except on very difficult courts). There are 2 benefits of using this approach: one is that it grooves the stroke into the numbers, and secondly it immediately puts pressure on your opponent to hit and stick.
- B. Going On A High 8 or 7 - this method is very similar to A, except that the disc barely gets into the 8 or 7. This is an effective strategy just before your opponent's hammer, because on the take out the take-out disc will usually stay on the line.
- C. Blocking The Opponent's Preferred Line - Generally, on most courts a player tries to find 2 ways in to the scoring area - usually 1 on each side of the triangle. Many times, however, there is only 1 line available. If you can block this line with your 4th shot, many times your opponent will have great difficulty scoring. This is a *great strategy* on very difficult courts.
- D. Putting Up Blocks - I feel that this is a very effective strategy to use on playable courts. Although the main strategy employed on slower courts, most Western Fast Court players don't consider it. They should (Figure 12-B Page 52). Basically, there are 2 main blocks used in shuffleboard. One is the St. Pete, which is set on your opponent's side of the court. The other is the Tampa, which is set on your side. The aim of both is the same - either a stick on the take out or a miss allows you to sneak/hide behind the block.

Section 1-B - Playing With The Hammer

In that same 16 frame game, a player gets 8 of these. If you ask even the novice shuffler what to do if you have the hammer, to a person they'll all say *keep the court clear*, i.e., leave no opponent's discs on the board. Yet very few of us, if any, do this with regularity. I can cite 3 reasons for the above:

1. The Hammer Shooter misses a take-out (very possible - especially on

difficult courts early in a game) now a 2nd disc from an opponent will be on the court.

2. The Hammer Shooter tries to score on an open court, before the hammer - if unsuccessful, many times the opponent will counter with a score or block of their own.
3. The Hammer Shooter Gambles (Big Mistake) and tries to score behind a disc or on a tap in. If the shot is not made now there are at least 2 discs on the board with more to come.

Now you may say, well, what's the problem with 1-2-3. The basic problem is that the court is *not* open for your last shot. Think about this very carefully.

Section II - Situational Strategy of Selected Shots

The remainder of Parts 6,7,8 will look at 21 common situations you see in a game of shuffleboard. Be advised, it's important to consider 3 main elements as we look at how to react to each:

1. WHEN does it occur - Beginning, Middle, End of the game?
2. WHAT is the game score at that time?
3. COURT CONDITION - that is, am I playing on a playable or non-playable court?

SITUATION 1- No Hammer - Playable Court

Controlling the 10 area - I play the game quite differently than most players. My thinking is much like a Chess player. Those of you who know the game, know that controlling the center on the chess board is crucial to controlling the match. I feel that the same is true in shuffleboard. Also, I take a page from Florida/Slow Court play and that is to *block* the board. To me, going on a number allows my opponent into the numbers. I, personally don't want this to happen (Figure 13 Page 53). The idea is to shoot short of the 10 area or very near it. A champion black shooter will generally play take out - clearing the court. Now I suggest 10's for 3 main reasons. The first, especially early in the game, is to take going into the kitchen/-10 out of the equation - the -10 area is a good 8-9' away! Second, by shooting for a 10 or the 10 area, you are blocking/clogging the court - if a take out sticks or misses then you can try a sneak or clog some more. Third, if you can throw a 10 on your 4th disc, the 10 area allows *very little* margin for error on a stick. Consider another factor - if that 4th disc is short of the 10, many times the opposing player will either clip the disc,

possibly tap it into the 10 by accident, or more likely push harder to get by it - *sometimes resulting in a kitchen, especially early in a match.*

SITUATION 2 - No Hammer - Playable Court

Finding the Line - Remember those practice shots; what if they don't go anywhere close to what we wanted? On these occasions, I am very happy not to have the first hammer. This leads us to exploring to find the line (Figure 14 Page 53). There is some controversy to this in that many shufflers tend to play one line only - no matter what court they are on. I question this. If my 4 practice shots (2 from #1 and 2 from #4) did not give me the desired results, I need to move. I will try the #2 position over the T (number 1 spot) and see what happens. Remember, if you are not getting the results you want, keep exploring in non-hammer frames - you must zero in when it becomes hammer time. I feel this facet of the game is even *more crucial* on those non-playable courts!

SITUATION 3 - No Hammer - Playable Court

This situation comes up quite often early in a match. You have a good score on the board and it's your shot. What to do? Let's say it's your last disc. My take is very simple - *block your counter* (Figure 15 Page 54). Let me tell you why - it's to get into your opponent's head early. If your block is a good one the better player will leave it and score or try to. So that frame may end 8-8, 8-7, or even 8-0 if they miss the hammer. Even an 8-8 score will unnerve many shufflers - now they don't feel too good! Let's look at the other choice. With a counter, I put in a score on the other side of the board. You've seen it many times - the player takes them both and many times they will stick in the process. *Now* they feel good - you see what I mean. Now, let's look at this same scenario on the very difficult court - I can't predict even where my disc is going - rather than try to block, I'm going for a score - realizing even the take outs will be tough. Think about it.

SITUATION 4 - Hammer, Playable Court

This situation occurs quite frequently in a match, especially early. It is yellow's hammer and black has a disc on the centerline - separating the 8's (Figure 16 Page 55). What to do here? I see 3 options. One is to try and score a 10, but if the speed is not right black could score on a bump in. A

second option is to try and pass the black disc and score an 8 or 7 on either side. Many times that extra push ends one up in the kitchen. *Remember* - we are early in a match - the wax is fast and maybe we are still a bit nervous. The safest shot is option#3. Shoot at the black disc with take out speed and try to roll into either 8. Shooting that speed we take kitchen out of the mix even if I miss the black. On impossible courts this is definitely the shot to take - with even a little more take out speed.

SITUATION 5 - Hammer, Playable Court

In this scenario, yellow has the hammer and black has a counter that is over $\frac{1}{4}$ blocked (Figure 17 Page 55). What to do? Take it from me, there is only 1 safe course of action to take - shoot to make your hammer. My rule of thumb is this - if there is *any* chance to miss it, *don't* go after it. Ego is the big word here for all of us. We all say to ourselves, I think/know that I can hit that disc. But, many times we either clip the front black or miss everything. It's amazing just how many times that missed scoring opportunity of a 10,8,or 7 early in a game will come back to haunt us later in a close game. Conversely, without a doubt, the take out shot is *the shot* on a very difficult court. Why, you might ask? Very simply, on that real tough court I don't know where the disc is going anyway. For that reason alone do the take out.

SITUATION 6 - Hammer Frame, Playable Court

Many shufflers don't like the conservative game. Here is a scenario for them that you see quite often in a match. Black sticks on a take out to the right of the point - a good Tampa for yellow. On shot #3 for yellow a hide is in the offing. This is a *gamble* - I don't recommend it. On yellows attempt at the hide they catch a 10-8 liner (Figure 18 Page 56). Now 2 discs are on the board. Black can now attempt a bump in 10, a sneak in to the 10, a score along the center line or set a block left of the point (my favorite). Now look at yellows hammer - 3 discs are on the board. Why? Because yellow gambled, lost, and now faces a tough hammer shot. If this situation occurs on a very difficult court, the clear on disc #6 is imperative!

SITUATION 7 - Hammer, Playable Court

I probably receive more criticism or raised eyebrows on the following than any other strategy I use. The court is completely clear and I'm ready to shoot disc #6 (my third shot) 80-90% of the time I'll shoot that disc

completely through the court (Figure 19 Page 56). Why, you might ask? Very simply, I want the court wide open for my hammer to come. Black cannot put any shot on its last disc that I cannot hit/get to. Remember, it's early in the match - here's the downside of trying to go on the board:

1. I could kitchen my disc - always a possibility
2. I could shoot short in the wrong place - now black could hide or maybe I block my own line for the hammer
3. I could score and black sticks on the take out

Now on that impossible board, the only sensible shot is a shoot through - remember the old adage - *keep the board clear!*

PART 7 - FRAMES 5-10 THE GAME UNFOLDS

Section 1 -

By this time in most matches a player should be settling in to the match and hopefully beginning to figure the court out. This brings us to some mid-game situations we may encounter. Remember, this takes us through frame #10 - which includes the turn around.

SITUATION 1 - Either Color, Playable Court

The first two situations we will look at are quite philosophical in nature - you will note this because we look at both colors. You hear this all the time from players, "It's a black court or it's a yellow court." I'll be honest with you, I'm still not sure what this means. I say this because many times a player will share their thoughts with me, and yet when I play the court I see a different result (Figure 20 Page 57). Let's say the court has a significant, but predictable, bend to the right 1'-2'. I'm playing yellow. TIP - I find that a court with a big bend many times will have a straight shot down my side. Many think it's a black court, because of the bend to the right. However, if the speed of the court is 14+ seconds, many times black cannot get their disc into the triangle. Yet, if I shoot from my #4 I can score on the left side of the triangle. My suggestion to all shufflers is this, *you* decide for yourself if the court is yellow or black. I say this for a very important reason. Let's say you are black and can do nothing and everything yellow does is working. You are *probably* on a yellow board. *Be patient,*

you'll switch to that color shortly. Don't start gambling and trying fancy shots to try and catch up. Realize that if you can stay close (15-21 points) you should make it up after switching colors. Conversely, if we are on the good color, say yellow on this court, we had better get the lead and then some by the half, because we'll be on the tough side shortly. Take it from me, one of the worst feelings in the game is making the color switch and realizing we were on the good side *and* we didn't know it! Now, if we are playing that impossible court have even more *patience*, because as many of you realize some courts have no good side!

SITUATION 2 - Either Color, Playable Court

On the fast Western Courts, taking out the opponent's scoring or near scoring discs *and sticking* is imperative to be considered a top shelf player. By this time in most games both players have settled in to the game, calmed their nerves, and generally figured out what the court will and will not allow them to do. To me, take out speed is somewhere between kitchen speed and full speed. I generally shoot from the 1½ position (Figure 21 Page 57). I generally recommend slightly harder take out shots at the outset of the game to learn the court nuances. Remember the last situation - this is a yellow court with basically a straight down shot. Because the court is bending to the right most of the black discs will line up for my take out speed - especially by the 5th frame - I need to stick these. Practice and more practice will help you to develop the confidence you need to do this. Now, if you are reading this carefully, some will say what do you do when you get to frame 9 and after. My response is simple - play short and don't go on the number. Also, on my turn around practice shots I definitely will try some lines *not shot* by my opponent in the first 8 frames. Now, what to do on those very difficult courts; my suggestion is to keep your speed up the whole game if need be. Remember that misses are the biggest danger on those tough courts.

SITUATION 3 - No Hammer, Playable Court

I see the following situation quite often as I'm sure you do too. We are shooting our last disc before your opponent's hammer and they have a disc up top near the 10 area. I see many shufflers knock this disc off them and try to stick or I see them go on the board for a score. I *do not* recommend these options for a number of reasons. Let's say the game is a close one - either tied or one or the other player is ahead by 1 or 2 discs. If you try the clear and cannot stick you now leave the court wide open for your opponent's hammer. If you choose to go on the board, you are now letting your opponent into the scoring area. You might say, then, well what should I do? My answer is to *think defense* (sound familiar) - block the court. Set your final disc to the right of theirs near the point (Figure 22 Page 58). Now here

comes a different take on those impossible courts. I choose to take that disc off and get off myself. Those of you who have played crazy courts like I'm describing don't want a wide-open court! Many times a wick or glancing off of a disc is the only way to score. Think carefully.

SITUATION 4 - No Hammer, Playable Court

This is similar to the last situation, except that the opponent has a disc on the 8 lines (or 7 lines) with each player having one shot left. For the most part, I see a knee-jerk response on this one from most players. They simply bang off the disc hoping for a stick. I say by now you should know if you can control the 10 area. Let's say we can. Again, thinking defense, put your disc in to the 10 or near the 10 blocking the hammer shooters double (Fig. 23 Page 58). Remember, we are trying to plug/clog the court and just not give a wide open hammer. However, you should know the response on that very hard court - get rid of that disc and leave the court open.

SITUATION 5 - No Hammer, Playable Court

I call this section the Lost Art in Shuffleboard, the Deep 7 (Fig.24 Page 59). I say Lost Art, because I do believe that, in the past or nowadays, there are players who value/play this shot. Let's say that this stage of the game we need something to happen, because we are behind or not playing particularly well this game. Wouldn't it be great if we could shoot Deep 7 hoping for a miss or roll into the kitchen after the take out. I do think that this should be a part of our game, but I see very few players using it. I can tell you this, it does unnerve an opponent if a player can consistently make this shot. Again, practice and more practice can make this shot work for you, especially if you are not a kitchen player. This is a particularly effective shot on those very difficult courts, because kitchening is almost impossible. *Fear* is the biggest obstacle we all face when having to execute this shot. The length of cue theory, mentioned earlier, may help here.

SITUATION 6 - Hammer, Playable Court

This situation will probably cause a stir, because it deals with a subject that there is always much talk about and that is *luck in shuffleboard*. I am probably in the minority, because I believe that there is not much of it that happens in a 16 frame match. Now, let me qualify that for a bit. Remember in this scenario we are black and have the hammer. If we keep the court clear as we should then at best only 1 disc of the opponent should be on the court at hammer time. Now with only 1 disc to contend with we are cutting down significantly on luck entering into the picture.

Now, let's look at Figure 25 Page 59 for another look at luck. Our opponent has 1 shot left before our hammer. Can you see the possibility for much to happen with the remaining 2 shots? In black's case, there is no need for this confusion if the board has been kept clean. On that very difficult court both players are courting disaster - depending on which color gets the luck!

SITUATION 7 - Hammer, Playable Court

In my estimation, this is the most important segment of the entire book. It's called *Make Those Hammers!* As I emphasize in all of my strategy sessions, if a player could consistently make 4 of 8 hammers during the course of a season, they would be virtually unbeatable. Now I know players from Slow Court play will snicker that 50% standard. You see top players on those courts virtually never miss a hammer or consistently make near 90% of them. Getting back to the Western Courts it would seem that 50% would be a reasonable expectation to an open board. Can you do it? First off, a player needs to track their hammers (Appendix A-8 Page 38). Please allow me to share one of my seasons of play to illustrate this. My goal every season is to play 100 competitive games; i.e., tournament and league play. In the 2002-2003 shuffleboard season I accomplished this goal. I played 104 competitive games and won 84 of them for an 81% winning percentage. The reason that I share this with the reader is that I tracked my hammers in those games (I've been tracking for 4 seasons now). If you studied Appendix A-8 Page 38, you will notice that I broke down the 2 types of hammers shot in a match. One is called the Draw Shot - a shot to an open board. The other is the Stick Shot (or a bump shot of my own disc); in other words, another disc was hit on the hammer attempt. Now, here is what I'm getting at. On my draws for the year, I made 41% of them. On my sticks/bumps I made 21% of them. When I combine these 2 figures, I come up with a 32% average! Folks, 3 of 8 hammers made is 38%. My point here is simple - I made 32% of hammers for the season, yet I won 81% of my games. I wonder what 50% of hammers would have done. One final statistic regarding my thought on *defensive play*. My scoring average for that season was 33 points a game. My opponent's scoring average for the year was 21 points a game. (I also keep every game score). One final tip - on those very difficult courts even 1 positive score can win a game. *Patience* is imperative on these courts.

PART 8 - FRAMES 11-16 / THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

This last set of situations are called The Moment of Truth for a reason. If a†

this point in a match we are ahead what do we need to do to preserve victory; whereas, if we are behind what can we do to possibly win.

SITUATION 1 - Ahead, Playable Court

We have just made the turn and we are ahead -we need to know the Magic Numbers! We are playing black now and Frame 9 has just been completed (Figure 26 Page 60). We are starting Frame 10 shooting black out. By a stroke of good play we are ahead, 31 to -3 that's 34 points. Our opponent only has 4 hammers left - note the 4 checkmarks at the base of the scoreboard. By my calculations, if our opponent makes all 4 hammers of 8's, and we make nothing, the opponent will get 32 points. Remember, we are ahead by 34. What to do on that first shot in Frame 10. I suggest that we shoot through and knock off all opponent's discs - let them have that wide open board. (In my heart the game is ours if we don't play any more). The error that I see many shufflers make is that they keep playing when the game is in their favor. We must realize *when* to stop playing! If they have 3 hammers left and we are ahead by 25 - if they have 2 hammers left and we are ahead by 17, and if they have 1 hammer left and we are ahead by 11 - the strategy should always be the same - shoot through on shot 1 and clear all discs. I liken the above to two well known sports - basketball and football. In basketball, if the team is ahead by even 4 points why come down the court and shoot quickly, the team ahead is playing to run out the clock. In football, if the team is ahead by 9, why throw passes which are intercepted or dropped to stop the clock? The game is theirs - the game just needs to end. Likewise, in shuffleboard, when we are ahead we are trying to get to Frame 16 and win by at least 1 point. The above strategy is Western/Fast Court Strategy - Defensive. We are not trying to get to 75 points; we are simply trying to play 16 frames and be ahead by at least 1 point. Now, if we are playing on those impossible courts and we are ahead 7 - 0, let's say, and we are on the good color - what to do? I suggest shooting almost everything through. Many of my games finish quickly on tough courts, because I may shoot through my first 3 shots just to get to my hammer - for many times my opponent cannot keep a disc on the court. Give this one some thought - believe me, it works!

SITUATION 2 - Ahead -Playable or Non-Playable Court

This will be an easy one for you if you agree with the last section (Figure 27 Page 60). Our opponent will try Deep 7's to try and get back into the game - either hoping for a miss, a stick they can kitchen, or our hit on their 7 ending us up in the kitchen on our take out. Now let's say they kitchen their attempt. We are ahead and the magic numbers are with us - what should our shot be? I suggest shooting our

disc through. Why block or score again - we don't need to. Why have your opponent get back into the game by reversing your good 8 - putting you into the kitchen and holding the 8. Now that's an 18 point swing. Why? *We kept playing!* Many shufflers will say, "Bob, what are you afraid of? The opponent's chance of making that shot might be 3 or 4 out of 100." As many of you shufflers know, even a 1 in a 100 chance means that a particular shot *could* succeed. You know what, I'm sorry, but I don't want to take that chance. As all of you shufflers can attest, *strange* things can and do happen in games. Think about those odds in your next game!

SITUATION 3 - Ahead - Playable or Non-Playable Court

Shuffleboard, like most games, is hard to figure. I'm sure all readers have either seen or experienced the following scenario late in a game. When we've tried to stick as the game developed we had little success. Now it's later in the game, we are black, and yellow goes on the board, hoping we'll stick. The opponent's aim is to try and kitchen us. Like I tell shufflers in our strategy sessions, I don't care if we shoot the take-out from a cannon invariably we *will* stick when we don't want to. Now yellow tries a kitchen on our stuck disc, but misses it entirely! The Magic Numbers are in our favor, so what should we do on our shot? I strongly suggest that we knock off our own disc (Figure 28 Page 61). Very simply put, if we do anything else the opponent will try the kitchen again. Don't give them that chance.

SITUATION 4 - Behind - Playable Court

None of us like this situation. As the game gets near the end we are behind by *more* than one disc. Is kitchen playing ever in order? I say a resounding yes! That -10 is not on the board for decoration purposes or for us to put ourselves in. Now it is our play to go on the board, the deeper the better. I've had my best luck from the mid to deep 8. Find your best line for feel and predictability and keep putting your shots there (Figure 29 Page 61). We all know kitchen speed. Generally, it's that little extra we put on a shot. Shoot that same way on kitchen tries. On your release just give the shot that little extra. Now on those very difficult courts kitchening is next to impossible. Deep 7's need to be the play.

SITUATION 5 - Behind - Playable Court

We are behind by more than 2 discs as the game is winding down. The Deep 7 needs to be employed now. We put one in real deep on the opponent's side in the 7. They either miss it or choose to shoot through. What should be our response (Figure 30 Page 62)? I say, without a doubt, a deep 7 on the other side. The mistake I see many players make is to score a 10 or an 8. That puts no pressure

on the opponent, in fact, your good shooters will simply take that top disc down to the 7 - many times clearing them both. Remember, we put the first 7 there to hope for a roll into the -10 on the opponent's take out or a stick allowing us to try for the kitchen. Force the opponent to shoot at one of your 7's. Our only hope on that very difficult court is to hope we are behind by no more than two discs and get 1 in to the deep 7 - hopefully, we have at least 1 more hammer coming. Remember again that we are on real tough court - even for the take outs. In fact, don't be afraid to shoot through yourself to force them to shoot at that lone 7.

SITUATION 6 Behind, Playable or Non-Playable Court

This situation is as much psychological as it is physical/shotmaking. I say this to all of us who are behind near games end. Our play is to go deep 7, but on this shot we kitchen our attempt (Figure 31 Page 62). Granted we have pressure on us to come from behind and try to win the match. But wait! Think of your opponent's pressure - they are ahead so they should win. I say all of this for a particular reason - don't be afraid of kitchen on your deep attempts. A good player should shoot through allowing you to simply clear your kitchen. We are hoping and praying they don't do this! If they try to get cute with a score or block on our kitchen, they are giving us a chance to put them in the kitchen on a reverse. Remember, this is a slim chance but , it is a chance. On that hard court this play is even tougher, the reversal, but we must still try it at this point in the game.

SITUATION 7 - Behind - Playable or Non-Playable Court

This last situation, I'll admit, is a bit preachy. We are behind by 3 or more discs with no chance to win. Very simply, please - please play till the end of the game. What do we learn if we simply push through the last 2 or 3 frames? We are not going to win, but what better time is there to practice our deep 7's or kitchen attempts than in a real match. In later matches in the season we might benefit late in a game by one of these shots. Simply pushing through teaches us nothing - it just shows that we have given up. Play till the end.

PART 9 - FINAL COMMENTS AND SHUFFLEBOARD'S FUTURE

Section I - Other Game Situations

As every shuffler realizes, there are literally hundreds of situations one can

face , and just when you think you've seen it all you'll see something never seen before! I believe the choices we make in given situation depends on 3 main factors:

- A. When in the Game - simply put, my response to a given situation will vary - is it the 2nd frame or the 15th?
- B. Type of Court - will the court allow me to do what I want/am trying to do?
- C. My Play for the Day - this factor needs to be determined ASAP in a game - cautious play should always begin a match.

One final note - Always remember that the Meat and Potatoes wins Shuffleboard Games. We all make great shots from time to time; but, if we rely on these frame after frame we will not be successful in the long run.

Section II - The "Art" of Winning

Now, the age old question - why do some players, male or female, win so much more than others? I contend that 4 factors come into play :

- A. Confidence - All top players have this trait. It is not a boastfulness but an inner feeling. Practice and more practice and play and more play are the key ingredients.
- B. Reading the Court - I still contend that being able to read the court quickly in a match pays big dividends (many tips were given earlier in this book.)
- C. Minimize the Mistakes - Let your opponent make the mistakes. Do this by smart/conservative choices. Granted, we will all make poor shots and poor choices, but these should be few and far between.
- D. Patience - Calmness and concentration seem to mark the top players. Remember, especially on the fast Western Courts, we cannot/should not rush the game.

Section III - Learning From Others

In the game of Shuffleboard, just as in the game of Life, nobody knows it all! There are some, however, who know more than others. If we are to improve our game we need to continue to learn. I always start with my *opponent*, after I lose a match. I give that opponent the congratulations due, then encourage suggestions/ thoughts on what I could have done better in the match. You'd be surprised the pointers you can pick up. Also, I suggest talking with the *top players* as to their thought of their winning ways. By and large, most players will share their thoughts. Lastly, I strongly suggest checking the sources of knowledge provided to you in Appendix B Page 39 . I've provided all I could find, first on the physical part of playing the game. I've read and own all of the titles mentioned. I'd be glad to loan these out or direct you to having your own personal copy. The second page is on the mental/emotional side of the game. Again, you will note there are *no* shuffle books devoted entirely on this aspect of play (I've read golf books). Please look for my second book in 2008 on this subject.

Section IV - Teaching Others

Just like we all can learn - if we choose to - we can also teach. I believe that the sharing of one's knowledge is a validation to the teacher that the ideas are worthy. Simply put, if someone accepts and tries some of my thoughts and says, "Hey, that works for me too", that gives me a good feeling - that what I am saying has value. Forgive me for saying this, but there are people, yes, even shufflers, who don't think this way. The don't want to share what they know - this is sad. Players often say to me, "Bob, you're giving away your secrets." I always retort back, "I'm proud to share what I know, and if someone embraces some of what I say and uses it to beat me, I'm proud of that too!" To a person, all shufflers agree that we need to get more/new players into the game. Folks, we all need to be teachers for shuffleboard to grow. My final thought is very simple - we all need to be "Ambassadors" of the game we love! Become a Teacher!

Section V - A Shuffle Newsletter and Directory

Where does the game of Shuffleboard go from here? I continue to have a very strong belief that if the game is to continue its growth in the future, lines of communication need to be dramatically improved! I will continue to urge the leadership of the International, the various National organizations, and even the States and Provinces that play the game - to find common ground in promoting interest, knowledge, and growth of our sport. I hope to do my part in the above by working with the above organizations in developing a newsletter, whether it be

quarterly or annually published to share what is going on in our sport. Also, I continue to feel a directory needs to be published - possibly of every District/Club in the world that plays the game. We are indeed a very mobile population - wouldn't it be great in our travels to have a complete listing of playing venues? The above ideas are surely not new; yet, I believe they are attainable. For years I belonged to A.C.E. (*American Coaster Enthusiasts*). This organization was formed in 1977 for the sole purpose of riding roller coasters. Yes, I paid dues, but in return I received 4 beautiful quarterly magazines a year, plus a directory of where every roller coaster is in the world. I suggest that both of these are what we call today Hard Copy. I realize that we live in the computer age (Appendix C Page 41- 42). Please avail yourself to the information available. I highly recommend the shuffler.org for the most comprehensive and up-to-date information available that I've found.

Section VI -A Business Directory

This section brings me to the end of my writings, for now, on the game of Shuffleboard. I urge all readers to carefully check out Appendix D Page 42. I've done my best to focus on the 4 main businesses in our game in the United States. All of them are to be applauded and supported by each and every shuffler - for they are a lifeline for what we need to play our game. Because of their efforts we can all Keep On Shufflin.

APPENDIX

Appendix A-1

Shuffleboard - The Game of Your Future (Beginner's Video)

- A twenty minute video on the "Basics" of the game
- For new players - to new countries - as a refresher to one's Beginning Instruction
- Available at M & S Trophies, Mesa, AZ. Allen R. Shuffleboard, Inc., Seminole, FL.

Appendix A-2

Polyglide.com - Segments on the Internet - Intermediate Strategy

- Eventually 6 segments will complete this work-in-progress. It focuses on Fundamental Strategies to be employed to improve one's game.

Appendix A-3

Scorekeeping in Arizona

- The Lag - if you win, you take BLACK.
- The Turn-around - at the half you take the other color at your end - which is now yellow, this gives you the last shot of the game.
- Strategy Implications - if you lose the lag, you start with yellow *and* have 2 hammers in a row in frames 8 & 9.
- The final score of a frame should be called out loudly to the scorekeeper; example, 7 Yellow, 8 Black - the scorekeeper then repeats this out loud.

Scorekeeping in California

- The Lag - if you win, you take YELLOW.
- The Turn-around - at the half you take your color with you as you switch to the other side of the court at your end - this gives you the last shot of the game.
- Strategy Implications - by winning the lag you give your opponent (black) the first hammer of the game.
- The final score of a frame should be called out loudly to the scorekeeper; (note how CA calls it); example, Yellow 7, Black 8 - the scorekeeper then repeats this out loud.

APPENDIX A-4

Singles/Doubles
Partner _____

Game # _____

Date _____

Park/Court _____

Opponent _____

Cue Length- _____

Game Score
 ½ Bob ___ Opp. ___

“Bob” 3-Strong ½ / ½ Reading Court Game Bob ___ Opp. ___
 2-Average ___ / ___ Shot Strategy
 1-Poor ___ / ___ Hammer Count Kitchen ___ Me ___ They ___

<u>Tally Person</u> _____		
<u>Shot Taken</u>	<u>Successful</u>	<u>Unsuccessful</u>
1. <u>Block</u> _____	/ _____	/ _____
2. <u>Hide</u> _____	/ _____	/ _____
3. <u>Take-out</u> _____	/ _____	/ _____
4. <u>Take-out w/stick</u> _____	/ _____	/ _____
5. <u>Score</u> _____	/ _____	/ _____
6. <u>Shoot thru</u> _____	/ _____	/ _____
Total	+	=64

Appendix A-5

Use of Baseball Clicker (strikes/balls/outs/innings) to Keep Track of Hammers

STRIKES

2

Number
Made
(Draws)

BALLS

4

Number
Shot
(Draws)

OUTS

1

Number Made
(Sticks/Bumps)

INNING

4

Number Shot
(Sticks/Bumps)

Appendix A-6

The Length of Cue Theory (By Bob)

- The Basic Theory is that by lengthening/shortening a cue in ¼ " measures, the same stroke can be used to produce different lengths of shots (same golf swing using different clubs!)
- At this point I start each game with the cue 1 ½ " shorter than full length (need adjustable cue). I then lengthen to a max of 1 ½ " or shorten to a length of 1 ½ " depending on court conditions.
- Weights on my cue are approximately 1 ½ oz. (other weights - lighter or heavier are also available).
- At this point, the lengthening or shortening of cue is done on a feel basis.

DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF THE ADJUSTABLE SHUFFLEBOARD CUE STICK

(By Ron Krause)
(FEB. 2, 2004)

AS WITH ALL SPORTS, EQUIPMENT EVOLVES WITH GROWTH AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE PLAYERS AND THEIR INTEREST TO IMPROVE IN THE SPORT. IN THIS CASE IT IS AN ADJUSTABLE CUE (IN LENGTH) FOR FAST PLAY COURTS.

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT AN ADJUSTABLE CUE WILL NOT SUDDENLY MAKE A PERSON A SEASONED PLAYER. WHAT IT WILL DO IS GIVE YOU AN ADDITIONAL METHOD/TOOL TO USE, AND THAT WITH PRACTICE WILL IMPROVE YOUR GAME AND ABILITY TO REPEATEDLY PLACE YOUR SHOT/DISCS WHERE YOU WANT THEM ON FASTER COURTS.

PROFESSIONALS IN HEALTH AND SPORTS ATHLETICS HAVE RECOGNIZED FOR A LONG TIME THAT THE NATURAL TEMPO AND RHYTHM OF THE HUMAN BODY CAN BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH SPORTS EQUIPMENT TO IMPROVE OUR COMPETITIVENESS IN OUR CHOSEN SPORTS.

A CLASSIC EXAMPLE IS THE GAME OF GOLF. TAKE A LOOK AT THE GOLF CLUB.

AT A DISTANCE ALL IRONS LOOK ALMOST THE SAME, BUT UP CLOSE IT IS IMMEDIATELY NOTICED THAT EACH CLUB FACE HAS A DIFFERENT PITCH TO IT. WHY IS THIS? SIMPLY PUT, SO THAT WE CAN USE OUR NATURAL SWING (AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE) AND GET THE BALL TO GO DIFFERENT DISTANCES AS NEEDED, BY SELECTING DIFFERENT PITCHED CLUBS.

NOW, IN THE GAME OF SHUFFLEBOARD WE MAKE THE DISC TRAVEL FURTHER AND FASTER, AND WITH MORE KINETIC ENERGY, BY SHORTENING OR LENGTHENING OUR PHYSICAL ARM STROKE. THIS IS MOST STRONGLY SHOWN WHEN WE DO A TAKE OUT SHOT. THIS SHOT IS USUALLY SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE ACCURACY IN DISTANCE IS NOT REQUIRED AND PHYSICAL BALANCE FOR REPEATABILITY IS NOT REQUIRED.

GOING BACK TO THE RHYTHM AND TEMPO OF THE BODY, BALANCE IS ONE OF THE PRIME ISSUES OF HOW WE WALK AND SWING OUR ARMS. NOTE: (IN SHUFFLEBOARD PLAY WE TAKE TWO STEPS AND SWING OUR ARMS). IT HAS BEEN NOTED OVER THE YEARS IN MANY HUMAN RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT OUR NATURAL WALKING STRIDE AND ARM SWING HAS A VERY ACCURATE REPEATABILITY.

USING THIS NATURAL BALANCE FUNCTION HIGHLIGHTS THE REASON TO DEVELOP THE ADJUSTABLE CUE. WHEN USING A NON-ADJUSTABLE CUE WE FORCE OURSELVES TO EXTEND OR SHORTEN OUR ARM SWING TO ACCOMPLISH LONGER OR SHORTER TRAVEL DISTANCE OF THE DISC, AND BALANCE IS NEGATED AND REPEATABLE ACCURACY SUFFERS.

HOW DO WE USE THE ADJUSTABLE CUE? THE UPPER HALF OF THE CUE IS MARKED IN QUARTER INCH INCREMENTS STARTING FROM THE POINT WHERE THE UPPER HALF OF THE CUE JOINS THE LOWER HALF. THE MARKINGS CONTINUE FOR THREE INCHES WITH THE INCH AND HALF DISTANCE HAVING A DOUBLE MARKING DENOTING THE CENTER POINT OF THE MARKINGS. WHEN BEGINNING A GAME WE SET THE CUE TO THE CENTER POINT. TARGET YOUR PRACTICE SHOTS TO THE TEN (10) OF THE HOUSE. IF YOUR SHOTS FALL SHORT ADJUST THE CUE TWO (2) MARKS TO MAKE THE CUE LONGER. CONVERSELY IF YOUR SHOTS GO BEYOND THE TEN (10) SPOT ADJUST THE CUE TWO (2) MARKS MAKING THE CUE SHORTER. AS THE GAME PROCEEDS FURTHER YOU MAY FIND MORE ADJUSTMENT IS NECESSARY AS COURT CONDITIONS CHANGE.

AFTER PLAYING SEVERAL DAYS YOU WILL BECOME MORE COMFORTABLE WITH THE ADJUSTMENTS AND WHEN TO USE IT. THIS ADJUSTABILITY BECOMES MORE USEFUL WHEN PLAYING FASTER COURTS.

Appendix A-7

Magnetic Board - Developed by Roy McLure

- To teach strategy up close
- To help the visually impaired and hearing impaired
(Magnets can be moved to simulate shots or to show actual shots)

Appendix A-8

Charting My Hammers - (Last 3 years)

Draws Made
Draws Shot
%

Sticks Made
Sticks Shot
%

Total Games Played
Game Score - Me (average)
Game Score - Opponent (average)

Appendix B-1

Shuffleboard Books - (The physical/shotmaking part of shuffleboard)

- Bullard, Col. How To Play Shuffleboard, 1958
- Catan, Omero Secrets of Shuffleboard Strategy, 1973
- Estes, Wilbur Modular Shuffleboard, 1995
- Faris, Lary Improve Your Shuffleboard, 1991
Improve Your Shuffleboard, 1993
- Garrett, Charles Shuffleboard Shotmaking, 2000
Shuffleboard Shotmaking with Strategy
Implications, 2002
- Haslem, Charles How To Book of Shuffleboard, 1977
- Johnson, Andy Shuffleboard 101, 1980
- Kamp, Dip Improve Your Shuffleboard, 1997
- McKenzie, Paul How to Win at Shuffleboard, 1989
- Peterson, Ken Shuffleboard Strategy - ABC's of Shuffleboard, 1984
- Swem, Floyd Shuffleboard, Those Capricious Discs, 1980
- Von Schuler, Karl Beginners Digest of Shuffleboard, 1974
- Zaletel,
 "Shuffleboard Bob" Keep on Shufflin, 2005

Appendix B-2

The Mental and Emotional Part of Shuffleboard - (Derived from these books)

Cohn & Winters	<u>Mental Art of Putting, 1995</u>
Freeman	<u>Golfers Book of Wisdom, 1995</u>
Gallwey	<u>Inner Game of Golf, 1998</u>
Graham & Stabler	<u>Traits of Champion Golfers, 2000</u>
Miedaner	<u>Coach Yourself to Success, 2000</u>
Parent	<u>Zen Golf, 1998</u>
Rotella	<u>Golf is not a Game of Perfect, 1995</u>
Steinberg	<u>Mental Rules for Golf, 2003</u>
Tomasi (Excellent)	<u>30 Second Golf Swing, 2001</u>

Appendix C

Linking Our Shuffleboard Community - by "Shuffleboard Bob"

This is an attempt to coordinate communication between the various Shuffleboard entities throughout the World, Canada, U.S., Arizona and California as of 10-01-05. Extra space is provided to keep these listings updated. Every effort has been made to insure accuracy.

SHUFFLEBOARD WEBSITES (* indicates website coordinator)

INTERNATIONAL

Sandy Myers - Canada www.trigger.net/~sandy/home.htm
Stan McCormack - Canada www.theshuffler.org

NATIONAL

Wilma Rudolph www.homestead.com/nationalshuffleboard

ARIZONA

Pat Lane www.geocities.com/azshuffleboard

CALIFORNIA

Larry Bell www.cashufflers.com

E-Mail Addresses

INTERNATIONAL

President - Joe Messier (US) JHMessier@earthlink.net
* Exec. VP - Sandy Myers (CAN.) Sandy@trigger.net
3rd VP - Michael Zellner (BRAZIL) Zellner@amcham.com.br

NATIONAL

President - Walt Wedel Wedelann@aol.com
VP - Joe Messier (US) JHMessier@earthlink.net
* Wilma Rudolph-Webpage redRudolph@earthlink.net

CANADA

President - John Weston jocoweston1@aol.com
1st VP - Max Tate mrtate@strato.net
* Stan McCormack -Webpage stanistheman_200@yahoo.com

WESTERN

President - Rob Robinson
Vice-President - Chuck Clausen
Secretary - Pat Neff

scootinmargaret@aol.com
chuckel@mycidco.com
rneff36@cybertrails.com

ARIZONA (STATE)

ASA President- Chuck Clausen
ASA VP - Stan Peters
ASA Secretary - Pat Heithoff
Pat Lane (Web person)

chuckcl@mycidco.com
stanley_peters@mindspring.com
Azsasecy@aol.com
anoscut@yahoo.com

CALIFORNIA (STATE)

CSA President - Larry Bell
CSA 1st VP - Helen Bell
Mike Walker (Dura Dress)
NSA 3rd VP - Rocky Briggs
Larry Bell (Web person)
CSA Communicator - Lee Christmas

llorenzo@verizon.net
llorenzo@verizon.net
mwalkerdur@earthlink.net
rockyb2@dslextreme.com
Llorenzo@verizon.net
xmasLtoo@aol.com

Appendix D

The Business of Shuffleboard

- Allen R. Shuffleboard Co., Inc. (Sam Allen/Jim Allen)
6595 Seminole Blvd.
Seminole, FL 33772

Phone: 1-800-260-3834
Website: www.shuffleboard-1.com
E-mail: mrshuffle@aol.com

- Polyglide, Inc. (Kathy Cullop)
3081 LaJolla St. Unit D
Anaheim, CA 92806

Phone: 1-800-921-1722
Website: www.polyglide.com
E-mail: kcullop@polyglide.com

- M & S Sporting Goods (John Rosenkrans/Judy Martinez)
138 W. Main St.
Mesa, AZ 85201

Phone: 1-888-969-2209

Website: www.msawards.com

E-mail: msshuffle@qwest.net

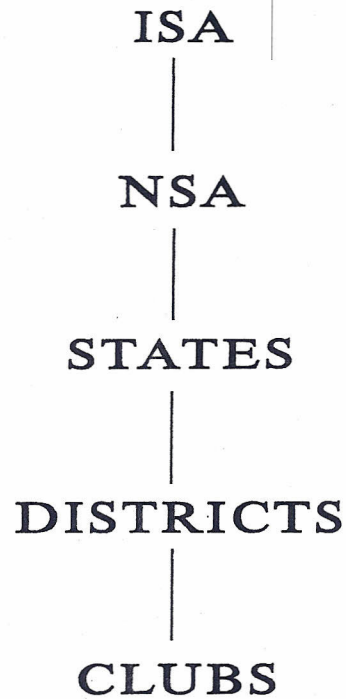
- Dura Dress Shuffleboard (Mike Walker)
2836 Merrywood Dr.
Sacramento, CA 95825

Phone: (916) 485-7802

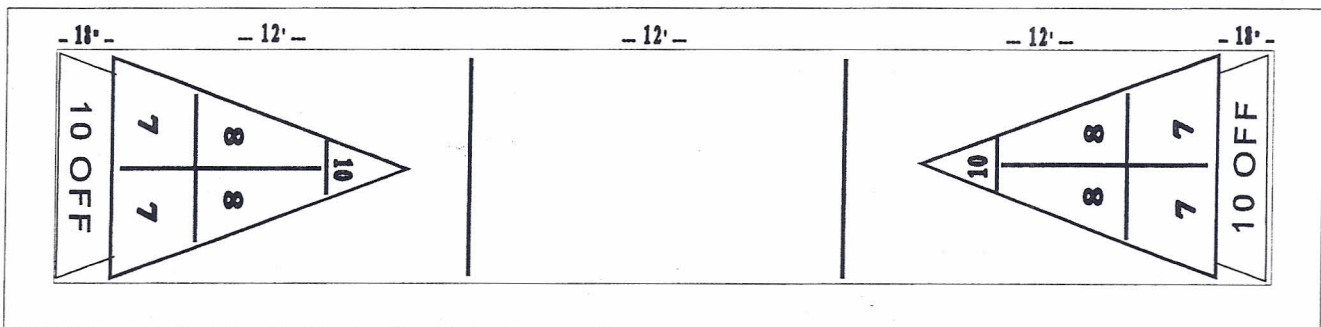
E-mail: duradress@yahoo.com

FIGURES

Shuffleboard's Organization (Figure 0)



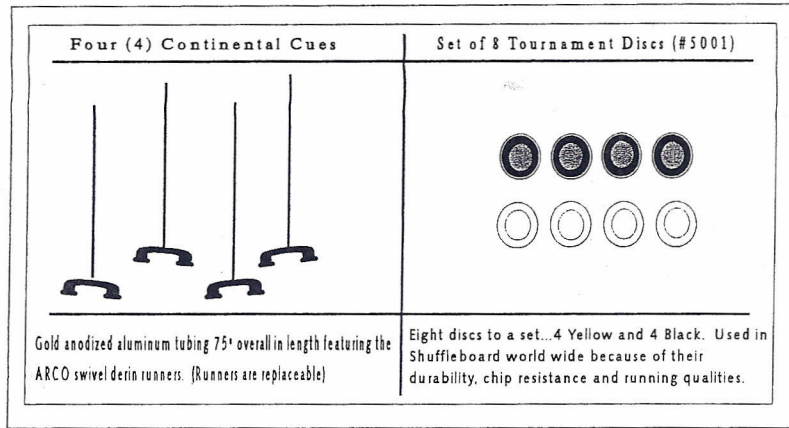
THE PLAYING COURT



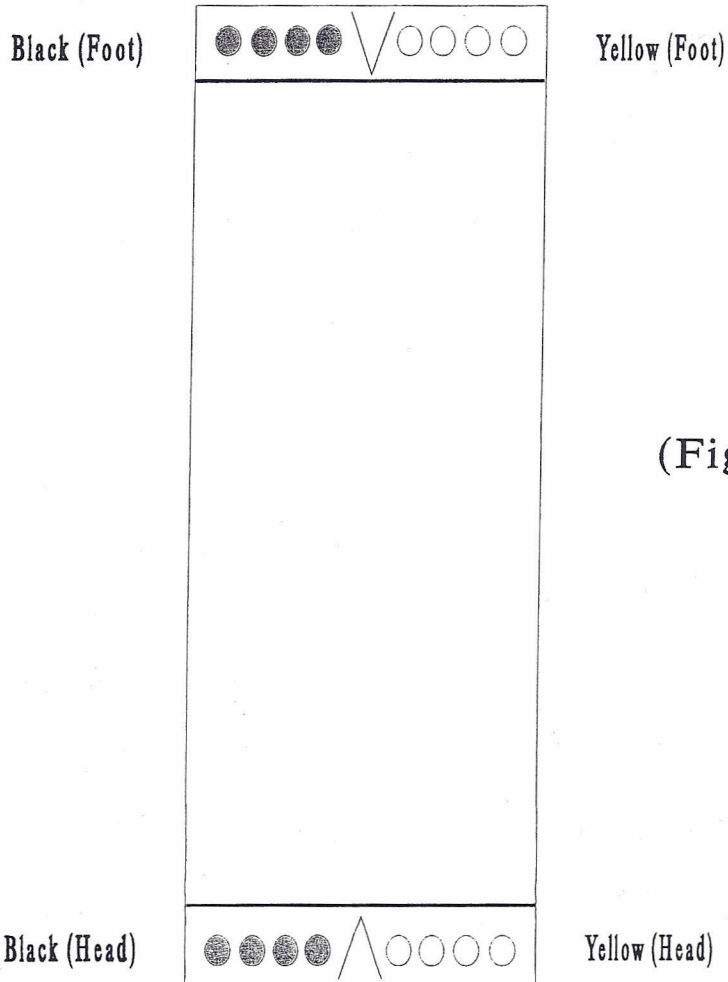
The Court size is six feet (6') wide by thirty-nine (39') long, plus a six foot six (6'-6") Standing area at each end.

(Figure 1)

(Figure 2)



Disc Positioning at Head/Foot



(Figure 3)

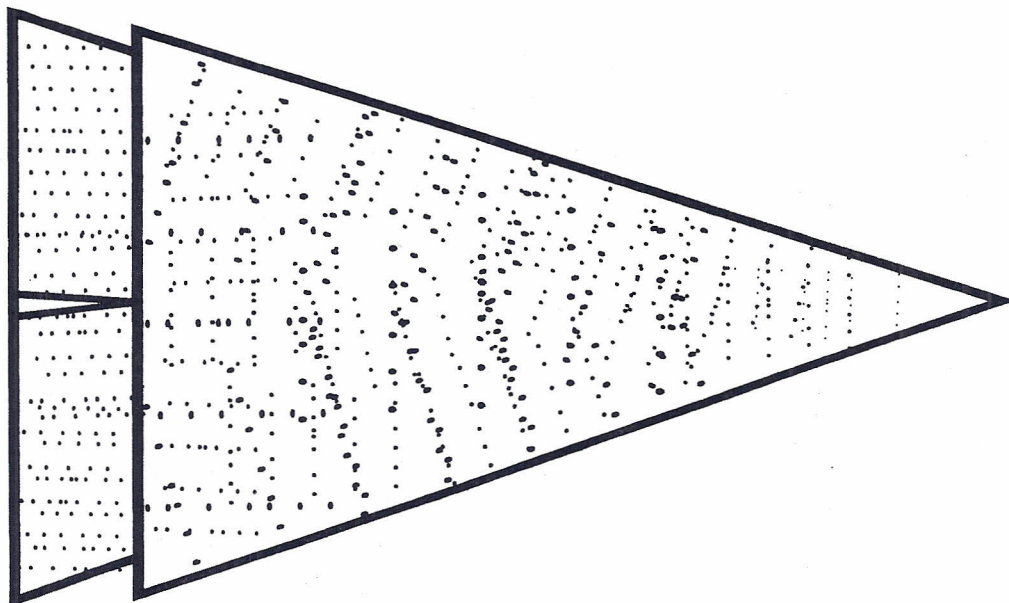
The Scoreboard

(Figure 4)

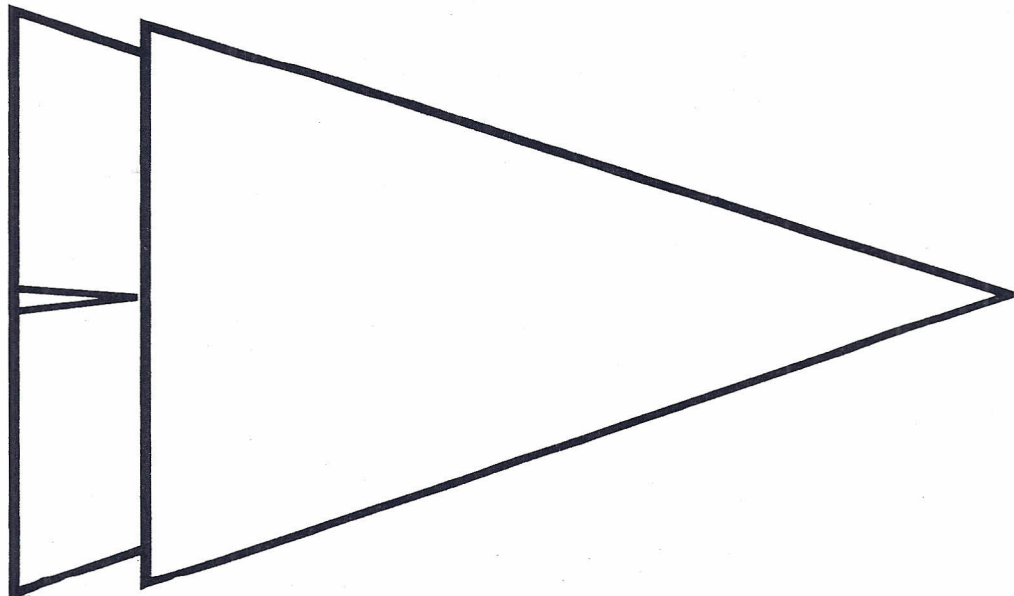
5									
Team Scores									
Players									
Bob		○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<small>H E A D</small> Kathy		○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dale		○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<small>F O O T</small> Kevin		○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Eastern Courts

(Figure 5)

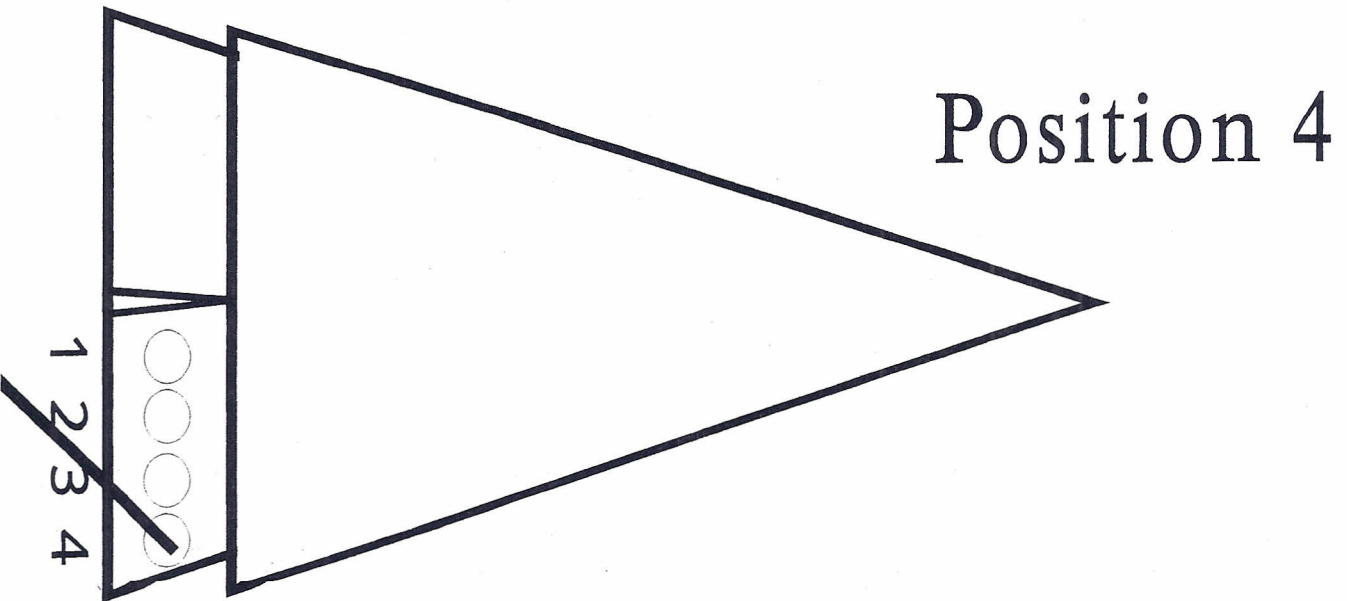
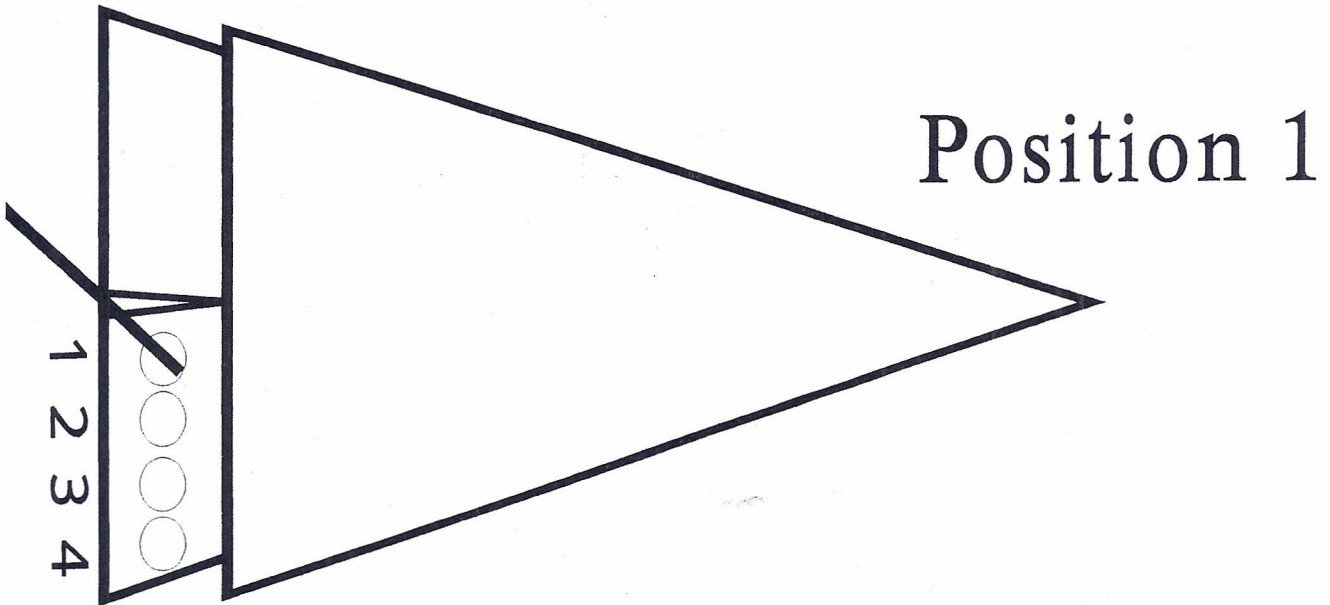


Western Courts



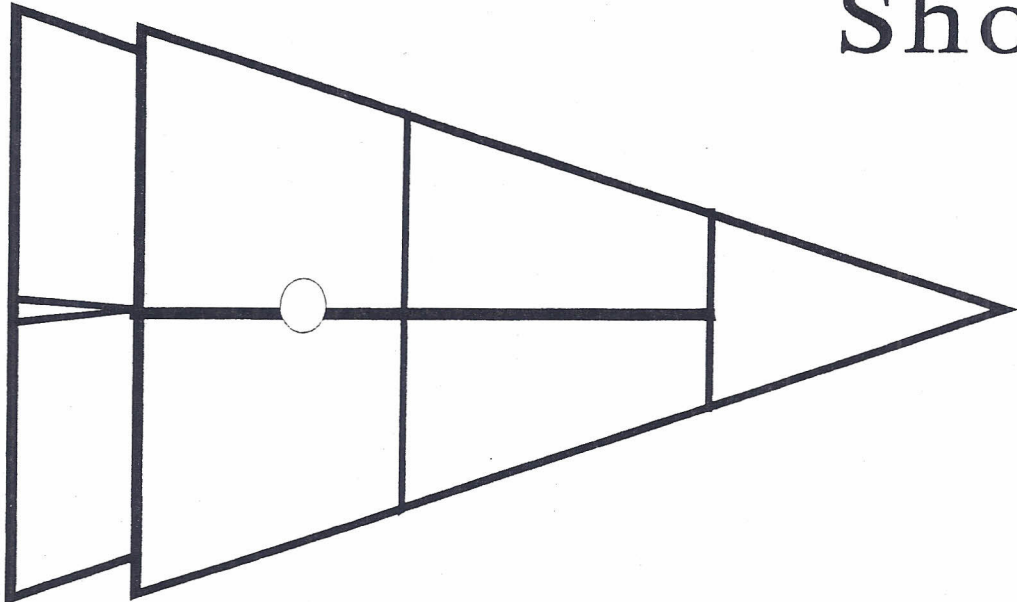
Disc Placement of Practice Shots

(Figure 6)



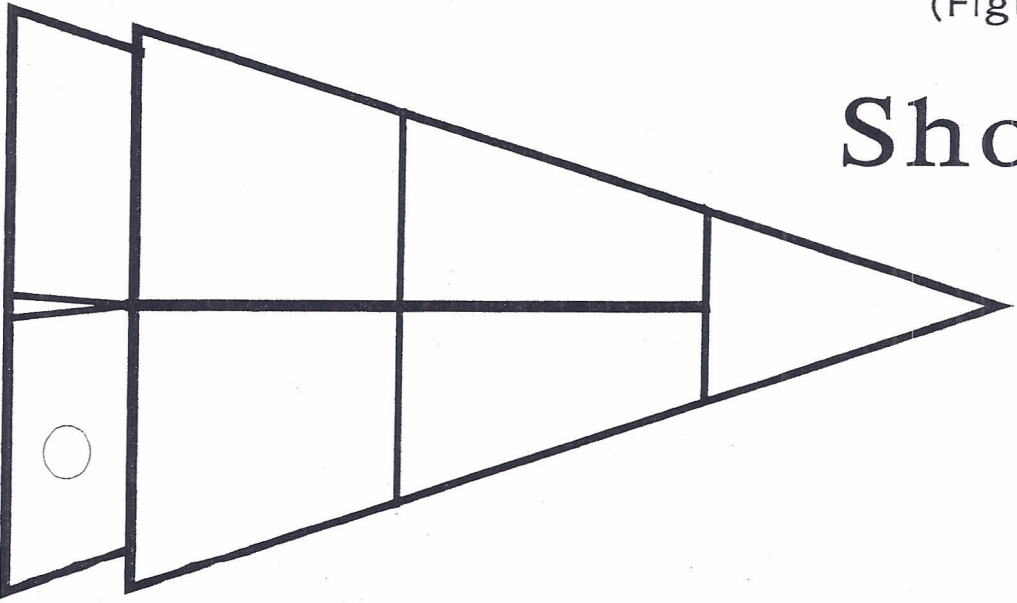
(Figure 7)

Shot #1



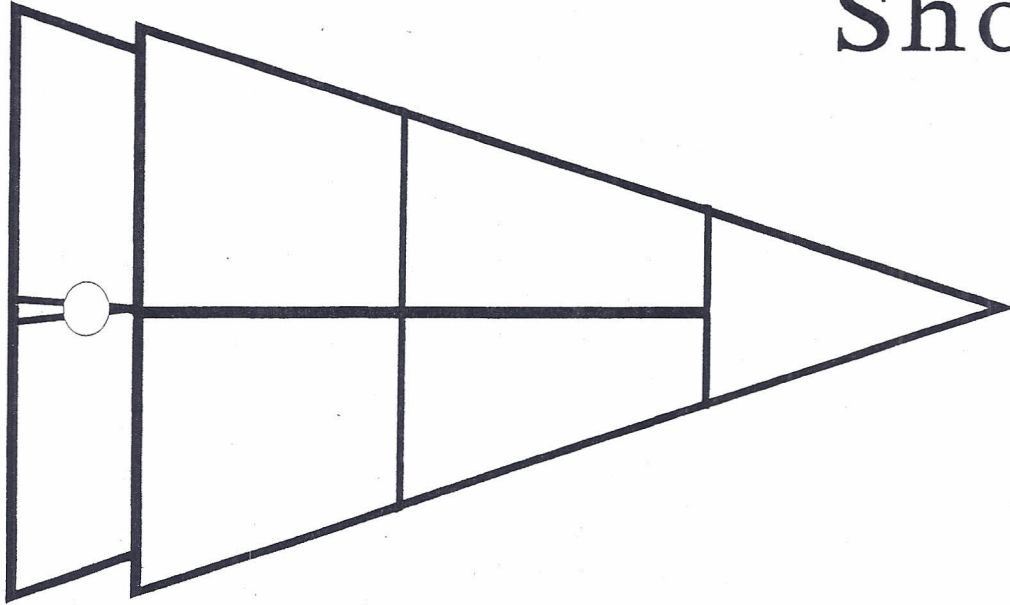
(Figure 8)

Shot #2



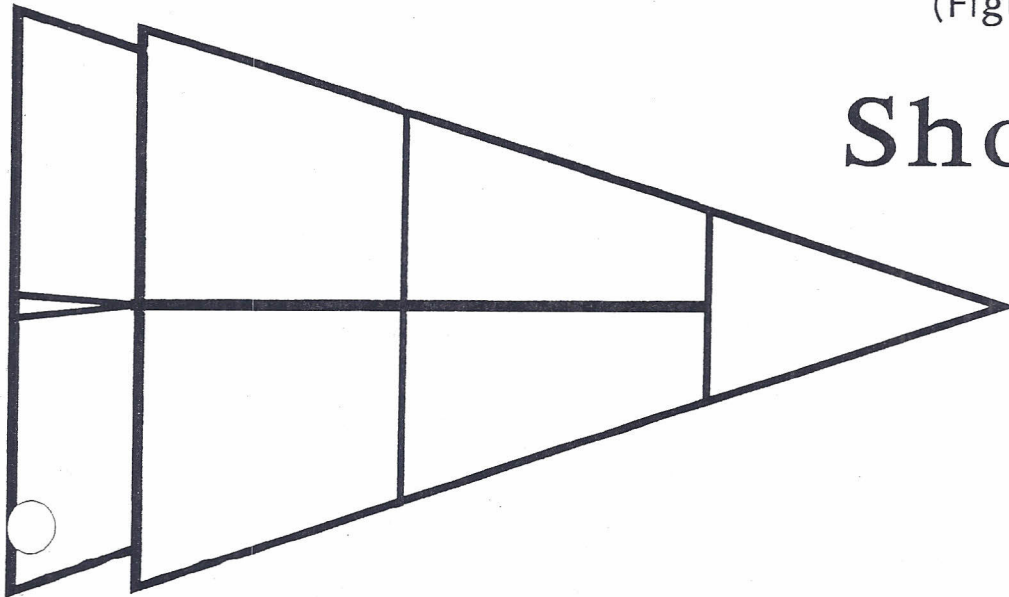
(Figure 9)

Shot #3



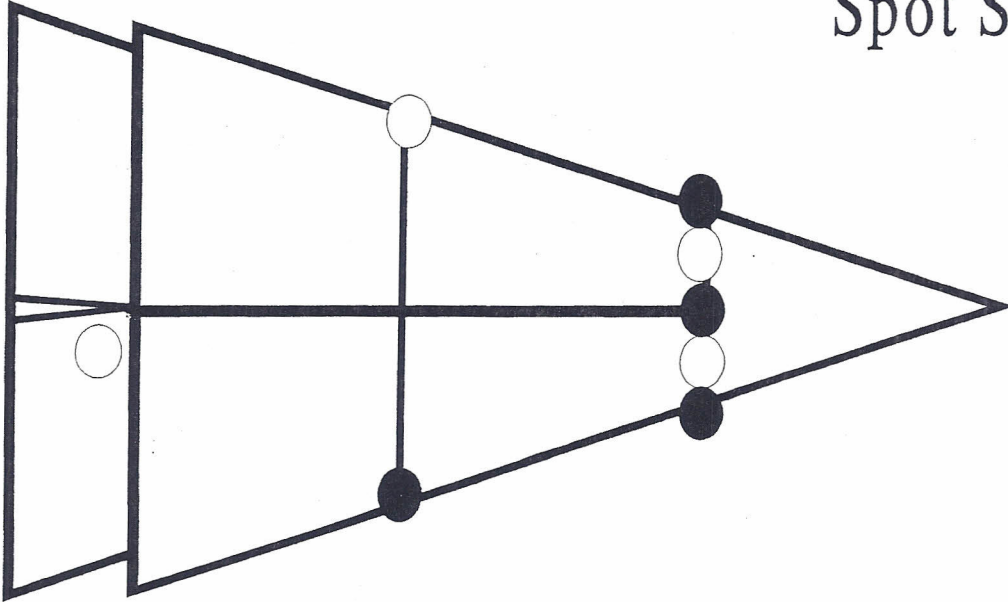
(Figure 10)

Shot #4



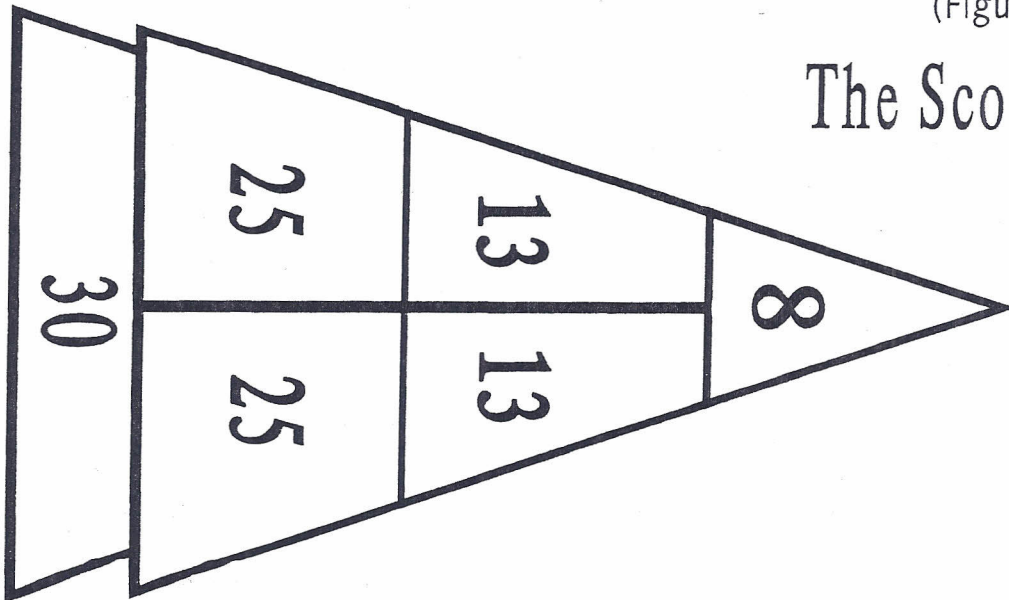
(Figure 11)

Spot Shooting

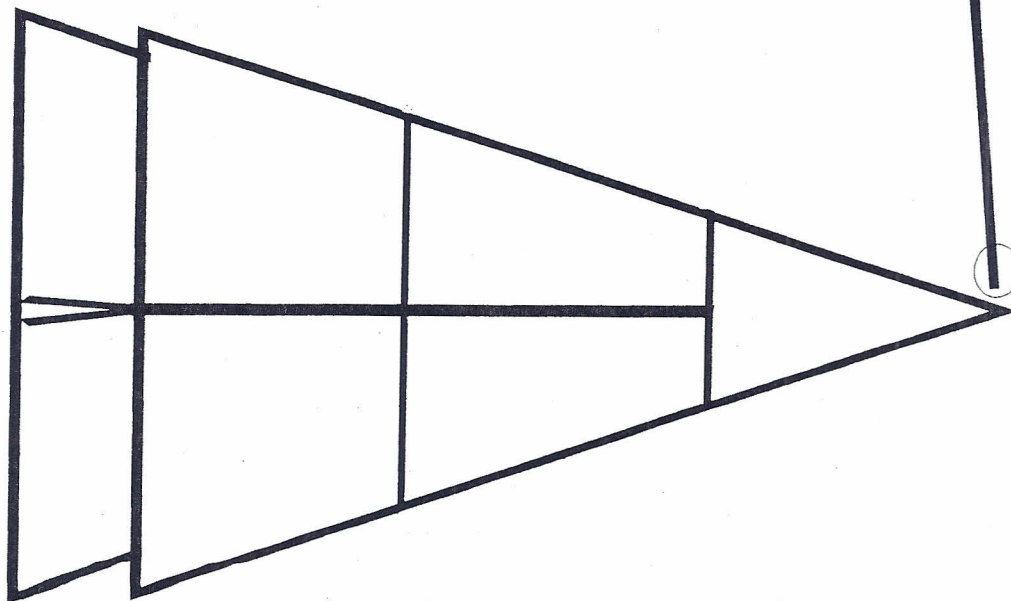
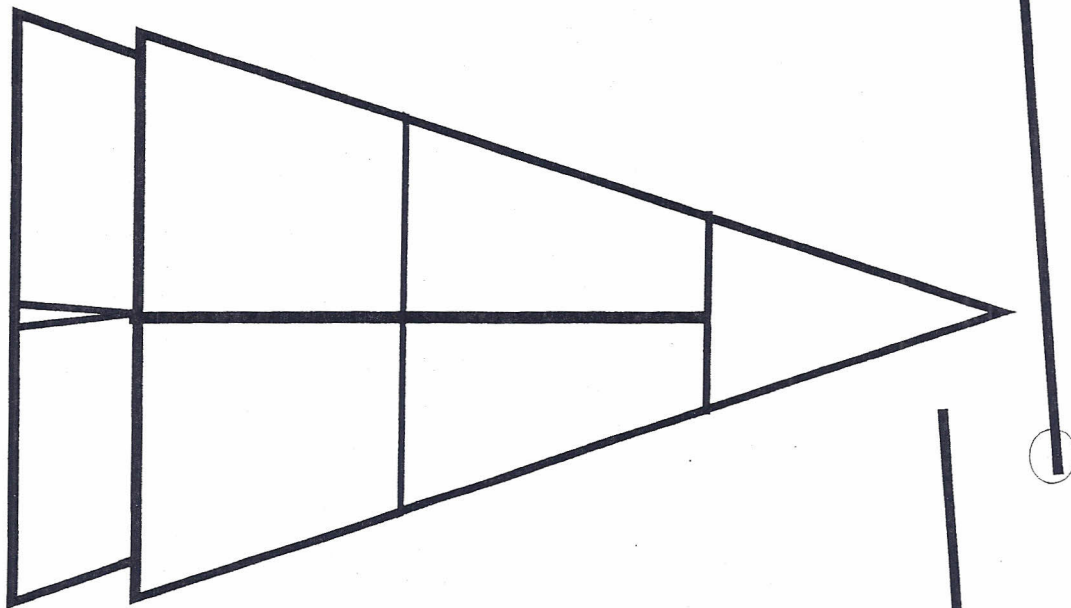


(Figure 12-A)

The Scoring Area



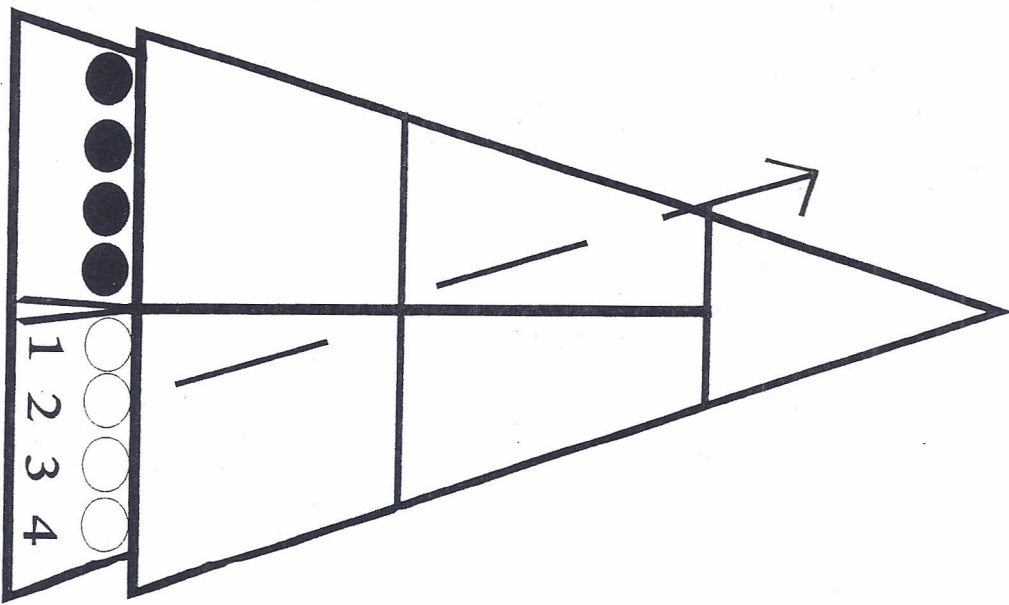
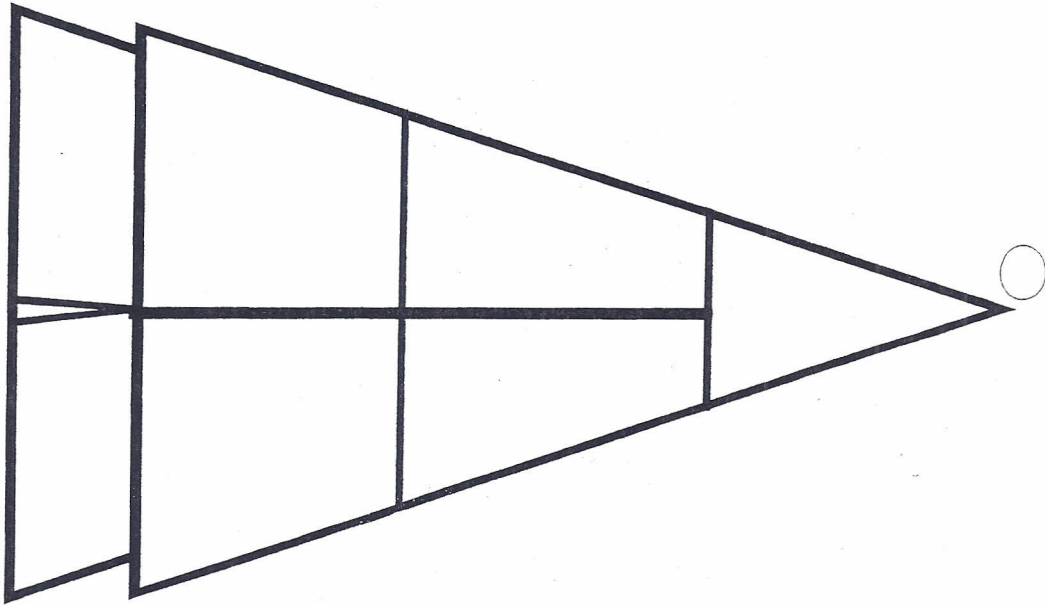
The St. Pete (Figure 12-B)



The Tampa

Controlling the 10 Area

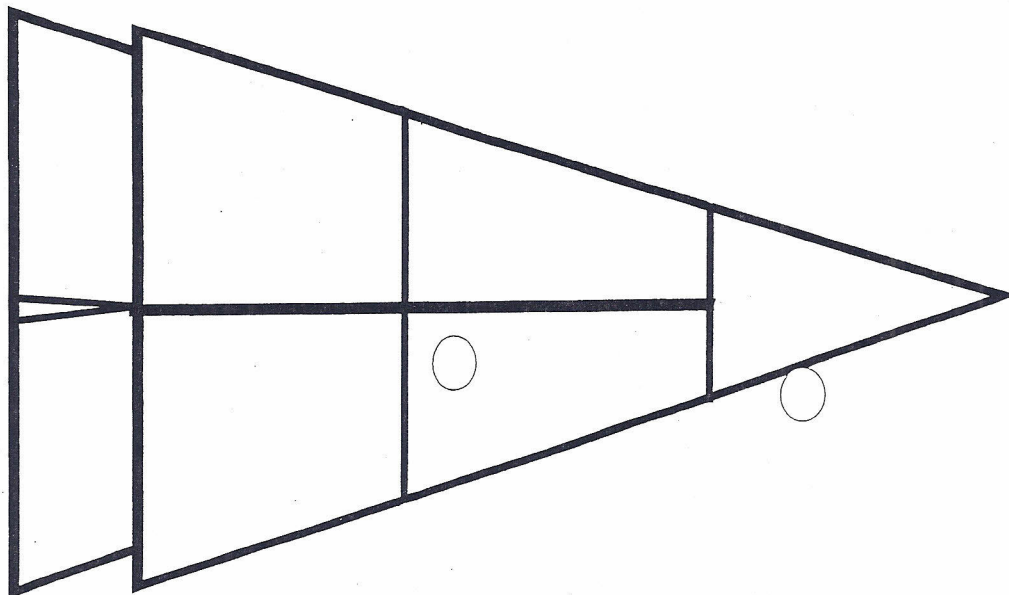
(Figure 13)



Finding the Line

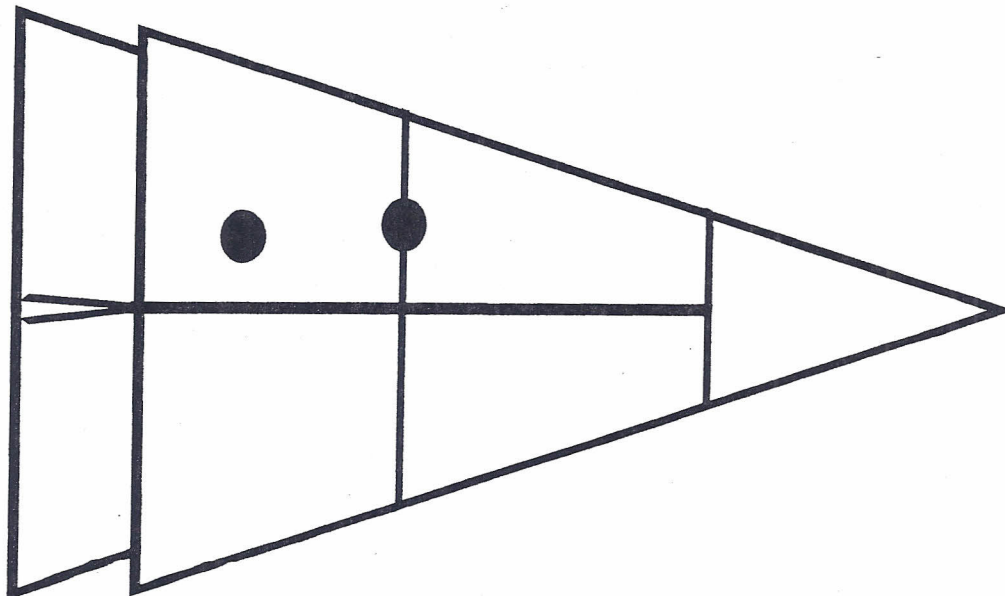
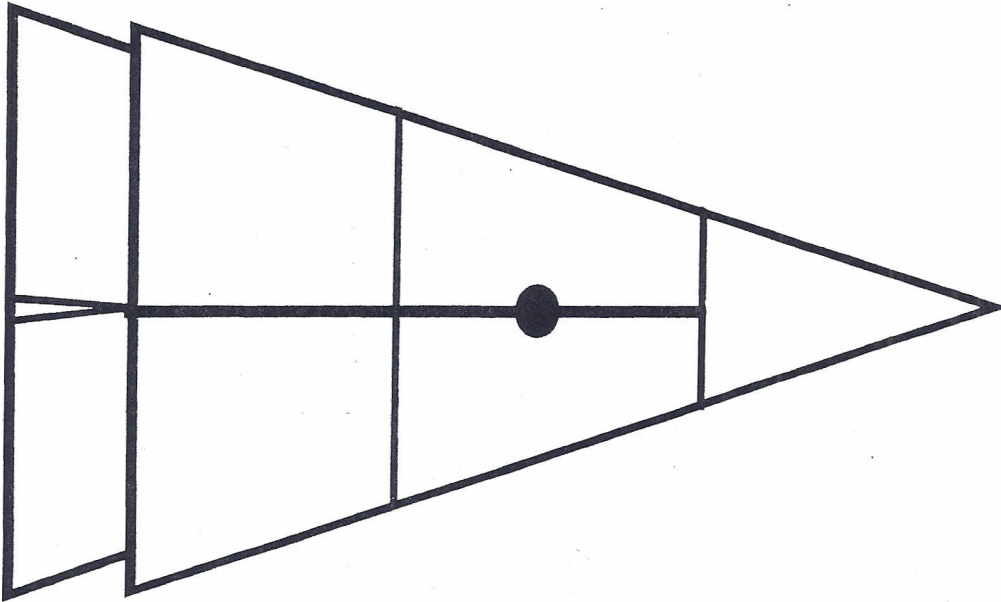
(Figure 14)

Score Again or Block (Figure 15)



Hammer Shot

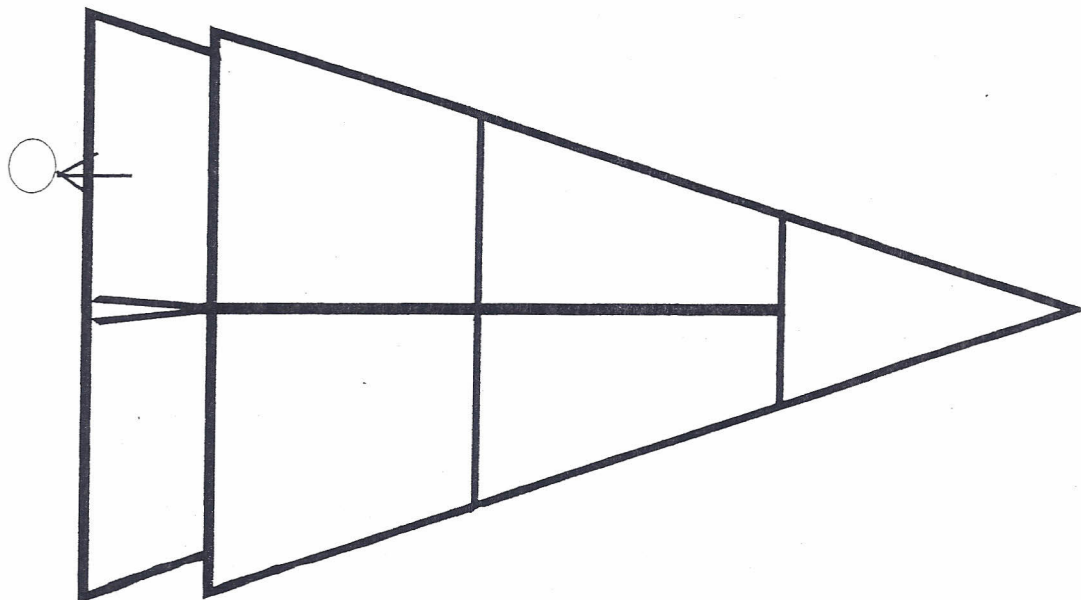
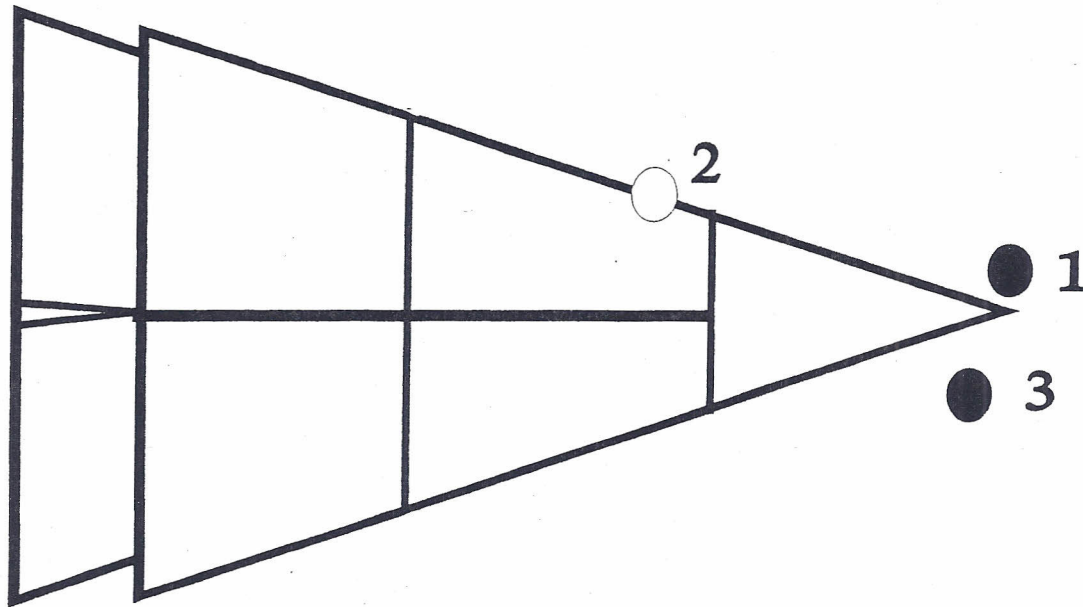
(Figure 16)



Hammer - Counter Blocked

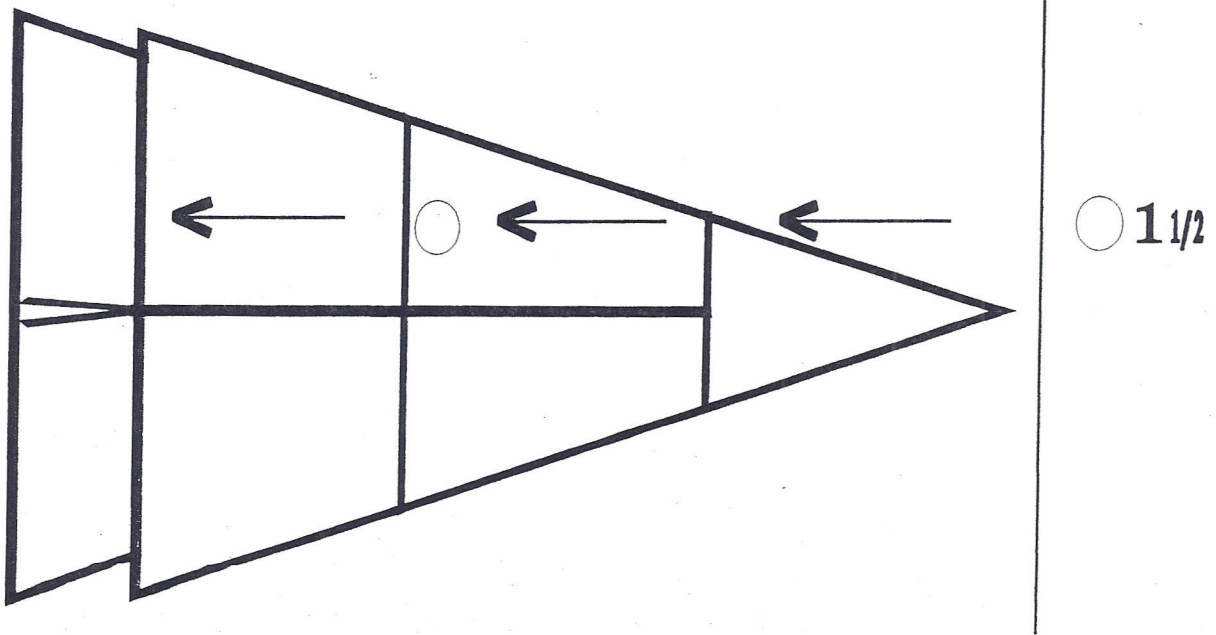
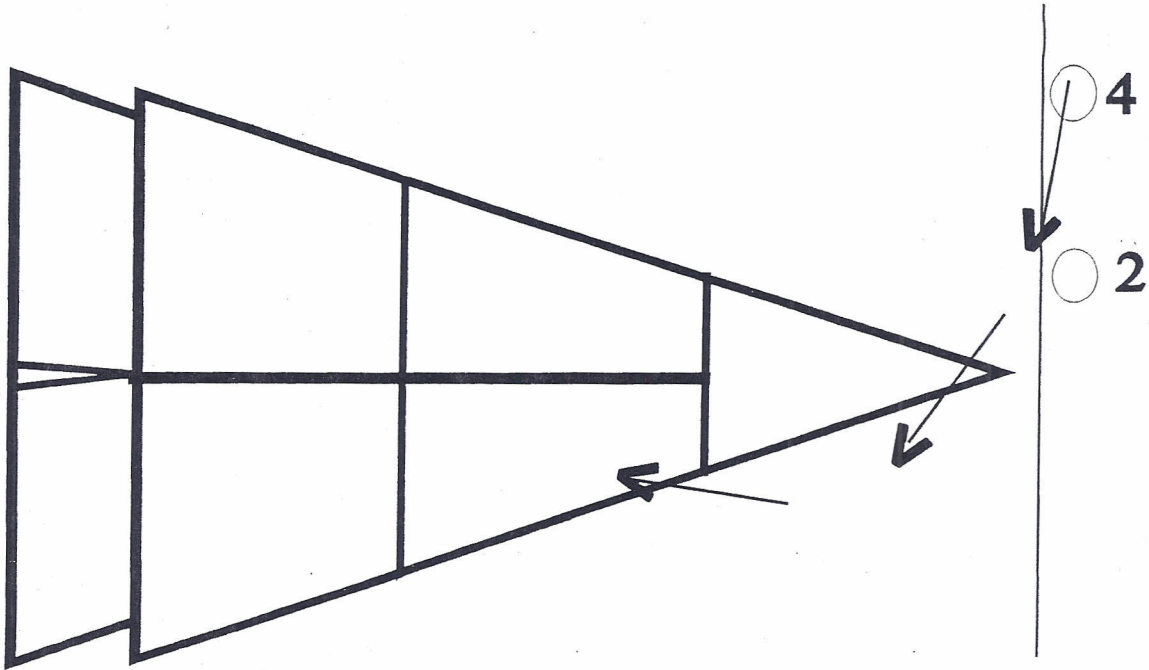
(Figure 17)

Disc #3 Hide - BEWARE (Figure 18)



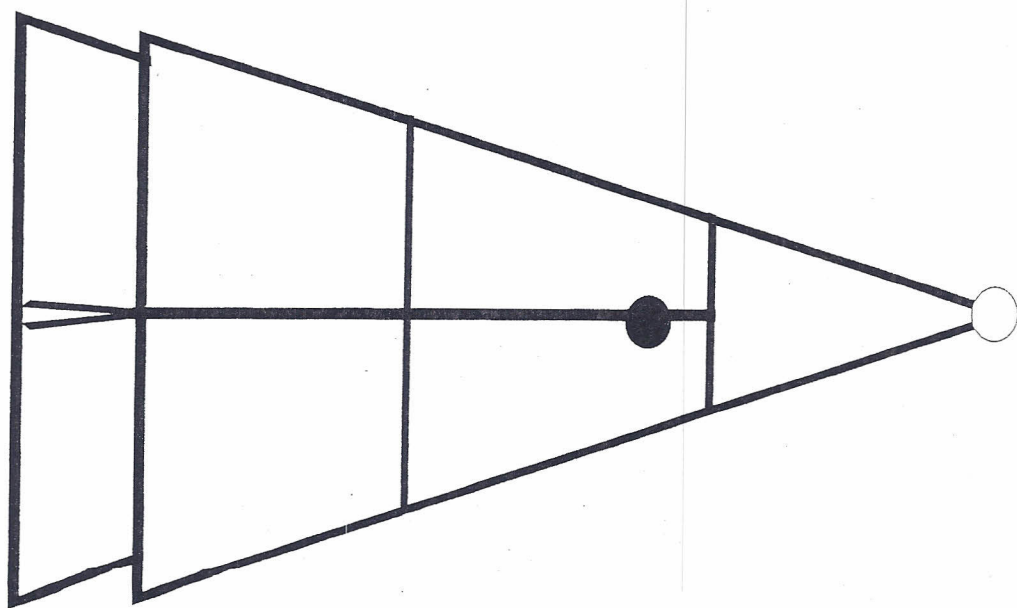
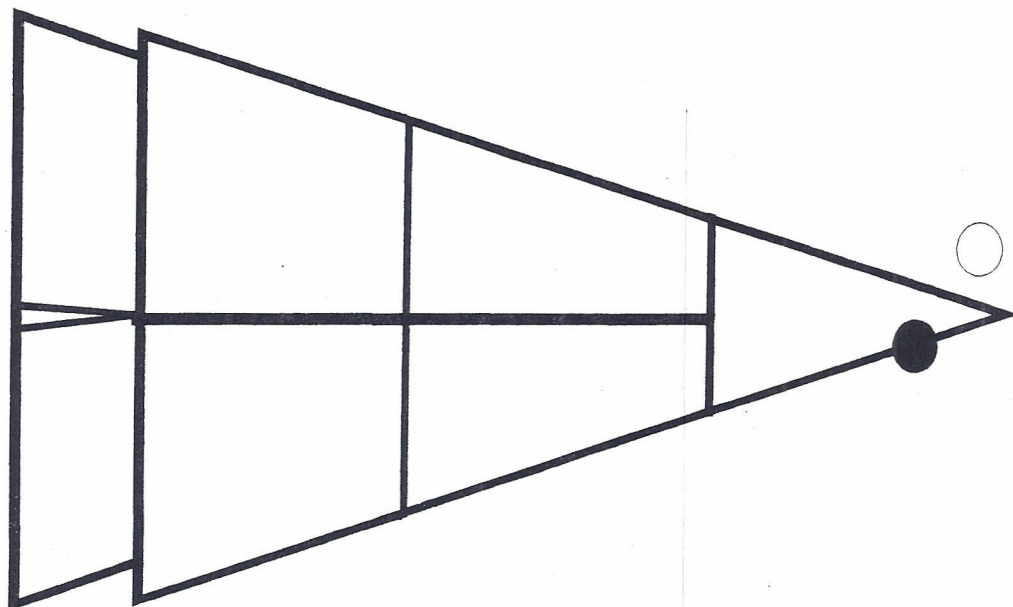
Court Clear/Disc 6 (Figure 19)

Yellow or Black Court (Figure 20)



Take Out Speed (Figure 21)

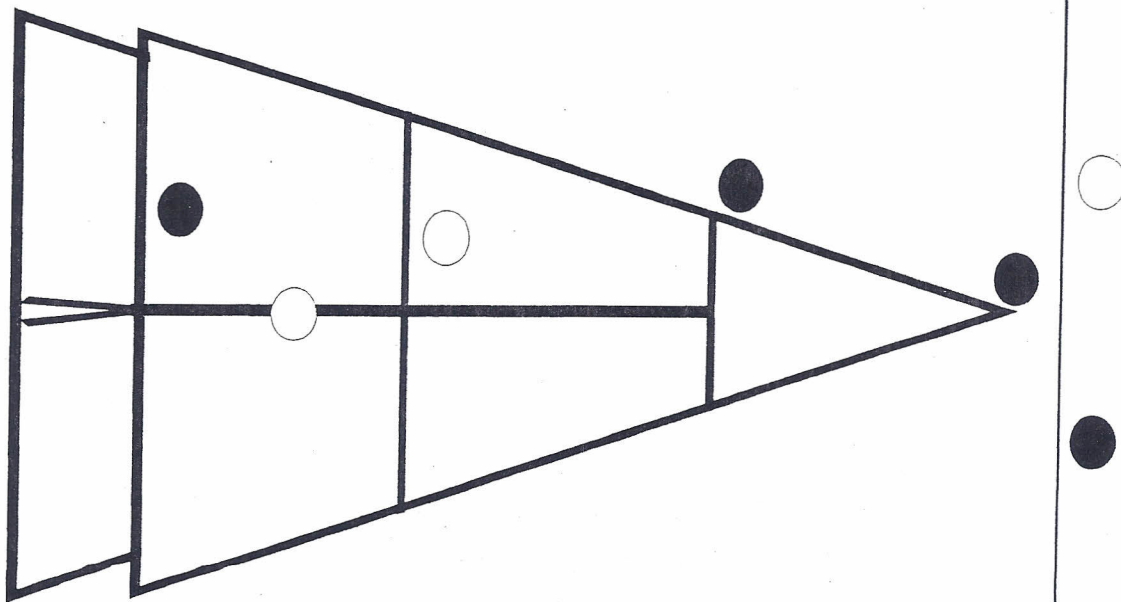
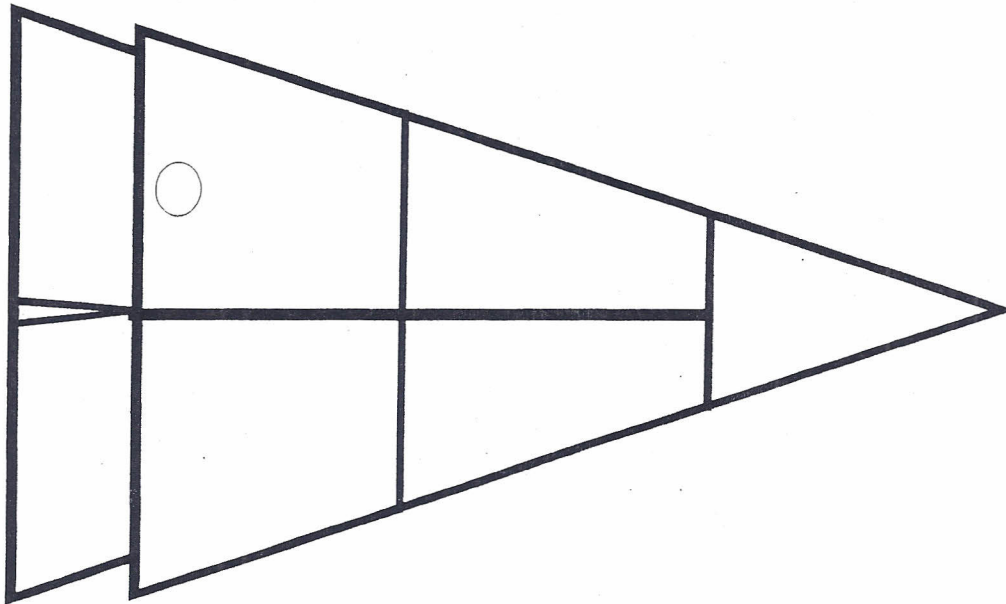
Opponent Disc Near the 10 Before Hammer (Figure 22)



Opponent's Disc on 8 Lines Before Their Hammer

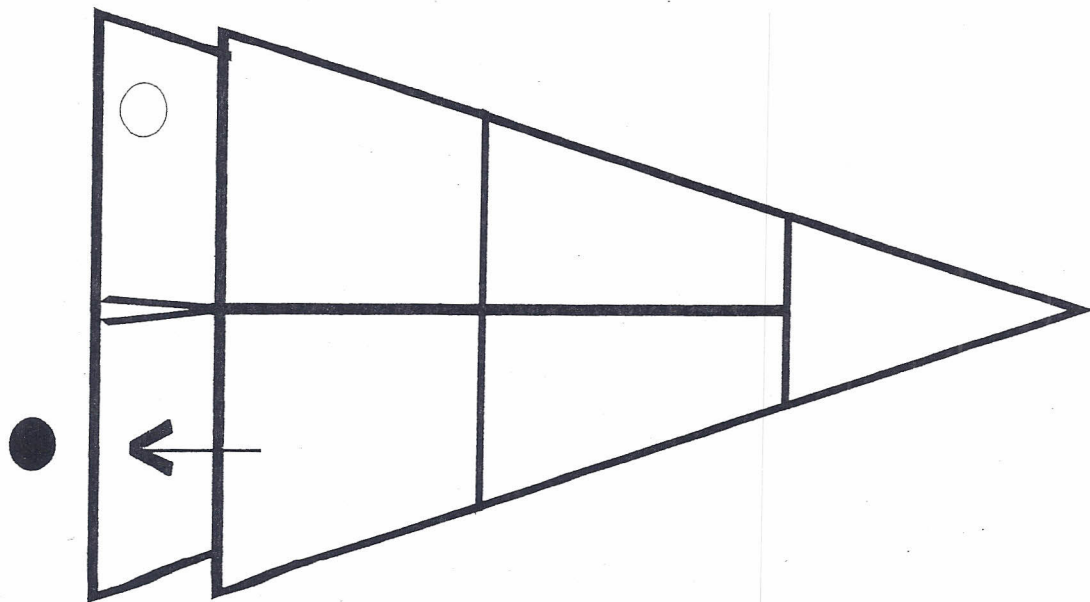
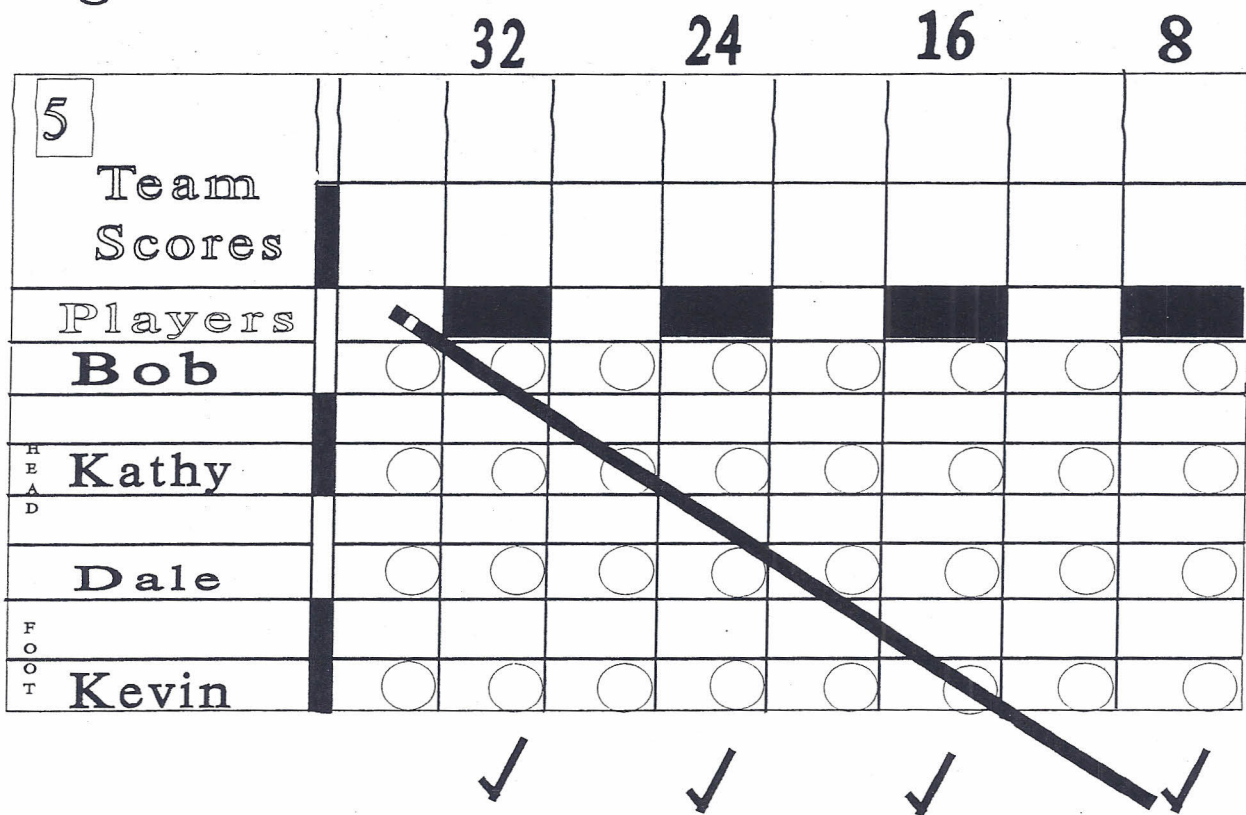
(Figure 23)

The Deep 7 (Figure 24)



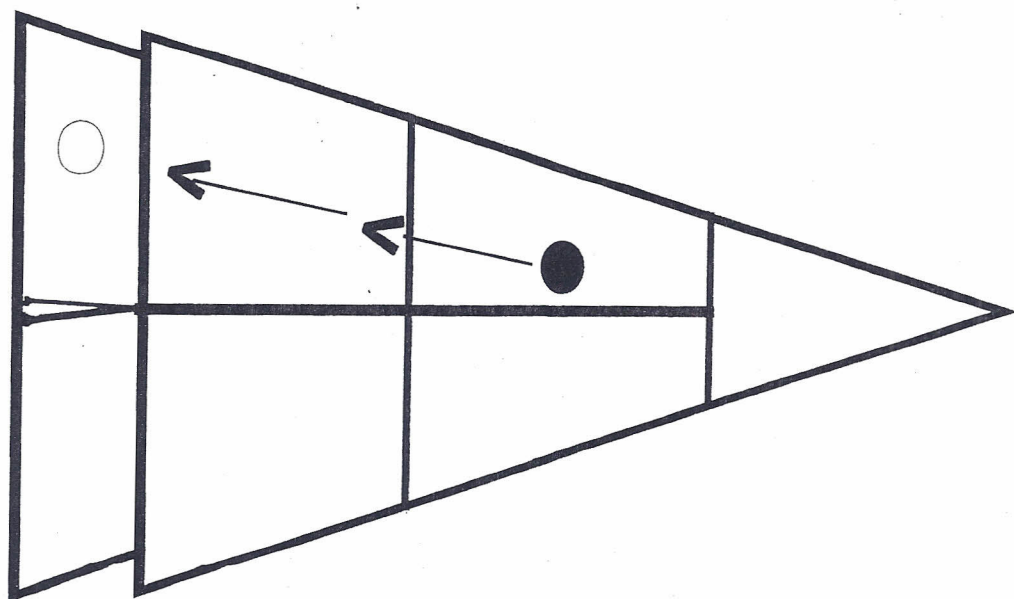
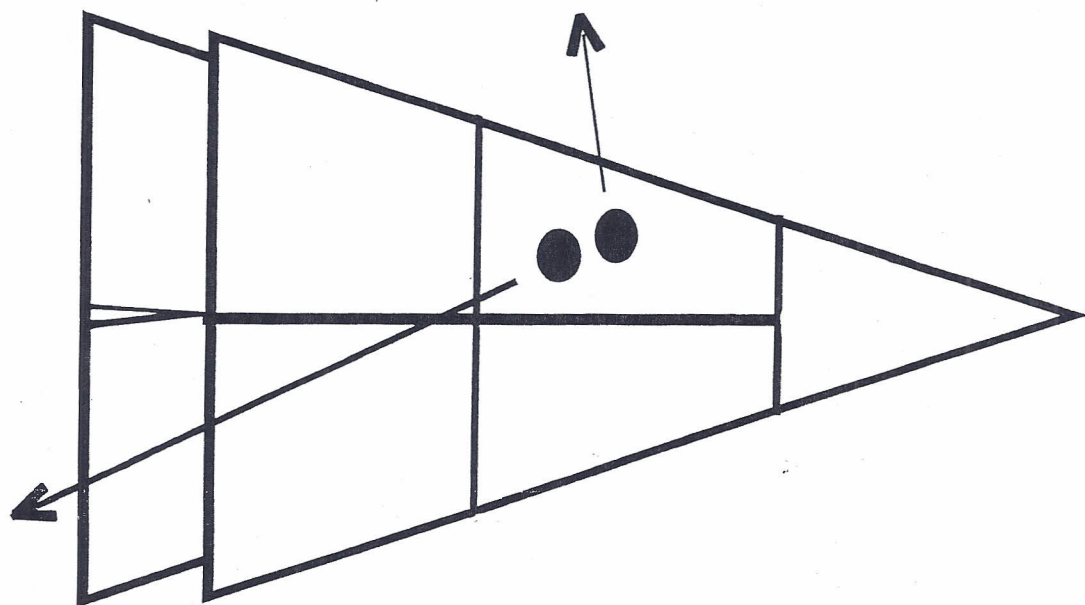
Luck in Shuffleboard (Figure 25)

Magic Numbers (Figure 26)



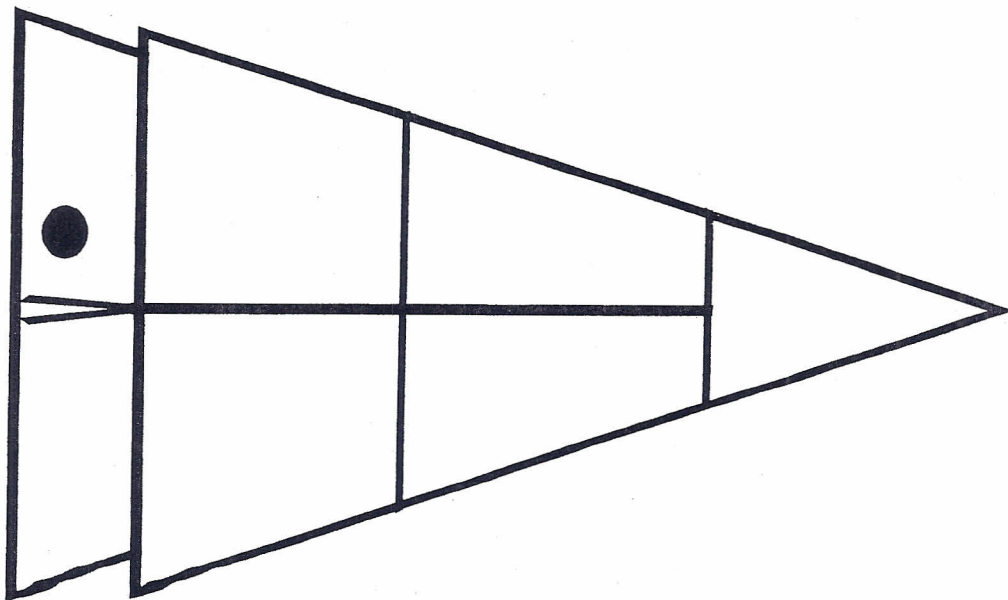
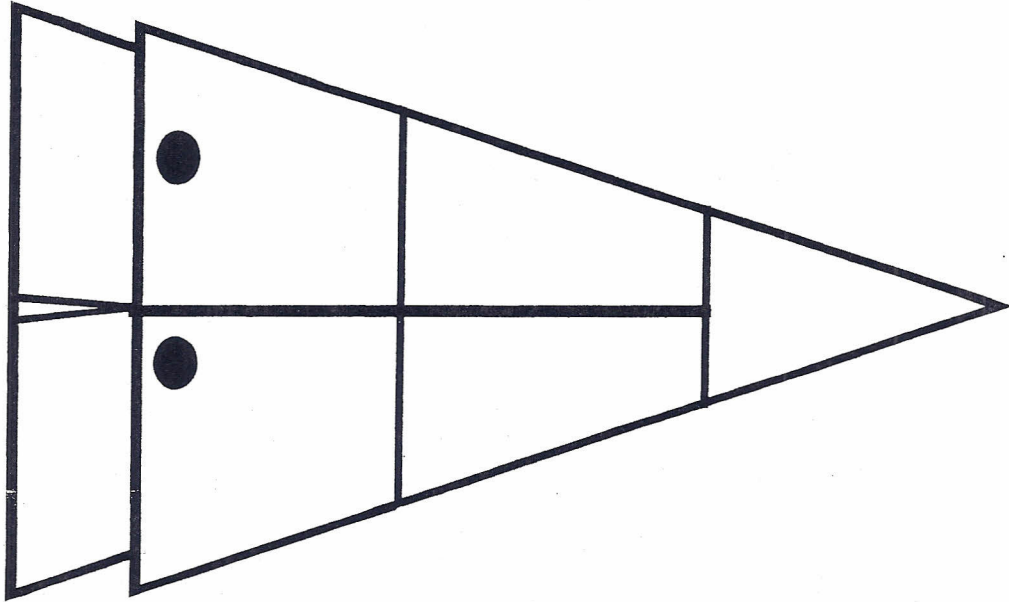
Should We Block Kitchen? (Figure 27)

Should I Knock Off My Disc? (Figure 28)



Do I Play Kitchen? (Figure 29)

Blocking Deep 7 with an 8? (Figure 30)



Afraid of Kitchen? (Figure 31)