

STEVENSON'S RELOAD

HARRY SEZ Very frequently in the midst of the top-of-the-table movements the object white will be found tight against the top cushion behind the billiard spot. This position as often leads to some attractive play, in which the leading feature is the holding of the ball in its place. I have myself, in similar circumstances, cannoned seven or eight times flush on the cushioned white without disturbing it. The ball is pinioned between the cannoning cue-ball, which causes a "**POSTMAN'S-KNOCK**" sort of tat-tat ! as the contact is made. What with the red winners interspersing these cannons, as many as fifty to sixty points may be made without the object white being moved from its position against the cushion.

THE INVALUABLE DROP CANNON As sure as the professional finds himself in difficulties he looks for a way to score a losing hazard. Playing this he shapes up the two object balls for the cannon, & then, from the D, so handles the stroke as to again get the balls between the top pockets. Its very methodical billiards this, gaining, then momentarily losing, & again regaining the top of the table. I have frequently in the course of a two or three hundred break played twenty & even thirty times from the D.

THE CROSS LOSER Whenever one gets into trouble, it is good policy, as i have previously said, to look for a losing hazard, leaving the object balls placed for a "drop" cannon. An equally sound shot in this cross-losing hazard can also be played. The cue-ball, in holing the red, is left by one of the corner pockets. When the red comes up on the billiard spot, play an in-off from it at half-ball contact into the opposite corner pocket. The red ball is sent over the middle pocket, placing it to be preferably pocketed when the object white is at the head of the table, or, in default, an in-off. The plain half-ball angle is to be gauged by taking a sight through the centre of the corner pocket to the billiard spot. If the cue-ball lies more in the direction of the top cushion, some running "side" will be found necessary. If, on the other hand, the ball inclines more to the side cushion, the use of some check "side" must be used.

POCKETS VERSUS CANNONS Something or other steps in the play, & u find yourself forced to play a second, a third, & a fourth cannon. Now & again the succession of cannons mounts far higher... I may say that, although not averse to a run of close cannons at a favourable moment, i prefer to abide by the more open alternate pot & cannon style of scoring..... A clustering of the balls on the top cushion is often most necessary.... In my opinion, the close cannon runs should only be made along the line of the top cushion. As the corner pockets are more & more nearly approached the player should look for the first opportunity to get the red ball back on the billiard spot, & the two whites, nicely placed, near by there....

MAC'S COMMENTS I reckon that, in the sort of top-end break that Harry mentions, the pts scored strictly at top might hav amounted to only **50%**. In fakt Harry hardly ever got 100 pts at top without getting at least one little run of say six **CLOSE-CANNONS**, ie 12 pts in every 100 pts. Hence, that 50% might in all probability hav been only **38%**. So, breaking away with 369's or drop-cannons or close-cannons woz an important scoring force. But no professional or author ever **BOTHERED** to tell us. **CLOSE CANNONS** were Harry's forte & hiz favorit way of breaking away from top,

albeit while never actually leaving. So nextly we look at what Harry haz to say about hiz close-cannon game.

MELBOURNE INMAN sed in 1924.....

One may attempt the original..... plan of scoring, or follow the up-to-date playing of many little cannons known as close-cannons or nurseries in between an occasional red pot.

HARRY'S 108 BREAK AT TOP

In hiz book Harry shows a **108 BREAK** at top, made up of **46** shots. Its not clear whether Harry meant this to show a **TYPICAL** sort of break that he might actually make in a serious match, or whether the break woz mainly meant to illustrate a wide **RANGE** of shots & moovments & positions. **POTS** I notice that Harry pots red **16** times, for a total of **48** points. An amazingly low proportion of pots, ie 16/46 strokes, ie 48/108 points. Only **2** of these pots were with the red on the spot, an amazingly small proportion, ie 2/16. And there were only **2** runs of **2** pots, so Harry didn't get very close to the **2** pots for **1** cannon ideal. **CANNONS** I notice that Harry gets **30** cannons, for a total of **60** points. An amazingly high proportion of cannons, ie 30/46 strokes, ie 60/108 points. Only **14** cannons were when the red woz on the spot. This meant that Harry played **16** cannons in the open, a very high number, & a very high proportion, ie 16/30. Harry played **10** single cannons, one run of **2** cannons, one run of **4** cannons, one run of **6** cannons, & one run of **8** cannons. **THERE** were **3** intentional **GATHERS**, ie played with a high hope & expektation for a run of close cannons.

THERE were **ZERO** cross-in-offs & zero run-throo in-offs & zero any in-offs.

THERE were **ZERO** drop-cannons.

THERE were **ZERO** pots or in-offs into a middle pocket.

THERE were **ZERO** shots from in-hand.

THERE woz **ZERO** postman's-knock, ie with yellow nicely pinned.

THERE woz **ZERO** ticklish floating-yellow (the yellow got heavy bumps).

So, Harry's sample of a typikal top-end break iz certainly what Mel called....

*many little cannons known as close-cannons or nurseries
in between an occasional red pot.*

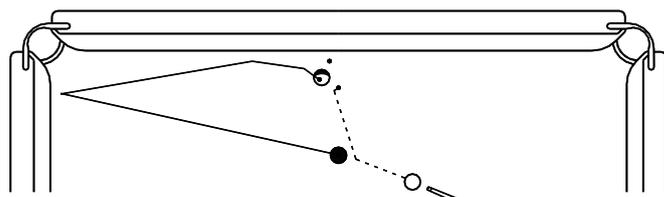
HARRY'S CLOSE CANNON GAME

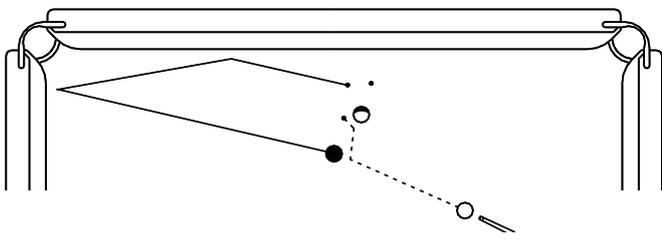
The key to the close-cannon verzion of top-of-the-table play iz the **GATHER**, & then later it iz the **RELOAD** to get the yellow back to near The Spot.

HARRY'S GATHERS Harry's 108 break haz three gathers

Stroke No.15....so i turn to the cannon again. In doing so i try to get the three balls together by the middle of the top cushion for a run of close cannons. Aim for a seven -eighths contact on the right side of red, & by the use of

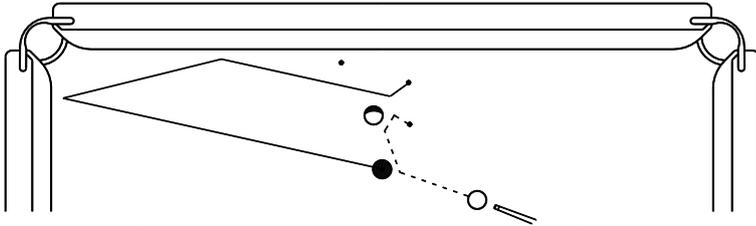
the "stun" stroke, the cue-ball falls flush on to the object white for the cannon. The red is driven on to the left top cushion, & it returns to the vicinity of the two whites along by the top cushion, which it also strikes. Very gentle shot in which no side is required.





Stroke No.30 Here we have two strokes, both legitimate ones, & equally “the game” on. One is to play a spot stroke, sending the cue-ball following on & out again off the two corner cushions for position as if for another

spot stroke. The other is a gentle screw cannon. This later shot i elect to play, with the idea of again bringing the three balls together on the top cushion for close-cannons. The contact is a seven-eighths one on the right of the red, which sends it on to the side cushion some 5 inches below the fall of the left top pocket. Use just enough “screw” to get on the left of the object white.



Stroke No.43 A “stun” cannon played very gently with a seven-eighths contact to the right of the red, dropping the cue-ball full on to the object white. The idea is to leave the

three balls together on the top cushion for close cannons. As the shot is played the red joins the two whites after striking the left top & top cushions, but a “kiss” with the cue-ball leaves them further apart then intended. No “side”.

MAC’S COMMENTS ON GATHERS

STROKE No 15 This gather needs a sort of semi-stun-throo. Semi-stun-throos are diffikult to judge unless the **qball** iz close to the red. **WHY** not ignore the gather & play the same cannon but softer to leev a straightish pot-red. I guess Harry woz **ITCHING** for a run of close-cannons. **DID** u spy the in-off yellow (?), this leevs a drop-cannon. In-off yellows often giv an eezy way out of trouble, **IF** u see them.

STROKE No30 The stun angle here iz close to **90o** which needs a full stun, & iz therefore much eezyer to judge than the semi-stun-throo in Stroke No15. But, the **qball** iz a **LONG** way from the red, & so once again the gather iz **DIFFIKULT** to judge. Me, i would play a stun pot-red to try to get pozzy for a simpler gather from the east side. This would need a very hard hit, but it would keep the **qball** **CLOSER**, kompared to Harry’s suggestion of a two-cushion run-throo.

STROKE No43 Once again there **IZNT** any need for a gather, Harry kood hav left a pot-red for Stroke No44. In fakt there **IZNT** much need to stun the gather in Stroke No43, a rolling gather **IZ** possible. In fakt in Stroke No42 Harry had an **IDEAL** angle for a rolling gather, albeit from longish range, but instead chose to play a skrew-back pot-red, leeving the **BADISH** angle shown in Stroke No43. In all three strokes, No15, No30, & No43, Harry **KOOD** hav hit the gather a bit thinner & just brort the red back off one cushion, ie the side cushion. In fakt trying to uze two cushions made all 3 shots more **DIFFIKULT**. In fakt, in No43, it made the gather allmost **IMPOSSIBLE**, which iz praps why Harry got a big kiss & **FAILED**. **IVORYS** Harry’s gathers make more sense when u realize that ivorys were big & heavy & ran throo eezyly, kompared to **KRAPAMYTHS**. Semi-stuns would be more **EEZY** to judge with ivorys. Pot reds with a 2-cushion run-throo would be **EEZYER** with ivorys, & the **qball** would finish closer to theSpot. The simple rolling gathers that i kood play in some of Harry’s pozzys were on with krapps but probly **NOT** on with ivorys.

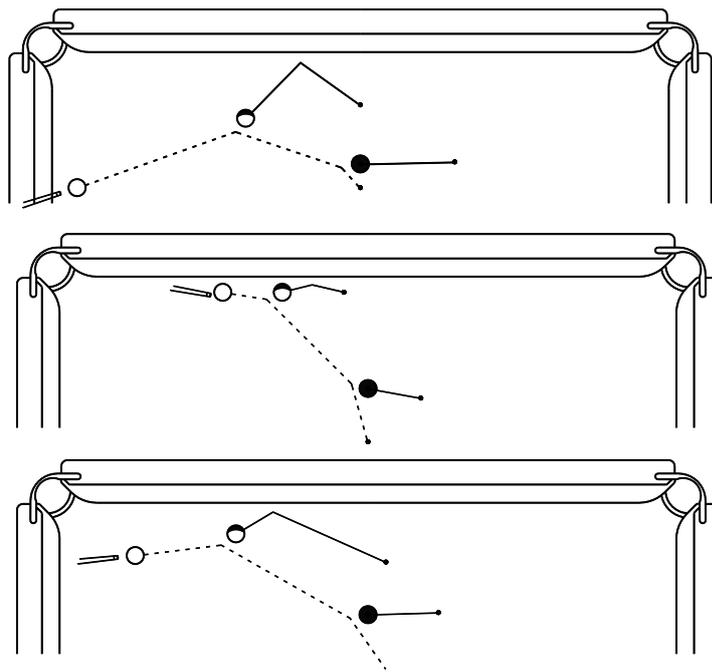
HARRY'S RELOADS

Harry's 108 break has three yellow reloads, ie shots where the yellow has drifted a long way away from The Spot & Harry bumps it back again. Two of these reloads were following a run of close-cannons.

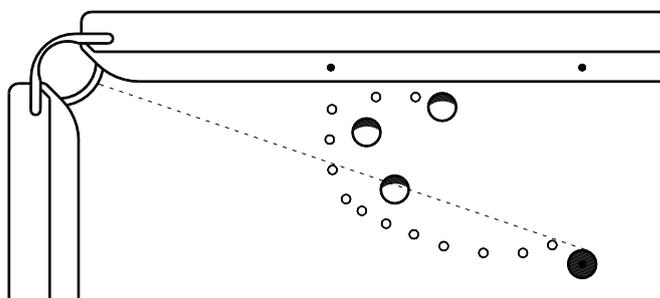
Stroke No.8 I guided my ball very accurately into a half-ball position (the easiest one can have) for the cannon from the object white. Aiming half-ball on the white, I play gently to put it behind the billiard spot & cannon on the red, so as to leave it for a pot in the right top pocket...

Stroke No.24 Having left the cue-ball nicely in position for a half-ball cannon, I play it, knocking the object white right behind the spot. I use some right "side" on the cue-ball, so as to throw it off a little to the right of the red as it makes the cannon, & leave the coloured ball in easy position for the pot in the right top pocket I mean to leave.

Stroke No.3 Half-ball cannon, hitting object white to the right, & so guiding it again behind the billiard spot. The idea of the stroke is to get on to the red so as to leave a pot on in the right top pocket. No "side".



MAC'S KOMMENTS ON RELOADS



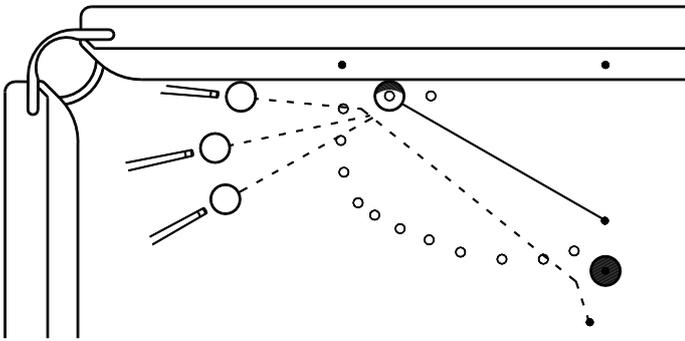
HARRY 1 My drawing shows the pozzys of the yellow for Harry's **THREE** reloads. It also shows 13 **IDEAL** pozzys for the yellow for a reload, ie where a half-ball cannon will place the yellow nicely on the centerline close to the Spot, plus the cannon will bump the red nicely to leave a straight pot into the top pocket.

Harry's three yellows are **NOT** ideal, but there is a large zone (not shown) where you can still reload the yellow well enough by hitting thin or using swerve or side or stun, or even by playing a thick run-through sending the yellow back off the top & side-cushions (not shown). The **KRITIKAL** thing for a reload-cannon is the pozzys of the **qb**ball. I reckon it's best to keep the **qb**ball close to the yellow. This makes stun-reloads easy too. If you leave the **qb**ball close to the **CROSS-IN-OFF** line (the dotted line) you will have a chance of a cross-in-off, if the reload cannon stinks. But the really **KRITIKAL** thing is the pozzys of the red after the reload cannon. You will usually play the YR cannon to leave a straightish pot into the top pocket, & the pozzys of the yellow will be **SECONDARY**. In fact don't be afraid of banging the yellow thin & hard so that it stops **BELOW** the Spot, there's no law saying it has to stop above the Spot. You don't have to leave a **POT**. Leaving an **IN-OFF** red is ok (not shown). Or you can bump the yellow up close to the red for a possible **CANNON** (not shown). Obviously you will have one of these three things in mind whenever you play the reload cannon. If after playing the reload cannon you don't have an easy pot red or in-off red or cannon, have a **LOOK** for a possible in-off yellow.

WHY were all three of Harry's reloads from the west side? I would have thought that a right-hander like Harry would have had a preference for playing close-cannons left-to-right, which would have led to reloads from the east not the west.

DOUBLE KISS RELOADS

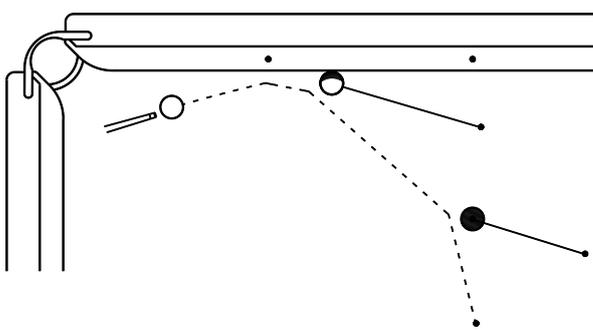
HARRY 2 If the yellow is on (frozen) or close to the rail the **qball** will **DOUBLE KISS** off the yellow. The ideal pozy for the yellow for a double-kiss-reload is one to two balls short of the $\frac{1}{4}$ point of the top-cushion (as shown). With double-kisses, the thinness or



thickness of the contact on yellow won't change the **qball's** kiss-off deflexion angle. The kiss-off deflexion angle is **ALWAYS** the same, it never varies. And it happens to be the same as the ordinary half-ball deflexion angle you get out in mid-table. This is **GOOD** news. To judge the **qball's** kiss-off trajectory you walk around & look **PARALLEL** to the rail. You imagine that the

qball approaches the yellow parallel to the rail, & you imagine the ordinary deflexion angle, i.e. as if no double-kiss, i.e. as if no cushion. That trajectory is what the **qball** will get no matter what the attack angle. Kiss-offs are very **FRIENDLY**, once you get to know them. If the yellow is a little **OFF** the cushion, you will still get a double-kiss, & the **qball's** trajectory, & the yellow's angle, will be **SIMILAR** to when frozen. Running side will **WIDEN** the kiss-off deflexion angle a little, & check side will **WIDEN** the kiss-off deflexion angle a little. When you are going to get a double-kiss on the yellow, **DON'T** try to use side or thickness of contact to alter the **ANGLE** taken by the **YELLOW**. Because **NOTHING** will change the yellow's angle. All you will ever change is the **PACE** of the yellow.

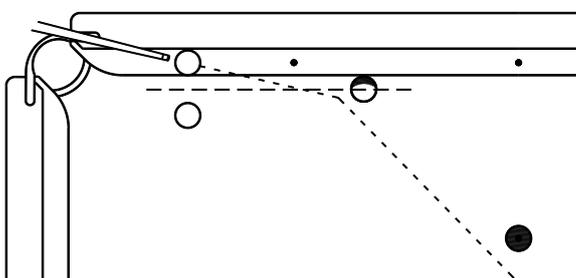
CUSHION--FIRST RELOADS



HARRY 3 Here the yellow is too close to the center-line for a double-kiss-reload, so I play a cushion-first reload. To help judge the shot I walk around & look along the mirror-image. The mirror-line is a half-ball out from the face. The **qball** is one ball clear of the cushion (as shown), so I imagine that the **qball** is laying a half-ball inside the face of the cushion (as shown). I lay my cue through the center of the imaginary

qball, & I point the cue at the right edge of the yellow, i.e. half-ball. And I imagine the imaginary **qball** rolling on that line & taking a half-ball deflexion angle off the yellow, & I judge where the **qball** will contact the spotted red. If the **qball** will hit very thinly on the right-hand-side of the red, I know that in fact it will hit about half-ball on the red, because, when the real **qball** hits the real cushion, the rebound angle will be much less than the attack angle.

HARRY 4 If the half-ball deflexion angle clear misses the red, then I know that I have contact the yellow thinner than half-ball, perhaps only a $\frac{1}{4}$ ball. Then I play the shot. The trick is to hit far enough before the yellow such that the **qball** gets the wanted contact. This is tricky. Firstly I get down on the real shot & I aim as if to just-miss the yellow, on the left. Then I re-aim



a bit thicker, eg az if to hit $\frac{1}{8}$ ball or $\frac{1}{4}$ ball. Here i uze feel. Feel needs praktis. In fakt lately i don't re-aim, instead i pivot the cue around a bit or a lot, uzing back-hand-pivot. The swing givs me a thicker line plus a bit of swerv plus a bit of running side, & i get the shot. Or i might uze front-hand-pivot. Front-hand-pivot givs me less swing but more swerv & more running side. Running-side keeps the yellow behind. And running-side tends to throw the red left for an eezyr pot. U uzually need to aim further left of the yellow than u might think (ie hit the cushion well before the yellow) koz (a) the **q**ball slides a long way along the cushion during kontakt, & (b) koz the rebound angle iz much less than the attack angle.

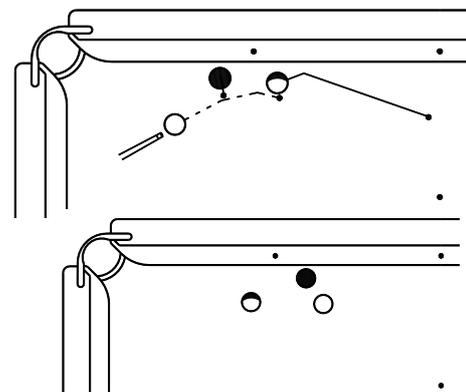
EARLY RED TO YELLOW RELOADS

HARRY 5 A **GOOD** sort of reload iz a cannon played thin on red & full on yellow, az shown. Here we reload the yellow with a RY cannon **PRIOR** to potting the red, rather than a YR cannon **AFTER** potting the red. Eezy.

HARRY 6 BOTHER If the yellow iz closer to the pocket than the red then u are in a bit of bother. Better think of something klevor fast. Praps a stun-cannon, RY, to leev an in-off yellow? The in-off red looks possible? **YELLOW**

OUTSIDE But u shood hav anticipated this little problem earlyer. The yellow woz the outside ball during the whole of

your little run of close-cannons, so u shood hav known from the start that u had to deal with this sooner or later.



THREE GOODISH GATHERS

HARRY 7 U don't havta be like Harry & wait. U kan play an eezy gather during postman's-knock any time u like. Here are three common pozzys that allow an eezy gather. Here we play Geet's standard 5/8 ball pot red into the left-hand top pocket from the pozy shown, at dead pace, leeving the **q**ball on the standard half-ball postman's-knock cannon angle. But instead of playing the standard postman's-knock cannon, we play thick & hard with maximum running-side & swerv to get a gather az shown.

HARRY 8 The same pozy but on our wrong hand (for a right-hander). We play thickish & hardish, rolling, plain-ball, to get a left-to-right gather.

HARRY 9 Here we are uzing the Off Center (**WIDE**) method of postman's-knock, with the yellow 1 ball west of the center-line. But instead of playing the standard $\frac{3}{4}$ ball stun pot-red into the left-hand top pocket, from the pozy shown, we roll the red in at dead pace, leeving an allmost straight pot-red into the right-hand top pocket, which we ignore. We play an eezy short-range stun gather az shown, the kontakt on the red iz uzually $\frac{5}{8}$ ball or $\frac{3}{4}$ ball.

