

# JAM CANNONS

Most of the high scoring Rockers & Rubs of the old days are difficult nowadays, they had large heavy balls & heavy bedcloths. The Jam might be the exception.

## **MANNOCK BILLIARDS EXPOUNDED (1908)**

*I will take the "jam" first. ... Diagrams \*\* and \*\* show the positions that T Taylor worked the balls into to make his break of 1,467, which was the largest break on record at the spot-barred game....in making this break, Taylor manoeuvred around the table at first, and then got the ball into position for the "rail-nurse", about half way on the top left cushion. He played the "nurse", driving then forward more than usually in the system, making 42 cannons in the traject, and with facility worked the two object-balls in the jaws of the top left pocket and locked them there. He then commenced cannoning in the manner he told me, that had been taught him by Gay. This was to play a decided stroke, striking both balls in such a manner that there could be no doubt about their having been struck. The diagrams show the distance as near as possible which Taylor kept the cue-ball from the two object-balls, and though there were at least three reporters hanging over the pocket to see that a cannon had been effected all right, it was unnecessary, as each cannon was made with such distinctness that, as Taylor said, it could be seen that one had been made from the whole length of the Aquarium. This was the system of playing it, to keep the cue-ball well away from the other two, and leave them at the necessary angle as illustrated. Great care had to be taken that one of the object-balls did not, by the concussion in cannoning, get too far inside the other, as if that occurred, the run was short-lived. Therefore, it was necessary for Taylor in this great sequence to look at the position of the two balls almost at every other stroke, and if one was slightly inside the other, he had to work thicker on the latter until he had got them equal distances from the drop of the pocket. All this required great patience, as it took Taylor quite two hours to effect the run. The fact that three reporters were hanging over the side of the pocket all the time was not calculated to improve his temper, as Taylor had to play from one side of the table to the other, using left and right hand, and had to go round them, losing sight of the balls every time he crossed over. Such being the case, the magnitude of the task can easily be conceived.*

In response to the big breaks the Jam woz barred. Later the ban woz lifted, when the 25 direct cannon rule woz brought in. Nowadays the only limit iz the 75 cannon rule. So the Jam iz back on the menu. In Tom Taylor's day i think that u were allowed to play with Touching-Balls. In fact i think u were even allowed to play Push-Shots. Things are different today, but touching-balls & push-shots are unlikely to kum up unless u really stuff-up.

## **CHARLES DAWSON**

**PRACTICAL BILLIARDS 1904** Charles givs a different story to Mannoek.

Dawson sed that Taylor woz on 227 & Hugh McNeil woz on 106, in a game of 600 up, when Taylor came to the table & made 9, at which point he had the balls jammed, &

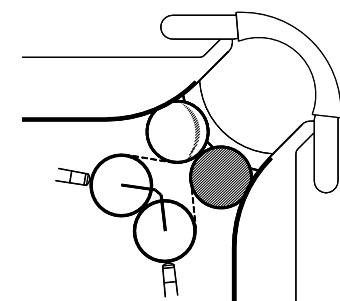
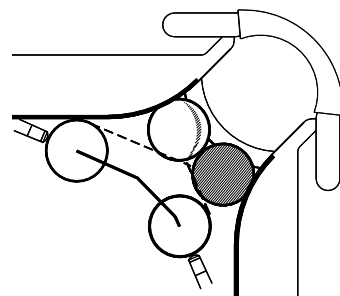
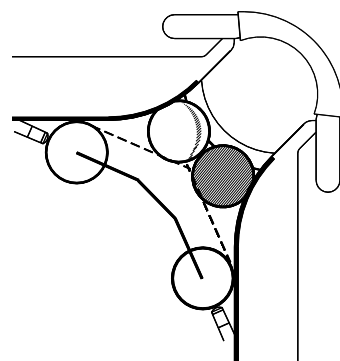
ran to game with 182 cannons. On being requested to continue his break in the evening he made it into 1467 (729 cannons), beating all spot-barred breaks.

## RISO LEVI STROKES OF THE GAME

*In 1891 Tom Taylor made a break of 1467 chiefly by means of what afterwards became known as the jam stroke.... The smaller the pocket and the bigger the balls the easier it is to keep the position, ... The jam stroke is correctly played only when the cue ball after hitting the object balls travels well from them. It should also come to rest at the finish of each stroke fairly close to a cushion. With the cue ball a considerable distance from a cushion it has to be played very full onto the object balls. A stroke nearly full on to the balls may unlock them, and even should it still leave them properly jammed the cue ball will remain very close to and in front of them, and loss of position will in all probability quickly result from this bad location of the cue ball.... The jam stroke was rendered obsolete many years ago by a rule which made it compulsory for the player to play from the D with the red ball on the billiard spot and the white ball on the centre spot, in the event of his having set up the position either by accident or design.....*

**JAM 1** With the balls jammed evenly, you play thin on the nearest ball, to land thinnish on the second ball, as shown. Shots in both directions are identical. You will need to walk around for each cannon. You can play more softly to leave the cue ball shorter. And you can play harder, hence the cue ball will bounce off the cushion, but this would leave a thin-thick or a thick-thin or a thick-thick long-distance cannon coming back, not good. The softer & thinner the stroke the less jostling done by the yellow & red, because the jostling ends up moving one of the balls in further than the other, & then you are on the brink of losing one of them. You might then resort to unjamming the balls to allow you to re-jam them, as shown in Jam 4 & 5. The old-timers said that you could play slightly thicker & harder on one or the other to jostle the balls to get them back to even, but this method has never worked for me. I have to give them a big bang, as shown in Jam 4 & 5. Anyhow, each little jam-cannon has to be positive. Just because it's easy doesn't mean you can relax. Fix your eyes on the cue ball or cue tip during the shot. If you move your gaze or start to get sloppy you will be sorry. **JAM 2** This is the most common pozzie. This is better. Play thin-thin, but more softly than in Jam 1. As I said, it's amazing how thickly you can hit the first ball & still get the cannon, but don't rely on it. Doing it this way, a right-hander doesn't have to walk around for each cannon.

She simply leans & stretches around & back for the little return cannon. It's a little softer & more accurate & quicker than the Jam 1 method. **JAM 3** But I reckon that the best method is to get in real close, as shown here, if you can. For each stroke you play very thin on the nearest ball to land thickish on the second ball, & stop close, as shown. Shots in both directions are identical. When you are this close the return cannon is very easy to get to without over-stretching or walking around. The main concern will be to avoid touching the cue ball (foul), or leaving touching-balls (spot-up).



I believe that, of players in England, **John Roberts, senior**, has scored the largest number (of) consecutive cannons. This was when he played against **Alfred Bowles**, at Oxford, in **1861**, & getting the balls all together in the **jaws** of one of the pockets, went on cannoning until he had made **102** without ceasing. The entire value of the innings was **240**. **Christmas**, the manager of the Cocoa Tree Club, St. James's-street, also on one occasion made over **forty** consecutive cannons. When i played against **Dufton**, at the Crystal Palace, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December last, at the close of the game i got the balls placed well together, & made **thirteen** cannons running, but had to stop then, as i had completed the full score & had won the game. Against the same player at Aylesbury last month, i also made **fourteen** cannons in succession... I myself consider that cannons are most **difficult** of execution, & though very pretty & brilliant, **should not be attempted** when an opportunity of scoring by hazards presents itself at the same time. A great number of cannons are most **difficult** to make in succession, & it is **rare** to find any player score many of them at one time. The great score already alluded to which **Roberts** made at Oxford is in no small degree attributable to his having the balls "**jawed up**" in the pocket, so that they could not easily get away, & then his perfect knowledge of the game enabled him to keep them there, & run up an immense number of cannons without **pocketing** the balls..... even the best & most delicate players find it a work of **considerable trouble** to make more than **half a dozen** or so (even under favourable circumstances) before the balls get a good deal separated.... I should, by all means, recommend **beginners**, after perfecting themselves in **hazard** striking, to practice cannons **privately**, as they will thereby gain considerable knowledge of the strength required to bring a ball back off a cushion after the object ball has been struck.... There can be no doubt that, as a part of the game, the cannon is an important stroke to master, but when that is done, i would advise every player to use it only when **absolutely necessary**, & not at the cost of any other stroke, but, as it were, to retain it as a **coup de grace** only to be used when every other opening for scoring is closed.

**ECHOES FROM FORMER DAYS** The Billiard Player September 1956

**THE 1927 REECE CANNON IN 1897 (FROM THE BILLIARD PLAYER 1927)**

the **pendulum-cannon**, recently exploited by Tom Reece, iz not new to Australia. Thirty years ago, in a match against Charlie Memmott, of Sydney, Harry Gray ran up **1380** from the same position, in much the same way as Reece. The object-balls were **loose**, near but **not jammed**, in the left top pocket, & old Harry just flicked from ball to ball, **hitting the top & side cushion**, until Memmott got annoyed & shouted -- **For the love of Mike, Harry, burst them up**. There was no referee, & many of us were doubtful if the artful old bird always made contact with the object-ball. Hence, no fuss was made of the break, especially az it was an exhibition match & Memmott pushed Gray's peg another 1000 along during the interval.

**MY COMMENT**....The abov report duz not agree with the following snippet.

NEWSPAPER SNIPPET

That fine old cueist, Harry Evans, was then the recognised champion, although friends of both Memmott & Weiss were inclined to dispute the fact. But so as to

endeavour to keep in the public eye **Harry Gray, Fred Lindrum** (father of **Fred & Walter**), & others ran a competition entitled the "Native Born Championship of Australia", or some such title, which i think Gray won --but am not certain, as the games were not considered of sufficient importance to go on record. Later on Harry Gray tacked the title of "champion of Victoria" to his name -- about the time his brilliant son **George** was born -- came across to **Sydney**, & took the four-tabled room which then adorned Roberts Hotel at what is known as the "CMG" (corner Market & George streets) corner. There he played a number of matches against **Hislop**, champion of South Africa, & an exhibition game with **Charley Memmott**, in which Gray was credited with making a break of **over 1100 by aid of a corner jamb**. I saw the run, & it was certainly the most remarkable break that it has been my lot to witness. Shortly afterwards Gray drifted north, & settled down in **Brisbane**, where George's skill on the losing hazard was developed in a Queen-street room

### SAVING YELLOW

**JAM 4** When u start to looz the yellow, a hard-hit red-first-cannon will loosen the balls, giving a leev similar to **LEEY 5** (see below), where u kan jam'em again with a thinnish cannon (az shown), hopefully better than before. Just how u hit the red-first cannon to loosen the balls will depend on the pozzy of the qball. I show six pozzys.

**4A** play almost full on red, with stun, hardish. Don't hit the yellow first.

**4B** play az for 4A.

**4C** play  $\frac{3}{4}$  ball on red, with top, hard.

**4D** play az for 4C.

**4E** play  $\frac{7}{8}$ <sup>th</sup> ball on red, with top, very hard.

**4F** play az thick az u kan on red, with top & check-side, hit very hard.

**LEEY 5 RE-JAM** Sometimes if the jaws are not cooperating u might loosen & re-jam the balls more than once.

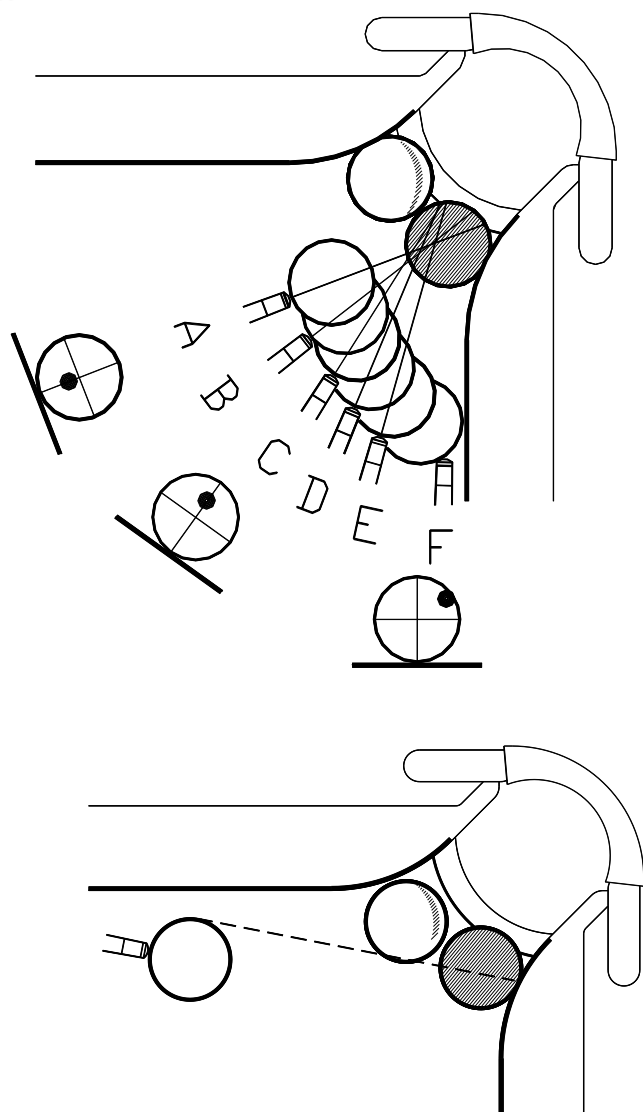
**TIGHT POCKETS** I reckon that the tighter the pocket the better. Saving yellow iz more difficult when the pockets are like buckets, & when the fall of the slate iz too generous.

**RUNNING** When playing a happy Jam

don't uze running thinking that it will keep the balls quieter, koz sooner or later u will misscue. **TOUCHING BALLS RE-SPOT** I nearly forgot, if the yellow iz far gone

why not try to get touching-balls (ie qball touching the yellow or red or both), to get a re-spot (not shown). U kan get touching-balls more surely by uzing a massé (not shown).

Once when jammed **ERIC** asked referee **HAROLD SILVER** to clean the balls. Harold told Eric where to go.



## JAMMING

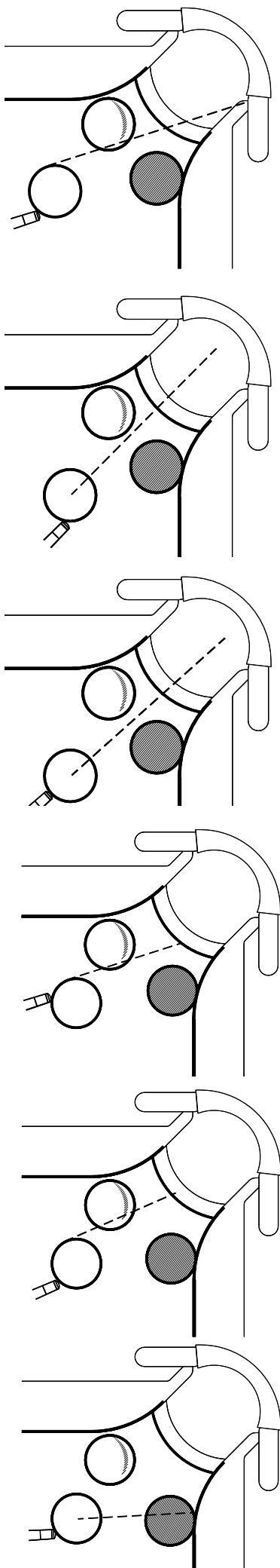
To get the Jam pozzy u usually play nurserys along the top-cush, then when near the pocket... **To turn or not to turn? That iz the question.** If u know that the pocket iz amiable to the Jam, of if u hav stuffed-up your approach for the turn, or if u suspect that some low-life haz placed the balls in the jam pozzy & given them a bang on the head so that they won't budge, then the Jam will be irrezistible. There are ways of improving your chances of jamming. **JAM 6** Here the best strategy (to get an even jam pozzy) iz to hit the nearest ball thinnish, with some running-side. Not too much running-side, koz it will take the red in too far. This iz a good rule when herding the balls into the jaws. Hit (the yellow) thinnish with running-side. **JAM 7** Same pozzy az 6, except that the qball iz equidistant from the yellow & red. Here u contact one ball (or the other) first, say half-ball, with some running-side (not too much). And not too soft. The uzual stuff-up iz to be too tentative & soft. U might be tempted to contact the first ball thinnish. If u do u might get a surprize. Koz if u aim to the right of the mid-point between the balls, u will contact the wrong ball first, & then u will hav the wrong side also, so the leev u get after that might be non-friendly. Silly, but eezy done. **JAM 8** Same pozzy az 7. Here i show an alternativ, which iz to aim mid-way between the balls (plainball). Not too softly, u might get touching-balls. But **JAM 7** iz better.

**JAM 9** Here the red iz ahead (ie closer in), so u uze left-side to keep it from double-kissing ahead. The left-side will also throw the yellow ahead despite the thinnish contact. And should the yellow get an additional kiss on the qball, the left-side on the qball will double-kiss the yellow ahead rather than back out.

**JAM 10** Here the red iz behind (ie further out), so u uze right-side to double-kiss it ahead. Even if it were level with the yellow, the approach-angle of the qball would double-kiss the red behindish if it were not for the right-side. The best contact on yellow iz a quarter-ball, partly koz at this range this givs u the widest deflexion angle, & thus givs u the best chance of promoting the red. See ch71 Deflexion Angles.

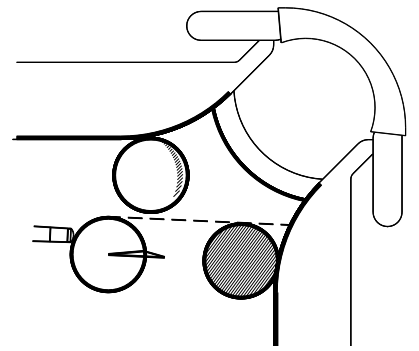
**JAM 11** Here the red iz further behind. Yor best bet iz to play directly on red (3/4 ball) with maximum right-side, to try to double-kiss red left (ie up), whilst getting the cannon on yellow. Here the red iz inside the last bit of the jaw, which helps a lot. Hit at 4 o'clock to maximize the side.

When jamming, if ever u are worryd, err to hav the red in too far, it's better than having the yellow in too far, koz u don't want to looz yellow (ie pot yellow).



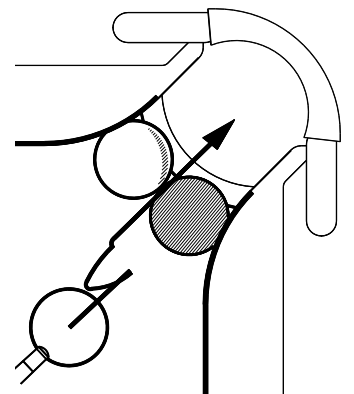
## CRADLE

**JAM 12** In Jam 10, u had the chance to play full on red, with left-side, to double-kiss back to graze the yellow, to leev Jam 12. This iz the famous Cradle-Cannon with which Tom Reece made hiz 499,135 break. This iz another one of thozе old-time freak pozzys that hav a place in the modern game. The beauty of this pozzy iz that u don't havta worry about loozing the yellow. And it's a one-shot seqence, so u don't havta keep changing sides. But i suppose that u will havta stand up & stretch your back & arms frequently. Here u aim full-ball on red (uzually), with left-side (uzually). The jaw stops the red from squeezing right, sometimes too well (in which case u havta uze some left-side to stop the red squeezing left). And the left side can be helpful to get the correct kiss-back angle to graze the yellow. The yellow iz frozen just inside the jaw. After a dozen cannons the red starts to sink into the bedcloth a bit (good). The uzual stuff-up iz to looz the red to the left or right. If to the left u might get the Jam, so don't panic. See ch32 Cradle Cannons.



## 10 SHOT

**JAM 13** Here's a way of getting a 10 shot, if u need 10 for game or frame. Hit the qball with lots of top, very hard. The red goze straight in, the yellow bobbles, then the qball knocks the yellow in, then follows it in. But i don't know how u got the qball into this friendly pozzy. Praps u played a piqué-cannon in the previous shot. U kan try the 10 shot from a pozzy closer to the cushion, but it iz then less certain. Think about getting the Jam in a frame of 150 up, the standard frame for some billiards games nowadays. If u kan set Jam 13 pozzy up when u are on 148 or 149, ukan make a break of 158 or 159. 159 would be the maximum, & would be a world's record for all time. The only other eezy way of getting a 10 shot & a 159 would be to be in-hand, with the red on the brink of a middle-pocket, & the yellow in the jaws of the adjoining top pocket.

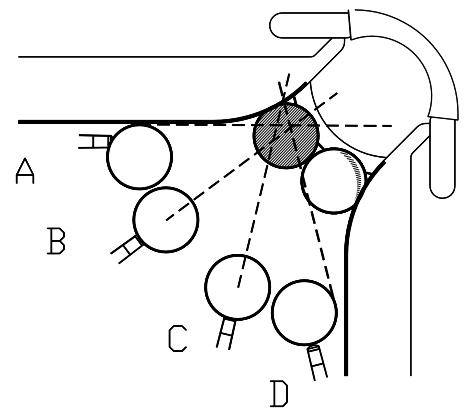


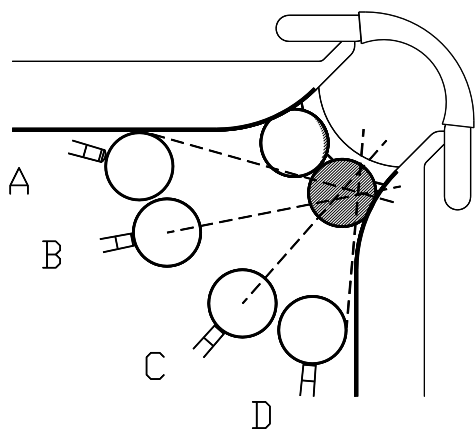
## 75 LIMIT

When u hav had yor 70 cannons warning, u had better start thinking about breaking away from the Jam. There are ways of loosening the balls to allow a pot red (eg Jam 4). But here we look at simply potting red with a hard stun or screw shot without previously loosening it. Theze strokes might also kum in handy if the red iz az good az lost, & u want to pot it forthwith. Or praps the yellow looks non-saveable, & yor best chance of saving yellow iz to try to pot the red with force.

## JAM 14A

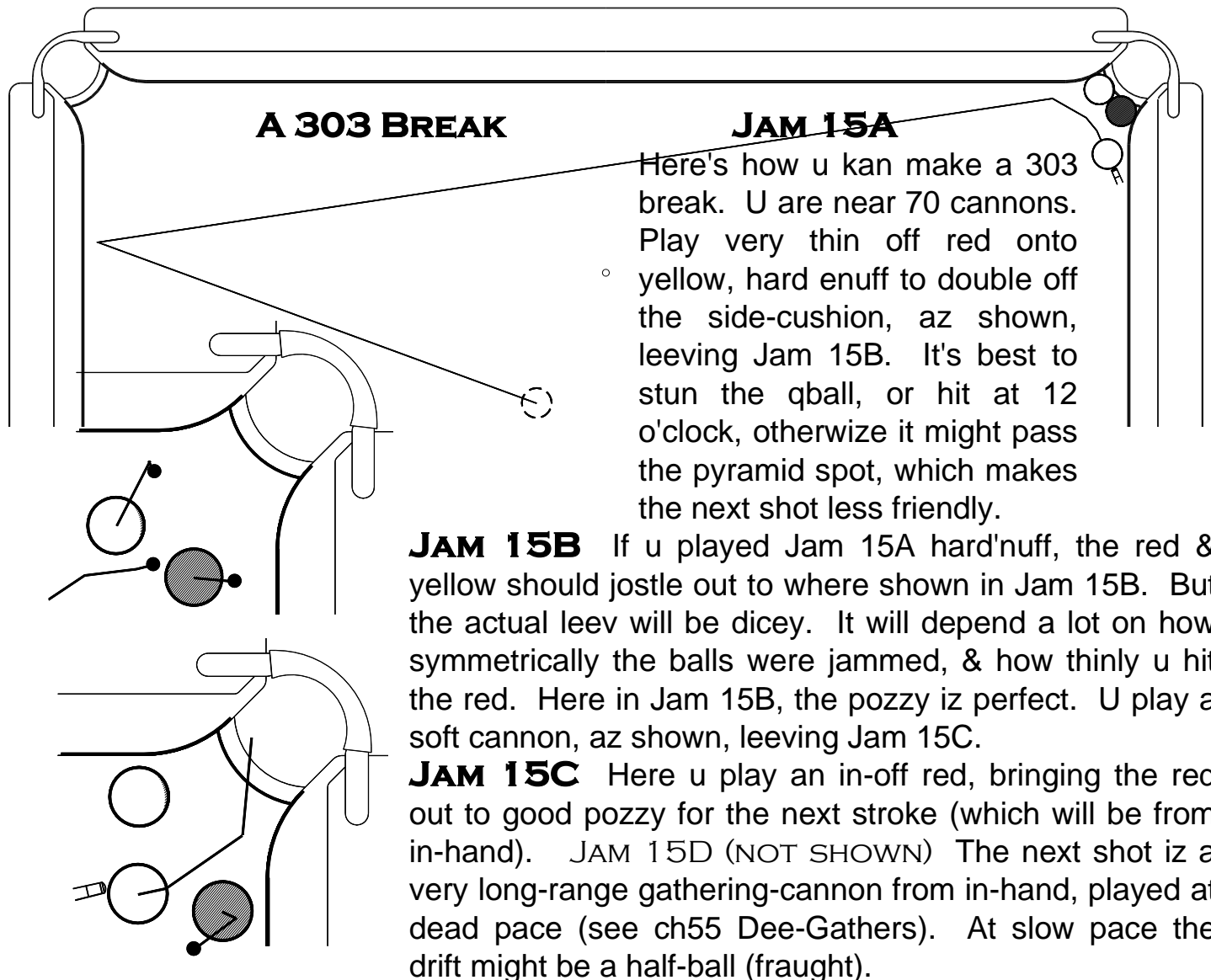
**A** Play a screw pot-red with check-side, hitting red az thickly az u kan, to finish on a line that allows an eezy pot-red off the Spot. The yellow kums out praps 200mm but iz unlikely to leev an in-off, which iz why it's best to play for a pot-red next shot. Instead of potting from A u kan play a thin cannon to finish near C & pot red from there. **B** Play a screw pot-red to leev a cross-inoff from near A. The yellow kums out 100mm or more, but it iz unlikely to leev an in-off. **C** Play az for B. **D** Play a thin cannon to finish near B.





**JAM 14B** Having the red on the side cushion makes things trickier. Also, as usual, you have to hit the red hard, to make sure you get the pot (the red sometimes refuses to fall if the shot is softish). **A** Play a thin cannon to finish near C or D. **B** Play a screw pot-red to finish on the pot-red line (ie with the red spotted). **C** Play a screw pot-red to leave a cross-in-off from near A. The yellow kums out 100mm or more, but is unlikely to leave an in-off. **D** Play a stun pot-red to leave a cross-in-off near A.

In each case when the red is potted, the yellow will kum out into the table praps 100mm to 400mm, but the yellow is unlikely to be of much direct help for your next stroke, so make sure of your pozzie for the red cross-in-off (with red on the Spot) or for the pot-red (with red on the Spot).



**A 303 BREAK**

**JAM 15A**

Here's how you can make a 303 break. You are near 70 cannons. Play very thin off red onto yellow, hard enough to double off the side-cushion, as shown, leaving Jam 15B. It's best to stun the qball, or hit at 12 o'clock, otherwise it might pass the pyramid spot, which makes the next shot less friendly.

**JAM 15B** If you played Jam 15A hard'nuff, the red & yellow should jostle out to where shown in Jam 15B. But the actual leave will be dicey. It will depend a lot on how symmetrically the balls were jammed, & how thinly you hit the red. Here in Jam 15B, the pozzie is perfect. You play a soft cannon, as shown, leaving Jam 15C.

**JAM 15C** Here you play an in-off red, bringing the red out to good pozzie for the next stroke (which will be from in-hand). **JAM 15D (NOT SHOWN)** The next shot is a very long-range gathering-cannon from in-hand, played at dead pace (see ch55 Dee-Gathers). At slow pace the drift might be a half-ball (fraught).

If after playing Jam 15D you have the red & yellow between the qball & the pocket then you can regain the Jam or praps get Cradle. And away you go again. Another 70 cannons, & then the same manipulation again. You get up to 153 points per cycle. But you would break away before 70 cannons, coz it can take 5 more cannons to set up the in-off. I have done the 303 in practice. It's probably the eezyst way some of us are ever going to make a 300 break. The Baulk Line Rule would be a hurdle, so we look at that nextly.

# BAULK-LINE XING

**JAM 16A** Here u play the 303 manipulation from the west (Jam 15 was from the east). The Jam 16 ploy iz less friendly. Hitting the qball at 12 o'clock will keep the qball closer, otherwize the next cannon will be from beyond the centre-spot. Stun keeps it even closer (shown).

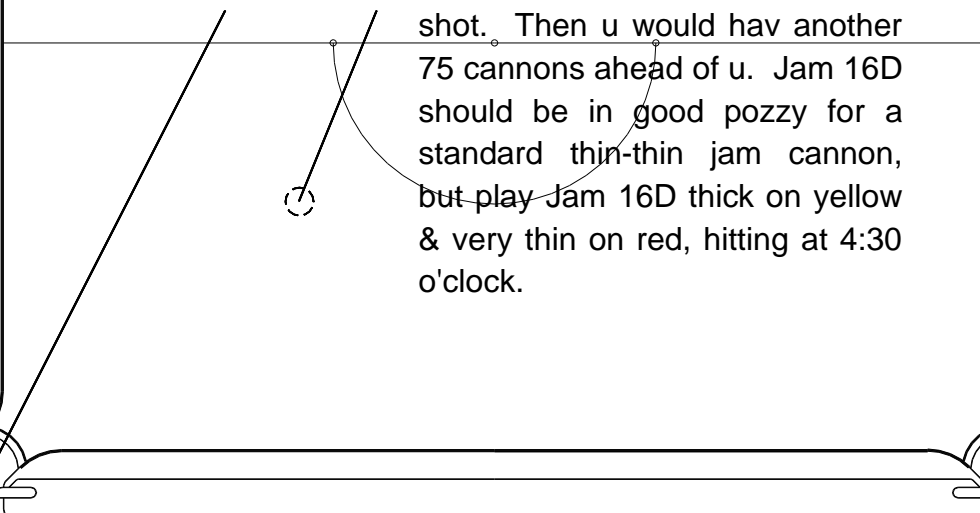
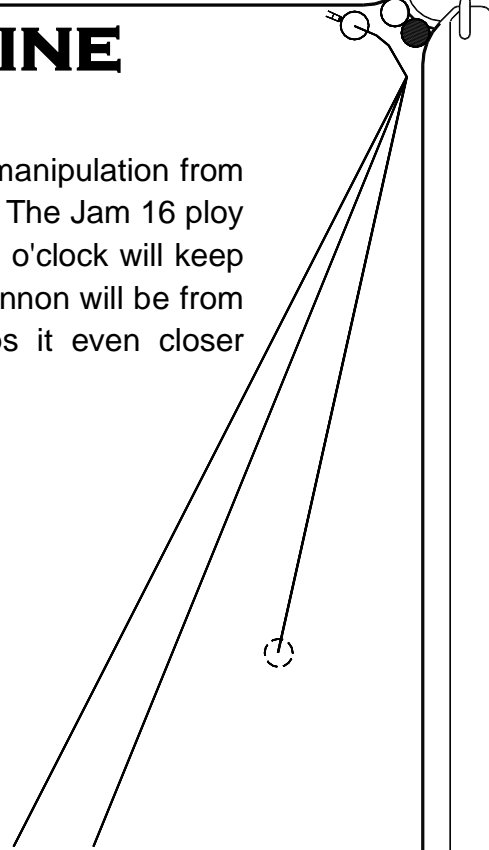
**JAM 16B** (Not shown)  
Instead of playing Jam 16A, if u hit at 3 o'clock, very hard, the qball goze into baulk & back out to near the top-cush (not shown). But this might jostle the red & yellow out further, say 150mm (which iz actually not a bad idea). To minimize the jostle-out u would firstly try to set up a thin-thin jostle-out cannon, to minimize the distance that the red & yellow jostle out.

## JAM 16C

Between 80 & 100 in a break, u kan satisfy the baulk line crossing rule by hitting hard'nuff to cross the baulk line near the green spot, az shown. Hit the qball at 3 o'clock. The right-side will minimize the disturbance of the red & yellow, & it will also giv the qball more pace off the cushion. With luck the red & yellow will jostle out only 2mm or 3mm. U play a long cannon from in-baulk, at dead pace. Allow for napdrift.

## JAM 16D

U might be able to fluke an in-off into the left baulk-pocket, az shown, killing 2 rules with one shot. Then u would hav another 75 cannons ahead of u. Jam 16D should be in good pozy for a standard thin-thin jam cannon, but play Jam 16D thick on yellow & very thin on red, hitting at 4:30 o'clock.



# MORE IN-OFFS

If u want to break your neck to get an in-off, here's a few more ways to gettum. These red-first cannons are good, koz u are unlikely to looz the yellow, it's the red that sometimes falls in.

## JAM 16E

The in-off into the right middle-pocket (shown) i got on my 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt. The red & yellow uzuually came out 2mm or 3mm. Thin on red, thick on yellow, hitting at 9 o'clock.

## JAM 16F

The in-off into the right baulk-pocket iz the eezyst (shown). I got it 5<sup>th</sup> attempt. This iz a good one, koz u would get a baulk line xing at the same time, & kill 2 rules with one shot. And u sometimes get the in-off into the left middle-pocket by accident (shown). The red & yellow are likely to jostle out 20mm to 150mm. Hit qball at 9 o'clock, thick on red, thin on yellow. I woznt going to show any of theze in the Bible, anyhow it shows what a cushion-crawler gets up to when no one iz looking. But who knows, u might get a chance of having a go at one of theze in a match.

# A LAZY 303 BREAK

## JAM 17A

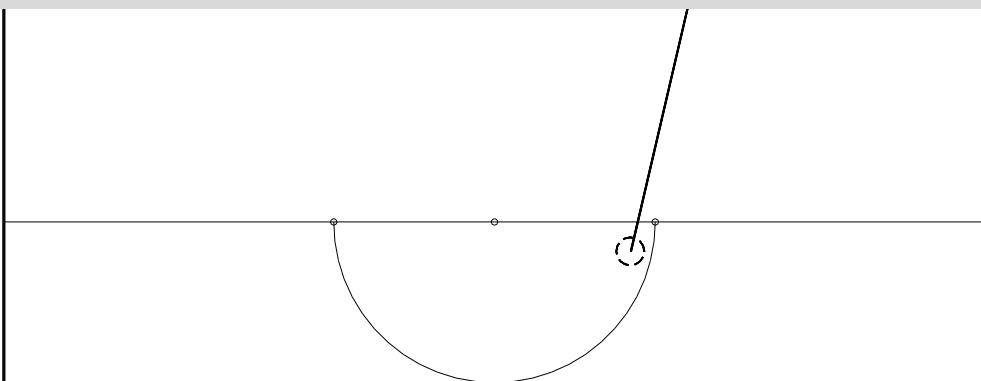
About the only way of keeping a solid jam while getting an in-off iz to play into the left middle-pocket az shown. The bad news iz that u havta go in-off the red, without making the cannon. So, if u miss the in-off, the opponent will hav touching-balls, & will get a free spot-up. That's the risk you take. The pay-off iz that u retain a solid jam.

## JAM 17B

So, after the in-off, u will hav a virtually unmissable cushion-first cannon from in-hand, az shown. Cushion 100mm to 200mm before the red. This cushion-first-cannon u might recognize az the one uzed in the Jam Pendulum. Az i say, it's virtually fool-proof, even at long range. Much eezyr than the eezyish gathers mentioned earlyr.

I got the Jam 17A in-off 3 times in say 10 attempts. U havta set it up with the qball on a wider angle than in similar shots shown earlyer in this chapter. Otherwise the middle-pocket iz hard to get at.

If u played one of the other seqences, requiring a long-range or short-range gather etc, u might regain the jam or the cradle say 3 times in 10 attempts also, but with other options if u err.



Roberts, who for some time had been trying to arrange an international match with Frank C Ives, of Chicago, the American Champion, sent T Taylor to America with power to make a match & arrange conditions that would put the two players as near on equal terms as possible. A match of 6000 points up, for 1000 pounds, was ultimately played at the Humphrey's Hall, Knightsbridge, London, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, to June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1893, on an English table erected by Messrs. Burroughes and Watts, with the pockets made much smaller, being 3¼" only instead of 3<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>", while the balls were 2¼" in diameter, instead of 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub>", 1000 points to be scored each evening. At the finish of the first night's play the scores stood:- Roberts, 1000: Ives, 689: & on the second: Roberts, 2001, Ives, 1670: the latter making a break of 88. On the Wednesday evening Roberts scored at a fair pace, compiling breaks of 90, 70, 49, 36 twice, 30 twice, 53, 33, 106, & 106 unfinished. Ives played fairly well with 175 (83 cannons), 63 (25 cannons), 34, 90, & 30, the scores standing Roberts, 3000: Ives, 2243. On resuming on Thursday evening Roberts made his unfinished break into 140, & then added 67, 49, & 139.

Ives, whose highest break had been 45, now got the balls together, worked them to the top corner pocket, & jammed the balls in the mouth of the pocket. Scoring at a tremendous rate he reached his points with an unfinished break of 1540 (770 cannons), leaving the scores: Ives, 4000: Roberts, 3,484. This came as a great surprise to Roberts, who, seeing that Ives had an excellent position to finish the game right off, offered to give the game to Ives & play a match of 2000 up, "jammed" stroke barred, for 1000 pounds, but Ives declined. On Friday evening Roberts did not have a stroke, as Ives continued and ran the break to 2539 (1267 cannons). Ives, when within 5 points of his required number, in the evening, broke the balls up, but no doubt he could have continued nearly as long as he liked, but the company present became impatient & frequently shouted "Smash them up", which he ultimately did, leaving the scores: Ives, 5000; Roberts, 3484.

In the last evenings play Roberts' principal breaks were 30 & 193. Ives made 80 & 49, & once more got the balls "jammed", making 848 (402 cannons), when he again broke the balls up with a four-stroke, bringing the full break to 852, & then played for safety. Ives won by 2179 points, the final scores reading: Ives, 6000; Roberts, 3821.

**A RETURN MATCH** was played for 400 pounds at the Central Music Hall, Chicago, America, on September 18<sup>th</sup> to September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1893, under the same conditions, with the exception that a baulk line, seven inches in length, was drawn across each of the corner pockets, inside of which only two strokes could be made without driving one of the two object-balls out of the baulk. Ives on the Saturday evening made the 1000 which he required to win, while Roberts only succeeded in adding 478, the final scores standing: Ives, 6000; Roberts, 5243. The largest breaks during the game were 432 by Ives & 166 by Roberts. After this second defeat by Ives, a third match of 10,000 points up for 400 pounds was arranged & plays at the Lenox Lyceum, New York, America, on October 2<sup>nd</sup> to October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1893, under the same conditions with the exception that the pocket openings were 3 5/8 in instead of 3¼ in. This put the two Champions on

more equal terms, the conditions in the previous matches being in favour of Ives, who relied on long runs of nursery cannons along the cushions. The hazard game of Roberts was cramped by the size of the pockets, & the "push stroke" also being barred in these matches made a great difference to his play, for he could not play the masse' stroke anything like the American Champion, who was an adept at this particular stroke. On Monday evening Roberts, with breaks of 106 & 191, to Ives' best of 109, scored 1001 to 542. On Tuesday afternoon, Ives, with runs of 244, 236, & 329, to breaks of 93 & 132 by Roberts, scored 997 points to 801, the scores reading: Roberts, 1802; Ives, 1539. In the evening Roberts, with 91 & 128, to Ives' best break of 116, scored 1002 to Ives 703; score: Roberts, 2804; Ives, 2242. On Wednesday afternoon Roberts, with breaks of 176 an 91, had all the best of the play & scored 797 to 414, Ives' best break being 98; score: Roberts, 3601; Ives, 2656.

In the evening Ives treated the company present to the finest exhibition of nursery cannon play ever seen on an English table. Playing with marvellous accuracy of stroke he nursed the balls past four pockets along the cushions & reached the fifth pocket (which was a side pocket), & had made 640 by cannon play, but by playing too hard he lost position, & after adding 11 more by hazard play finally failed at a follow-on stroke, the full break being 651. Roberts answered to this with 105, 101, & 119, but Ives again got the nursery cannons, & passing the side pocket made 516. Roberts followed with 162, when Ives for the third time got the nursery cannons & scored 395, which gave him the lead for the first time.

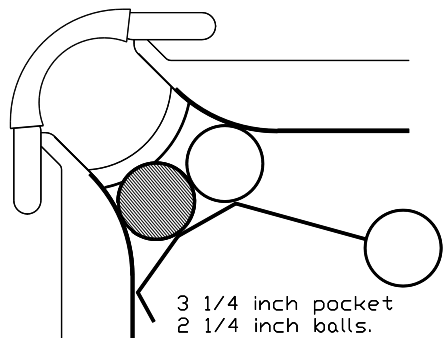
Ives during the evening scored 1946 points to Roberts 886. Score: Ives, 4602; Roberts, 4487. On Thursday afternoon Roberts, with breaks of 95 & 110, scored 913 to Ives' 436, leaving the score: Roberts, 5400; Ives, 5038. In the evening, with breaks of 143, 117, & 105, Roberts scored 1001 to 748, Ives' best breaks being 94 and 202, the scores reading: Roberts, 6401; Ives, 5,786. On Friday afternoon Roberts, with his best break of 103, scored 799 points to Ives' 878, the latter making a break of 586 by cannon play, taking the balls three-quarters of the way around the table. Score: Roberts, 7200; Ives, 6664. In the evening Roberts, with breaks of 125, 157, & 123, to Ives' best of 146, scored 1000 to Ives 513. Score: Roberts, 8200, Ives, 7177. On the Saturday afternoon Ives made breaks of 263 & 205, & scored 927 points to Roberts' 801, leaving the scores: Roberts, 9001; Ives, 8104. In the final stage of the game Ives scored 634 points, with a best break of 366, while Roberts with 130 & 127 scored the desired 999, & ran out a winner by 1262 points, the full scores at the finish being: Roberts, 10,000; Ives, 8,738.

Roberts on his return resumed his duties at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, London, where he played H Coles, & on November 10<sup>th</sup> made a break of 571, "spot barred", mostly compiled by short runs of nursery cannons, which showed he had benefited by his visit to America, for shortly afterwards he began to play an extraordinary game, beating the "record" time after time.

**F C IVES & J SCHAEFER**, the American Champions, visited England & gave an exhibition of American billiards at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 1894...

On Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, **Eugene Carter** (the American player) opened at the Argyll Hall, Argyll Street, London, playing **J P Mannock** & other professionals at American billiards, which, no doubt, helped to increase the agitation against the "**push stroke**". In one of his games with **C Memmott** (the Australian Champion), **Carter** made a break of **563** on December 5<sup>th</sup> (counting **one** for each cannon). At each entertainment **Carter** played fancy strokes, & gave a novel display with little ivory balls. He had a long successful season in London, & he afterwards visited the provinces.

**Hugo Kerkan**, the German Champion, on March 29<sup>th</sup> gave exhibitions of French billiards at Messrs Burroughes and Watts Show Rooms, Dean Street, London, with **J P Mannock**, but he did not have a very long run, for after the first week the attendance was only moderate.



### DAWSON'S DRAWING

Dawson shows that the balls were definitely jammed, though not symmetrically. And he shows the red overhanging the drop, I suspect that this would have been a foul or a spot-up under the Articles for the match. You would not get a long run of jam cannons with standard balls in a standard pocket if you had this sort of angle. Either Ives' balls stayed put somehow, or he was able to jostle them

about at will. Also, Dawson shows that Ives played from near the cushion from one side, & from well out on the other. Whether this was the main sequence, or whether it varied, we don't know.

But Dawson saw the match with his own eyes, & he was one of billiards' prime students, behind Mannock possibly, so he would know what he was drawing. Almost every other writer & authority on billiards says that Ives did not have the balls jammed, & say or insinuate that Ives had a version of the cradle cannon. So, there was disagreement.

### MISUNDERSTANDING

I reckon that the misunderstanding & disagreement re Ives' jammed or non-jammed balls stem from one thing. Reece & others always maintained that in the jam-cannon the balls are never jammed. They maintain that the balls are actually free to move & jostle, & that a clumsy stroke can ruin the pozzie. And that in fact even with perfect strokes, it is only a matter of time before the symmetry is bent & you then have to unbend it. This jostling was possibly even more evident in Ives' jam, because of the large balls & the small pockets. So, if enough people say enough times that the balls were not jammed, then someone who wasn't there will try to draw drawings showing the balls slightly apart, & then they are followed by Holt & others who write adamant articles saying so.

### JOHN ROBERTS THE BILLIARD PLAYER AUGUST 1950 PEEPS INTO THE PAST

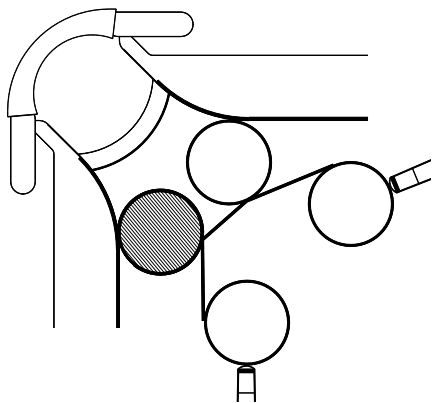
For the benefit of those omniscient pressmen who are just now fostering the erroneous impression that Ives has beaten me at English billiards, I give particulars of the game they refer to. The table had the usual 6 pockets, but they were only 3½" wide at the fall of the slate, & the middle pockets were square. The balls were 2¼" in diameter. That is to say, the pockets were 1/8" narrower, & the balls 3/16" larger, than in the ordinary game, which made a difference of 5/16" in hazard play & the squareness of the pockets further

discounted middle-pocket hazards. Notwithstanding this, i kept the lead for the first 3 days & was about 1000 ahead when Ives got the balls into position for the Anchor Nurse, & made 1267 cannons. The final score was Ives 6000 (2539 break), Roberts 3821 (best breaks 239, 141, 140, 139, 193).

**COMMENTS.**..Roberts' use of the term Anchor Nurse suggests the Cradle Cannon.

**TOM REECE DAINY BILLIARDS (1925) ROBERTS V IVES**

Until the rule restricting the series of ball-to-ball shots to five-and-twenty came into force, i feel sure that i was going to roll up some new records. Unfortunately, i showed my hand too soon. The long string of **249,552** consecutive cannons in a break of **499,135** points, between July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 1907, which occupied 85 hours 49 minutes to tick off, ended my chances of ever again making full use of my close-cannon skill.... Try as i would, and certainly did, to overcome this restriction i found it too heavy a handicap.... When i made my record ... i had the balls placed just outside the right top pocket, the red ball on the end cushion, the object-white on the side-cushion (both just clear of the "bumps") and the cue-ball in between.....Within my own memory there have been curious happenings concerned with close-cannon strokes when the balls have been at the jaws of a pocket. The late **John Roberts**....contested a compromise match with the then American champion, **Frank C Ives**, the "Napoleon" of the cue, as his admirers styled him, at Humphrey's Hall, Knightsbridge, London.....There were 6 pockets to the table, each 3¼ inches (much smaller than the usual openings) at the "fall of the slate", and the balls were 2¼ inches (much larger than the regulation size) in diameter.....It was an interesting contest until Ives managed to work the balls to the mouth of the right top pocket, and, once having done this, ticked off cannons to his heart's content. A big set of balls and a small pocket enabled him to keep the balls **moving** about the "bumps", and to all intents and purposes prevented any of them going in. The American champion finally, and after he had made his position on the marking-board secure, purposely broke up the position--or he might have kept them there to the end of the one-sided match.....



**TOM'S DRAWING** of Ives' pozy shows the object-balls almost touching, just outside the bumps, equidistant from the centreline of the pocket. And it shows the qball grazing across both balls, from side to side, just az for a jam-cannon, except that the qball never goze near a cush but keeps quite close to both balls. The drawing shows that the cannon grazes the white each shot, but haz some kiss-off effect off the red each shot. This could be poor drafting, or perhaps there woz some kiss-effect. I hav tryd to emulate

Ives on my home table. My pockets are 3½", & i ized my set of 2<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" balls. I kan tell u that Ives did not make hiz cannons az drawn by Reece, or az stated by many of the other descriptions that i hav kum across over the years. I guess that there iz another possibility. **Perhaps Ives invented the cradle-cannon, in 1893**, & hence ized a cradle cannon kiss-back sort of shot for each of these here cannons. In fact he could hav ized a cradle-cannon kiss-back for **each second shot**. And he could hav thrown in a few reverse cradles, ie playing the kiss-back by firstly grazing one ball **before** kissing-back off the second ball (instead of **after**). This sort of reverse cradle-cannon iz

sometimes the best shot to play in a present-day cradle (ie with 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" balls). Regarding Tom's drawing, it iz possible to graze across the two object-balls az shown by Tom ad-infinitum, but it iz also theoretically possible to score 75 consecutive cannons by simply belting all 3 balls around the table each shot.

### JOHN ROBERTS MODERN BILLIARDS 1901-1919

*On the Thursday, however, Ives got the balls in one of the corners. **They were not jammed under the English rule, as to fall within that rule part of the balls had to overhang the pocket, & this was an impossible position with balls & pockets of the size used in this match.** The position was more what is known in America as the "anchor", & was perfectly allowable under the articles....*

**MY COMMENT** Dawson's drawing sez that one ball might have been overhanging. By the way, *Modern Billiards*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1901 (my book iz 1919), iz somewhat unique. John haz one chapter on close-cannons, with very little content, just 12 bread & butter shots. He shows 6 basic nursery positions, & the rezults of playing the correct way & the incorrect ways, ie with left-side with right-side & with nil side. But the novel bit iz that he also shows 6 basic shots drawn full-scale. He asks that the player uze some tracing linen & chalk to transfer the pozzys to a table, to praktis the shots according to the instructions. Very good thinking.

### THE BADMINTON LIBRARY MAJOR W BROADFOOT 1885 & 1896

*These notes on nurseries may be appropriately closed by the following remarks kindly furnished by Mr Rimington-Wilson, who, it is permissible to observe, can play such cannons with a speed & certainty as greatly to be envied as they are difficult of attainment, & in a style professional rather than amateur... Nursery cannon play in England is still in its infancy, & the writer cannot help expressing a wish that it may never see full maturity. The possibilities of this style of game were well illustrated by the visit of the American champion **Ives** to this country, when he played a match with Roberts under unusual conditions....It is true that Ives made his gigantic break in a way that would be impossible with the ordinary sized balls & pockets, viz by jamming the balls, which were an intermediate size between the American & English, in the angle of a table with very tight pockets. While maintaining the position in which he made his break, the balls were not jammed in the jaws of the pocket as they may be in the English game, but rather in the angle of the corner where, owing to the large balls & small pockets, there was very little danger of losing a ball. In fact, the break was played very much as it would be on an American table with no pockets.... Independently of this break Ives' cannon play was very superior to anything of the kind in this country, & the writer has seen him in practice make a break between **600 & 700** without ever getting the balls **angled**, & this with the **push stroke barred**. Of course the massé stroke came into play, but not very frequently....From the spectators point of view long series nursery cannons soon become wearisome, perhaps even more so than the spot stroke. In many instances also a large proportion of those present are unable to see the play at all, as the body of the striker blocks the view.....*

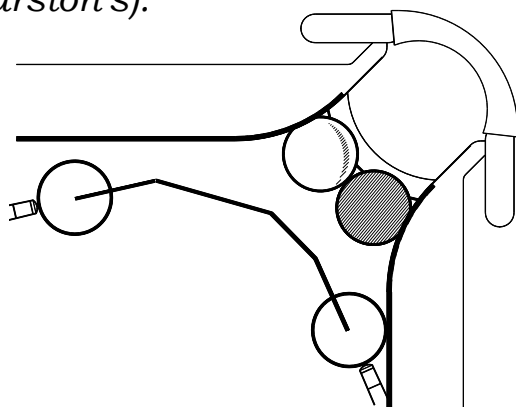
**MY COMMENT** My 1896 copy woz owned by old time English & then Australian professional Harry Evans & it haz hiz signature. This book iz a must for any player, It haz a nice section on Nurserys, & a nice bit on Ives.

### **RICHARD HOLT JAM PENDULUM THE BILLIARD PLAYER NOV 53**

The **1927 "pendulum" cannon** was the old "jam" stroke, with a difference (Taylor made **1,467** -- **729** cannons, no limit -- in **1891**, but with the position arising by chance). Reece maintained that the balls were not jammed as the slightest inaccuracy would have dislodged them ..... and in this jam stroke we believe there was sometimes a slight space between the balls. Reece manoeuvred the balls into the jam or "pendulum" position after three strokes, on this occasion (v. Inman, 1927 Championship, at Thurston's).

The stroke differed from Taylor's in that Reece had to make a cushion-first cannon after each sequence -- he did this when each **20** was called -- and it was this stroke which needed special delicacy of touch. He compiled **1,151 (568 cannons)** in this break, and later made other big breaks with it, including one over **3,000**. The Billiards Association, however, felt compelled to restrict the "pendulum" cannon, as

big breaks by it threatened to upset the game (**Joe Davis** made **2,501** with it, against **Newman**, in the **1927** Championship), and by defining specifically the "**indirect**" cannon, and imposing a **35-limit**, put paid to the stroke. As a matter of fact, ucan often get the cannon by hitting cushion-first (not shown). When they brought in the **25 direct-cannon-rule**, the pro's soon learnt to get around it (for the Jam-Shot) by leaving the qball very wide (when needed) so that they could then play a cushion-first cannon (when needed). This form of Jam-Cannon was called the Pendulum (no relationship to the real pendulum). These pendulums are easiest off the top-cushion, because the nap helps the shot. Tom Reece made a **1,151** break in the 1927 Championship, then Joe Davis made **a 2,501** break in the final (BP Feb 51), both almost entirely using the Pendulum. Henceforth, an indirect cannon was to be **ball-cushion-ball**, which obviously excluded the "pendulum" **cushion-ball-ball** formula, whereby Reece, after each sequence, cleverly played on to the cushion without disturbing the balls in making the cannon, after which he would, as stated, resume the direct cannons.



### **RICHARD HOLT THE BILLIARD PLAYER (FEB 51)**

" No \*\* is the so-called "pendulum" cannon, which Reece introduced into the 1927 Championship, making a bk. Of **1,151**; Joe Davis (Final) made **2,501** with it. It resembles the old "jam" stroke, with which Tom Taylor made **729** cannons in 1891, but Reece skilfully worked for the position, and also played a cushion-first cannon when the limit (**25**) was reached; Taylor's bk. was from an accidental obtaining of the position. Ives' big bk. Against John Roberts (**2,534, in 1893**) was made with the "jam" stroke (balls not quite touching) but with smaller pockets and bigger balls. The balls need not actually touch in the "jam", nor in the Reece 1927), position.....

**COMMENTS** Strange! Richard thort that Taylor got pozzy by accident. He must hav been thinking of some other player & some other break. And Richard thort that the balls need not quite touch in the jam nor in the pendulum-jam. Strange stuff!

**DOLLY** Haz a copy of a popular ozzie magazine (195?), where Wally sez that hiz biggest-ever break woz over 11,000, & that this woz using the pendulum. But i guess he did it in praktis or in a friendly game, koz there's no official record i think. He probly praktised it so that he kood uze it in self-defence if ever it raized its ugly head in Australia or the UK.

### **ANDREW RICKETTS**

#### **WALTER LINDRUM, BILLIARDS PHENOMENON 1982**

*In May of 1927 the Control Council's attention was drawn to a break of 3964 made by Tom Reece against Arthur Peall... in the same match Reece made... 6417..... When news reached Walter Lindrum of Reece's new stroke he had a simple answer. In an exhibition at the Footscray Men's Club in Paisley Street, Footscray, he made a pendulum cannon break of 8000 unfinished before walking away from the table through boredom.*

#### **TOM REECE CANNONS & BIG GUNS 1928**

*Some misconception appears to have arisen about the **pendulum-cannon** which i should like to clear up here & now. I do not in any sense claim to be the discoverer of this stroke.....The fact is that, a few weeks before my match with Inman, i was introduced by Mr Harry Young to Mr J C Pepperell, of Ramsgate, & it was this gentleman who demonstrated to me the possibilities of the position. So far as i am concerned, therefore, the credit of the discovery belongs to Mr Pepperell, just as Mr Lovejoy deserves full credit for the Anchor Stroke which i also exploited professionally.*