



# Hillsboro Independent Pool League

H.I.P.L.

[www.hillsboro8ball.com](http://www.hillsboro8ball.com)

## General Information Rules and Guidelines

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## **Our Organization**

The Hillsboro Independent Pool League (H.I.P.L.) was founded in 2007 by Brian Roy and Bob Mobile, two local players. Bob with the experience in managing and directing billiard leagues and Brian with the skills needed to cultivate the friendships and contacts necessary to formulate teams of interested players.

The area had originally been supported by a sanctioned T.A.P. 8-Ball League; however, due to financial hardship, the local T.A.P. franchise eventually ceased operation. The failing of this local T.A.P. franchise left a bit of a vacuum in in the community, with many local billiard players thirsting for a way to return to competitive league play; and thus, the Hillsboro Independent Pool League was born.

## **Special Recognition**

The H.I.P.L. would not be what it is today without the hard work and unselfish efforts of Bob Mobile and Brian Roy. Both founding members played important roles in establishing the league, but special recognition should go to Bob Mobile for his tireless efforts in implementing the original player handicapping system, establishing the original website, countless financial donations and for management of the league for nearly 5 years!

## **Our Charter**

Our charter is a simple one. It's all about the players! We seek to provide a forum for organized competitive team play, where local players can join together to enjoy the game of 8-ball in a social setting. This means placing an emphasis on good sportsmanship, mutual respect and an appreciation for individual player skills.

Our organization is entirely a non-profit organization with NO league management fees. This means that nearly 100% of the fees collected are returned back to the players in the form of prizes, awards and banquets. We are also fortunate to benefit from the support of a few local businesses and individuals sharing in the passion for pool.

## **Infrastructure**

The H.I.P.L. is a small league, consisting of 4-8 teams, playing weekly at local host establishments. The league is an "e-League", meaning our primary forum for communication and management is handled over the internet, coupled with an informative website, thus allowing our players to stay current on league information.

The actual management of the league is handled by a league Director, Co-Director and Treasurer, with input from team captains and their players. The league Director and Co-Director are elected positions. The Treasurer is an appointed position.

## **The Places We Play**

We are fortunate to have a number of great establishments in our local region that allow us the privilege of playing pool on their premises. It is through their generosity that our non-profit league remains viable. In exchange, we need to show our appreciation and so we ask that all of our players patronize these establishments! We also recognize the liability these establishments are burdened with in hosting our league and take great care to recognize and reduce this liability by promoting safe and friendly play. No host establishment should ever suffer any consequences as a result of our league play. We further promote the following guidelines:

1. Help to defray their expense for table maintenance by donating \$1 per person for each match played to their table maintenance.
2. Promote their business or establishment and whenever possible, purchase food and beverages during matches. We also encourage bringing spouses or friends.
3. Don't be a trouble maker! Always consider yourself a guest when playing a match and abide by the establishment rules. As a league member, you represent the league as a whole and your actions or actions of your guests reflect on all of us.
4. Be safe! When consuming alcohol, manage your drinking; and please, never drink and drive.
5. Be a good sportsman and be respectful of your fellow competitors. Be respectful of the equipment and your surroundings.
6. Join the establishments as a member. Most of our host establishments are private organizations, so help by joining their establishments as a member and you will share in the benefits.

## **When We Play**

The H.I.P.L. plays every Monday evening during the fall, winter and spring, starting at 6:00pm. We run (2)15 week regular sessions, plus playoffs. Depending on the number of teams involved, we typically start in September/October and play until June/July. (We do not play during the summer months.)

## **League Management**

At a minimum, the league shall be managed by at least (1) Director and if possible, (2) Directors. (Titles to be Director and Co-Director) The term of the Director or Co-Director shall be (1) year or a (12) month period as an elected position. Elections are held at an annual players meeting.

The Directors also have the option to appoint Ad Hoc Committees with Committee Chair Persons as needed, such as, Treasurer, Member Committee, Rules Committee, etc.... The committees and their committee chair persons are volunteer positions and serve at the pleasure of the Directors. Committee members can be terminated at any time and a committee expires at the end of the Directors term.

A players meeting is to be held prior to the start of each fall session, whereas active and past players have a way to voice their opinions and/or request changes. All players are entitled to

submit a verbal or written proposal for discussion at the meeting and to make a formal motion for vote. Once a formal motion has been heard, a second motion would be needed, followed by a vote. (A simple majority is required to pass any motion.) Each active or past player present at the meeting is entitled to (1) vote, provided a quorum is present. A quorum is defined as 50% of the voting members. (For the purpose of determining the number of legal voting members to constitute a quorum, the Directors shall use the total number of players on the previous session league roster.)

From time-to-time, it may be necessary for the Directors to hold a Captains meeting or a special players meeting. Captains meetings are to include each team Captain or their designee, plus the Director and Co-Director. Captains meetings are not the place to make permanent policy or rule changes, but can serve a purpose should an emergency arise requiring an immediate temporary change or appointment.

The H.I.P.L. Directors reserve the right to terminate league membership of any player, at any time, should it be in the bester interest of the league.

### **Team Management**

Each team shall be managed by a Captain and Co-Captain. (Captains and Co-Captains are identified on the roster with the symbol **c** or **cc**.) The Captain and Co-Captain for each team are decided by individual teams by a method of their choice, not necessarily a vote.

Team Captains and Co-Captains have the responsibility to manage their team's players and to perform various league duties as needed, such as, submitting team rosters prior to the start of a league session, keeping score during matches or assigning that duty to one of his/her players, submittal of score sheets to the league Director, collection of league dues from each of his/her players and for the behavior of their team during match play. Captains are also expected to transmit information to their players as needed and to interpret the league rules. (Captains are urged to keep a copy of the league rules with them during matches.)

The H.I.P.L. Directors reserve the right to terminate a "Captain's" status at any time, should it be in the best interest of the league. Should this occur, the Directors can appoint a new interim team captain as needed; however, it is the individual team's responsibility to choose a permanent new Captain and/or Co-Captain.

### **Website and League Information**

The H.I.P.L. is an "e-League" and maintains a website for our players that can be found at [www.hillsboro8ball.com](http://www.hillsboro8ball.com)

The website contains various pages and links that provide a way to read, download and print important forms and information. The website generally includes up to date rosters, schedules, weekly match results, team standings, minutes form league meetings, updated rule book, financial records and announcements or general information.

## Annual Banquet

Every year the H.I.P.L. holds an annual banquet for current and past players. These banquets include a pool tournament or tournaments and pot luck meal. Depending on the cash reserves of the league, prizes for the tournament(s) may be paid out and the league may subsidize part or all of the food expense.

## Awards

Every session, the H.I.P.L. presents various awards in recognition of player's individual achievements. To qualify for these awards a player must have played in a minimum 1/3 the number of total weeks in the regular session. (Playing twice in one night only counts as (1) week qualified.) The awards are as follows:

- MVP – Handicap 2-3 (Highest winning percentage)
- MVP – Handicap 4-5 (Highest winning percentage)
- MVP – Handicap 6-7 (Highest winning percentage)
- Most Improved Player (Best % improvement from session to session)
- Most Effective Break (Highest % made on break)

## H.I.P.L. General Rules and Guidelines

We play the game of coed singles 8-ball, and for the most part, our rules are a “spinoff” of most typical 8-ball leagues. The objective of the game is to pocket all of one designated group of balls (stripes or solids) followed by the pocketing of the 8-ball.

### **Section 1 General Guidelines**

#### Eligibility To Play:

Any amateur level player is eligible to play and join a team in the H.I.P.L., provided that the team roster is not considered frozen. (See roster details listed under “Forming Teams”.) Professional players are prohibited from playing in our league. Specifically, a professional player is defined as one of the following:

- Any individual that exceeds \$4,000. in income derived from sanctioned billiard tournaments in a single calendar year.
- Any individual that holds a current membership in a Men's or Women's professional billiards organizations or association.

#### Forming Teams:

A team consists of a minimum of (4) players and a maximum of (7) players, with (1) player designated as a team Captain and (1) player designated as a Co-Captain. Teams must be

associated with a host establishment that includes a pool table of sufficient quality to host 8-ball competition. (i.e. American Legion Post, Moose Club, Public Bar, Public Tavern, etc...) Teams must submit an initial team roster to the league Directors prior to the start of a pool session and the roster must include all players' names, individual player handicaps and individual player contact information. (For past or returning players, an established handicap level may already be available from the league Director or on the website. For new players, captains are asked to submit an initial handicap equal to the players' estimated skill level.)

Rosters will remain fluid for several weeks to allow teams the opportunity to try out new players or to make changes and additions to their rosters as needed; however, rosters will eventually become frozen whereas no roster changes can be made. The date the rosters become frozen depends on the number of weeks scheduled in the regular session. For a 15 week regular session, rosters will become frozen after week 9 has been completed.

***Even after rosters are frozen, the H.I.P.L. does allow some minimal roster changes for unforeseen circumstances (i.e. player health issue, player moves out of the area, etc...); however, these late roster changes would require a majority vote of the captains and league Directors.***

The team must agree to pay league fees and the captain or co-captain must agree to collect all league fees with transmittal of funds to the Treasurer or league Directors. Payment can be made either in cash or by check made payable to "HIPL". (See "Match Fees for exact amounts and details.)

There is no maximum team handicap level, but there is Maximum Handicap Rule that applies to nightly matches and the total combined handicap of the players involved in matches. (See "Maximum Handicap Rule" for more details.)

#### Schedules:

The league Directors will publish a schedule prior to the start of any pool session. The schedule is generally based on a fall/winter 15 week session, followed by 3 weeks of playoffs, and a winter/spring 15 week session, followed by 3 weeks of playoffs; however, this is subject to change based on the number of teams participating and the availability of the host establishments.

Schedules are posted on the website and all captains are responsible to ensure that their players are informed as to the actual match locations.

#### Match Times:

The H.I.P.L. 8-ball league is played on Monday nights. Matches are scheduled to start at 6:00pm and will run until completion. (Match completion is generally around 10:30pm.)

Recognizing that there can be delays due to bad weather travel or other unforeseen player circumstances, the H.I.P.L. allows for a 15 minute grace period beyond the scheduled match start



time; however, captains must be able to field a player to start the first match no later than 6:15pm. Should this not be possible, then game concessions or match forfeits will result as follows:

- If a captain cannot field a player within the 15 minute grace period (6:15pm), then the first match is considered a forfeit.
- If a captain cannot field a player within a second 15 minute grace period (6:30pm), then the second match is considered a forfeit.
- This continues in 15 minute increments with the third match to start by 6:45pm and the fourth match by 7:00pm.

*See “Forfeits” for scoring details.*

#### Match Fees:

The H.I.P.L. does not charge a membership or franchise fee or dues; however, individual player match fees are assessed as follows:

- The H.I.P.L. assesses a match fee per player, per match. The current match fee is \$6 per person, per match. (An individual player match consists of all games played against a single opponent on a single night.) An additional fee of \$1 per player, per match is charged and donated to the host establishment for pool table maintenance. (Match fees are subject to change at any time per a member vote.)

Team captains are required for the collection individual player match fees and to make payment to the league Directors or Treasurer. All match fees must be paid in full prior to the start of playoffs. Teams not in good financial standing will not be allowed to participate in the playoffs.

Team captains are also responsible to ensure that the \$1 per player per match donation is given to the host establishment for table maintenance.

#### Score Sheets:

The league provides printable blank score sheets listed on the website. Home team captains are required to download and provide a score sheet at the start of matches. The home team captain is also responsible for submittal of the completed score sheet to the league Directors or uploaded directly online.

#### General Conduct and House Rules:

Regardless of where we play or what our rules are, the “House or Host Establishment Regulations”, regarding table play, shall always prevail in terms of general conduct and the types of shots that are allowed. For example, “Jump” shots are never allowed, but Masse’ shots may be allowed.

## Section 2 Matches

### General Information:

A match is defined in 2 ways, individual player matches, also known as a “Race”, and team matches.

An individual player match or “Race” is a head-to-head match-up between 2 players, resulting in one player winning by either achieving the required number of game wins or by forfeit. The number of game wins required is typically referred to as the “Race” and is determined by the individual player handicaps involved. The following table illustrates the various “Races” required to achieve an individual player win. Handicaps are listed along the top and side.

<b>Race</b>	<b>Handicap 2</b>	<b>Handicap 3</b>	<b>Handicap 4</b>	<b>Handicap 5</b>	<b>Handicap 6</b>	<b>Handicap 7</b>
Handicap 2	2/2	2/3	2/4	2/5	2/6	2/6
Handicap 3	3/2	2/2	2/3	2/4	2/5	2/6
Handicap 4	4/2	3/2	3/3	3/4	3/5	2/5
Handicap 5	5/2	4/2	4/3	4/4	4/5	3/5
Handicap 6	6/2	5/2	5/3	5/4	5/5	4/5
Handicap 7	6/2	6/2	5/2	5/3	5/4	5/5

Examples of individual player match-up races are as follows:

- A player with handicap 3 versus another player with handicap 3.
  - First player to win 2 games would win the match.
- A player with handicap 3 versus another player with handicap 5.
  - Player with handicap 3 need only to win 2 games, whereas the player with handicap 5 would need 4 wins.

A team match is defined as the match-up between 2 teams. During the regular 15 week session, a team match involves 4 individual player head-to-head matchups in an evening. (During regular session matches, all 4 individual player head-to-head matches are always played to completion.) During the playoffs, a team match is a best of 5 individual player head-to-head matchups. (During playoffs, first team to achieve 3 individual player head-to-head wins is considered the team match winner. Any remaining matches need not be played.)

### Make-Up Matches:

The league Directors have the sole discretion to cancel or postpone matches at any time for the benefit of the league or the safety of the players. Cancellation or postponement will be communicated to the team captains and the captains would then be responsible to notify their individual players. Should a match be postponed, it is up to the individual team Captains to schedule a make-up date. (Make-up dates are generally scheduled on off nights.) Should a

make-up date not be possible, the league standings will be adjusted by percentage of matches and games played.

Forfeits:

Every attempt should be made to avoid forfeits, but should a forfeit become necessary, then (1) team is awarded all match wins for the night, but no games played (wins or losses) and (1) team is awarded all match losses for the night, but no games played. (wins or losses).

No player shooting data is recorded.

If a forfeit were to affect the playoff qualification for minimum match requirements, then it is the sole discretion of the league Directors to make adjustments in these rules for specific players. (A forfeit should never adversely affect the winning team or their players!)

Game Protests or Disputes:

Both players at the table are considered the referees for their match. The players are encourage to pay attention, to call their own fouls and to settle any disputes between themselves; however, either player can ask their team captains for a rule clarification at any time, but the team captains are not allowed to make judgments regarding the legality of a shot already taken or a past foul. This interpretation is left to the (2) players at the table. If a dispute at the table cannot be settled by the (2) players involved, then and only then, should team captains have any input. If a satisfactory judgment by the captains is not possible, then the game should be replayed.

**Section 3  
Player Handicaps**

General Information:

Individual player handicaps are calculated and assigned weekly based on the past shooting history for each player. Specifically, the league tracks and calculates individual player percentages of balls made per inning “BPI” (trip to the table) with some additional adjustment for balls pocketed on the break, for a break and run and for sinking of the 8-Ball on the break. New players are assigned a starting handicap by their team captains and an initial 12 week shooting history is entered based on the midpoint of the handicap level assigned. An example, for a new player assigned a Handicap of 3, 12 weeks of shooting history would be entered at a BPI level of 1.03.

The BPI shooting percentages that make up our handicap system are as follows:

Handicap 2, 0.00% - 0.92%	Handicap 3, 0.93% - 1.12%
Handicap 4, 1.13% - 1.70%	Handicap 5, 1.71% - 2.63%
Handicap 6, 2.64% - 3.93%	Handicap 7, 3.94% and up

This handicap system was developed in an effort to equalize individual player abilities with the goal of giving each player an equal chance at winning their individual matches, regardless of the actual player match-ups. In addition, a one level jump in handicap or “Bias” is imposed for any player with a match winning percentage equal to or greater than 75% with a minimum of at least 3 matches played. The “Bias” is carried over to the following sessions until the players winning percentage drops below 75%.

Captains are required to check the H.I.P.L. website prior to the start of matches to determine weekly player handicaps. See additional clarifications as follows:

- Should for any reason, the handicaps not be updated from the previous week, then players are still required to play under the handicaps listed on the website at the start of a match.
- Should a mistake in the handicap calculation look evident, players must still play under the handicap listed on the website at the start of a match. (This happens from time-to-time, as data entry errors are an occasional problem.)

#### Maximum Handicap Rule:

In an effort to help balance the skill level on each team and prevent stacking of team talent, the H.I.P.L. has adopted a “Maximum Handicap Rule” of 25. The rule states as follows:

- During a typical regular session team match, the sum of the (4) player’s handicaps that play for any one team may not exceed 21.
- During playoffs, a team match is considered a match-up of (5) individual player matches, so the sum of all (5) player’s handicaps may not exceed 25; however, the (5) players can play in any order. So..., there is no penalty in trying to win a playoff match in 3 by playing all high handicaps first; however, the remaining (2) players available must be declared to the opposing team before the start of the 3<sup>rd</sup> game and must result in a total team handicap of 25 or less.
- Players are allowed to play multiple times in a regular session team match, but their handicaps are frozen at the start of the evening. In other words, player handicaps do not change and are not recalculated until after all evening matches are complete. (Players are not allowed to play multiple times in a playoff match.)
- For a playoff match, those teams that consist of only (3) players are allowed to compete, but the total team handicap for the (3) players may not exceed 18. For a playoff match, those teams that consist of only (4) players are allowed to compete, but the total team handicap for the (4) players may not exceed 21.
- When a team is short players during regular session matches, the opposing team is allowed to decide who would play more than once, but the choice cannot force a team to exceed the “Maximum Handicap Rule”. If there is no player available that would conform to the “Maximum Handicap Rule” then unfortunately, a forfeit is the only alternative.

## **Section 4**

### **Rules of the Game**

#### Choosing the First Player to Start a Match:

A match commences with the home team determining which team is to field a player first. (It is the home team's choice to decide who must field a player first, thus allowing the other team to match up against a known opponent.) Each subsequent match is then alternated between the teams as to who is to field a player first.

#### Determining Which Player Breaks To Start an Individual Matchup:

At the start of each individual matchup between 2 players, a lag shall determine which player wins the opportunity to choose break or to pass on the break. (The winner of the lag may choose to pass the break to his/her opponent.)

- A lag consists of each player shooting any object ball of their choice, except the cue ball or the 8-ball, from behind the head string and into the foot rail that is clear of all other balls, with the goal of having their ball kick back and come to rest at a position either frozen to or closer than their opponents ball to the head rail to win the lag. During the lag, should the 2 player's object balls collide or touch in any manner, the lag is void and a new lag must be attempted. Any player pocketing their object ball, touching the inside portion of a pocket, touching either side rail or committing any type of cue stick or foot fault will suffer the consequences of a loss in the lag.

If it is determined by both players at the table that the lag is a tie, then a new lag is attempted until a winner prevails.

#### Determining Which Player Breaks As The Match Continues:

During individual player matchups, the winner of the previous game will automatically be granted the choice of break to start the next game. (Player with choice of break can choose to pass the break to his/her opponent.)

#### Who Must Rack:

The winner of the lag shall have the option at the start of a match to break or pass the break, and if choosing to break, can choose to rack his/her own balls or to force his/her opponent to rack the balls. Once a player makes his/her choice upon their first break shot, then that choice prevails for the entire match. The opposing player (Loser of the lag) does not have to make the same choice and retains the right to choose either to rack his/her own balls or to force his/her opponent to rack the balls. Once the loser of the lag makes his/her choice on their first break shot, then that choice prevails for the entire match.

### Definition of a Legal Rack:

A legal rack is defined as follows:

- The balls must be racked tightly with all adjacent balls in contact with each other and the head ball located over the foot spot on the table.
- The 8-Ball must be placed in the center position of the rack on the 3<sup>rd</sup> row.
- The lower corner balls on the last row of the rack must be of opposite groups (1 solid and 1 striped)

Failure to meet the above criteria will require a re-rack. Continued and deliberate attempts to thwart a legal rack by any player (loose rack, balls position incorrectly, etc...) would be considered poor sportsmanship and may result in the loss of a game. If agreed to by both captains in attendance or designated team managers, a penalty loss of 1 game can be assessed for poor sportsmanship.

### Definition of a Legal Break:

A legal break requires ALL of the following:

- The cue ball must be placed 100% behind the head string and driven in a hard manner directly into the forward facing portion of the rack of balls. (The cue ball cannot touch any rail or pocket prior to contact with the rack of balls.)
- A minimum of 4 balls (can include the cue ball) must strike a rail or be pocketed as a result of the break.
- The cue ball must make initial contact with either the head ball or either ball in row 2 first! (The cue ball cannot make initial contact with any balls in rows 3, 4 or 5.)

Failure to accomplish a legal break results in a re-rack and loss of breaking privilege. The opponent would then have choice of break. (Causing a re-rack will result in a foul marked on the score sheet as an "Inning".)

Should a legal break be accomplished, but the cue ball scratches or jumps off the playing surface, then a foul has occurred and the incoming player is granted ball in-hand behind the head string. (This is a foul, resulting in an inning is marked on the score sheet.)

Should a legal break be accomplished and the 8-Ball is pocketed during the break shot, then the game is considered a win for the breaking player. (All balls pocketed are marked as made on break "MOB" on the score sheet.)

Should a legal break be accomplished and the 8-Ball is pocketed during the break shot, but the cue ball is also pocketed or the cue ball jumps off the playing surface, then the game is considered a loss for the breaking player. (All balls pocketed are marked as made on break "MOB" and a foul is marked as an "Inning".)

If no balls are pocketed during a legal break, then the incoming player assumes position at the table where the balls lie. (No inning is marked as a break shot is not considered a skill shot.)

If any balls are pocketed during a legal break and no fouls are committed, then the breaking player continues play and the table is still considered “Open”. The breaking player continues and has choice of solids or stripes (high and lows) regardless of what balls have been pocketed.

#### Continuing Play Calling Shots:

All shots, except on the break, must be called by ball and pocket unless they are blatantly obvious. This is to avoid any misunderstandings between opponents. It is not necessary to call the method as to how an object ball will be pocketed (i.e. bank shot, combination shot, etc...), but in some cases it might be a good idea to do so as a courtesy to the opponent. Shots that are a few degrees from straight in, bank shots, kiss shots, combination shots, etc... are not blatantly obvious and must be specifically called by ball and pocket.

The 8-Ball must always be called and it is a good idea to look your opponent in the eye to make sure they confirm and understand where the shot is called. It is not necessary to mark the pocket.

#### Continuing Play Regular Play:

The player at the table remains at the table after each shot is legally accomplished until such time as the 8-Ball is legally pocketed to complete the game.

- A legal shot is defined as shot whereas an object ball is struck by the cue ball and then any ball, including the cue ball, makes contact with a rail. (If a ball is pocketed, then no rail contact is required.) If one or more rails are contacted by the cue ball first, before the object ball is contacted, then any ball, including the cue ball, must still strike a rail after object ball contact. (If a ball is pocketed, then no rail contact is required.)

**Note: The 8-ball is never considered neutral, even when the table is open, and may not be used first in conjunction with a combination, carom or kiss shot. The 8-ball can be used 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, etc... in conjunction with a combination, carom or kiss shot, provided that the cue ball makes legal contact with the players object ball first.**

#### Continuing Play Missed Shots:

Any time a player misses a called shot, pockets a called ball into the wrong pocket, pockets the wrong ball or fouls, the player’s turn at the table is over and the incoming player takes possession of the table. Until such time as either player pockets a called shot, the table is considered “Open”. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

#### Continuing Play - Fouls:

If a foul is committed, the player’s turn at the table is over and the incoming player takes possession of the table. In all cases, with one exception, the incoming player is granted ball in-hand and may place the cue ball anywhere on the table. The one exception is when a foul is committed on the break, whereas the incoming player is granted ball in-hand behind the head string. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

### Breaking Fouls:

Failure to make a legal break shot is considered a foul and is marked as an inning on the score sheet. (See “Definition of a Legal Break”)

### Cue Ball Fouls:

If, during a shooter’s final stroke, the cue ball is moved in any manner, it is considered a foul. This includes being hit with a bridge, the cue stick, body, hand, etc... If while in the process of being placed by hand, after a ball in-hand foul by opponent, the cue ball contacts another object ball, it is considered a foul. If the cue ball is accidentally moved during the placement process, after a ball in-hand foul by opponent, and not during a player’s actual final stroke, it is NOT a foul. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

If a shooter intentionally picks up the cue ball in an attempt to intentionally foul in lieu of making a shot, it is considered a foul and results in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

If the cue ball is pocketed or driven off the table it is considered a foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

Cue ball fouls during a break shot result in ball in-hand behind the head string. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

If a cue ball foul occurs when attempting to pocket the 8-ball, it results in ball in-hand and NOT a loss of game. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

### Object Ball Fouls:

If a player touches any ball that is in motion as the result of a shot or if a moving ball is touched by a willfully moved ball, or if a moving ball strikes the shooter’s cue, bridge or person, then it is considered an object ball foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

If an object ball foul occurs when attempting to pocket the 8-ball, the result is ball in-hand for the opponent and NOT a loss of game.

***If an object ball or any other ball is accidentally moved during either the preparation for a shot or the actual execution of a shot, it is NOT considered a foul. Under such a condition, the opponent has the option to leave the ball(s) as they lie or to have them moved back to their original position. If, by reflex action, the shooter attempts to move a ball or stop a ball from moving, it is NOT considered a foul and the opponent will have the option to leave the ball as it lies or to have it moved back to its original position.***



### Scratch Fouls:

Any time the cue ball falls into a pocket or is driven off the table, it is considered a scratch foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent, except during a break shot, where it would result in a ball in-hand behind the head string. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

A scratch foul, while shooting on the 8-ball, results in a loss of game. Any time a scratch occurs, it results in an inning being marked on the score sheet and any balls pocketed are marked as completions.

### Scratch or Foul on First Object Ball:

If, after the break, a shooter pockets their first object ball and either scratches or fouls, the table shall remain open until such time as a player legally pockets an object ball without committing a foul. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

### Head String Shot Fouls:

On shots required to be taken from behind the head string or “In The Kitchen”, either during the break or after a breaking foul (See “Breaking Fouls”), the cue ball is required to cross the head string before contacting the first object ball. Failure to do so will result in ball in-hand any place on the table.

An object ball sitting directly on the head string may be legally hit without penalty of foul.

***Shooting the cue ball across the head string and making contact with your object ball behind the head string or “In The Kitchen” would be a legal shot, but will require extreme English or Masse and requires that the cue ball contact a rail beyond the head string before striking an object ball behind the head string or “In The Kitchen”.***

### Rail Contact Fouls:

A legal shot is defined as shot whereas an object ball is struck by the cue ball and then any ball, including the cue ball, makes contact with a rail. If one or more rails are contacted by the cue ball before the object ball is contacted, then any ball, including the cue ball, must still strike a rail after object ball contact. Failure to execute a legal shot will result in a ball in-hand foul. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

If a ball is legally pocketed, then no rail contact is required.

### Bad Hit Fouls:

Once each player’s group of object balls is determined, the shooter is required to contact a ball from his/her own group prior to contacting any of their opponent’s balls or the 8-ball. (Unless shooting on the 8-ball.) Failure to do so will result in a ball in-hand foul. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

A bad hit foul when shooting on the 8-ball is a ball in-hand foul, unless the 8-ball is pocketed, in which case it would result in a LOSS of game.

### Split Hits:

When a situation arises where two balls from each player's group of object balls, or the 8-ball, lie in close proximity or are frozen, the Split Hit rule shall prevail as follows:

- If both balls are contacted exactly at the same instant, the shot is legal, provided any ball then strikes a rail, including the cue ball, or the object ball is pocketed.

This situation should always require notification to your opponent and at times, an impartial referee should be chosen. If both balls are not struck exactly at the same time and an opponent's ball or the 8-ball is struck first, then the result is ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

### Foot Fouls:

If at the instant of contact, when a shooter's cue makes contact with the cue ball, at least some portion of one foot is not in contact with the floor, then a Foot Foul has been committed, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

When shooting on the 8-ball, a Foot Foul results in ball in-hand and NOT a loss of game, unless the 8-ball is pocketed.

***Players with disabilities can be granted special privileges, but a special waiver must be granted by both captains prior to the start of a match.***

### Push Shot Fouls:

When the cue ball is frozen to another ball and a player elevates the cue, uses follow and makes contact with the cue ball for a prolonged period, the resulting shot is considered a push shot foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

***To avoid push shot fouls, it is recommended that the shooter elevates the butt of the cue and shoots these types of shots off angle.***

When shooting on the 8-ball, a Push Shot Foul is ball in-hand and NOT a loss of game, unless the 8-ball is pocketed.

### Double Hit Foul:

If the cue ball tip comes in contact with the cue ball more than once, it is considered a double hit foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

When shooting on the 8-ball, a Double Hit Foul is ball in-hand and NOT a loss of game, unless the 8-ball is pocketed.

#### Cue Stick Alignment Foul:

Placing a cue stick on the table as an alignment aide and removing both hands from it is considered a cue stick alignment foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

*Care should be taken before accusing a player of this foul, as it is legal to lay a cue stick on the table, provided the intent is not to use the cue stick as an alignment guide.*

When shooting on the 8-ball, a Cue Stick Alignment Foul is ball in-hand and NOT a loss of game, unless the 8-ball is pocketed.

#### Object Ball Gauge Foul:

Removing a pocketed ball or using the cue ball during a ball in-hand foul as a gauge to determine if a ball in play will fit through a particular situation on the table is considered an Object Ball Gauge Foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

When shooting on the 8-ball, an Object Ball Gauge Foul is ball in-hand and NOT a loss of game, unless the 8-ball is pocketed.

#### Jump Shot Foul:

Jump shots are not allowed and will result in ball in-hand for the opponent, but it is legal to perform a Masse shot; however, no part of the cue ball can jump over another ball during a Masse shot. Jump Shot Fouls result in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

When shooting on the 8-ball, a Jump Shot Foul results in ball in-hand and is NOT a loss of game, unless the 8-ball is pocketed.

#### Miscue Foul:

There are no miscue fouls provided that a legal shot is completed. (See “Legal Shot” defined.)

#### Other Specific Fouls Defined:

If during the process of placing the cue ball as a result of a ball in-hand foul by the opponent, the cue ball makes contact with any other ball on the table, it is considered a foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

If a player touches any ball that is in motion with their hand, body, bridge, etc..., it is considered a foul, resulting in ball in-hand for the opponent. (Fouls are marked as an inning on the score sheet.)

Head string fouls result in ball in-hand for the opponent as follows: (These can only occur as a result of a foul on the break.)

- Cue ball struck from in front of the head string.
- Cue ball makes contact with an object ball that is not completely beyond the head string. (Note: It is possible to kick at a ball behind the head string, but the cue ball must make contact with any rail beyond the head string first.)

#### Continuing Play- Defense:

A player that declares “Defense” or “Safety” agrees to give up their turn at the table for continuing play, after executing a legal shot, regardless if a ball is pocketed. (See “Legal Shot” defined.) Care should be taken to ensure that the opponent understands that a defense or safety has been called prior to executing the shot.

#### Continuing Play- Unusual Situations:

- If an object ball is frozen to the rail, then to complete a legal shot, the shooter must make the cue ball contact the frozen ball and then must also complete one of the following:
  - The object ball must be pocketed.
  - The object ball must be driven to a different rail.
  - The cue ball must make contact with a rail.
  - Any other ball on the table must make contact with a rail.
- Combination shots are legal as long as the object ball from the shooter’s group is contacted first. When the table is still open, any ball except the 8-ball may be contacted first. The 8-ball is never considered neutral and can never be contacted first, except when shooting on the 8-ball. Contact with your opponents ball first or the 8-ball first will result in a ball in-hand foul.
- Switching cue shafts is legal, provided the player declares their intention to do so to the opponent. If a regular playing cue is broken down and is fully separated at any time without declaring a cue shaft change, then it is considered a forfeit and the entire match is lost.
- Minimum cue length is 40”. There is no maximum cue length.
- Using just the cue shaft to complete a shot is not allowed.
- Balls driven off the table during the break will remain down or pocketed. This also is considered a foul and the incoming player has the option to play the cue as it lies or take cue ball in-hand behind the head string.
  - If the 8-ball is driven off the table, it is an automatic loss of game.
  - If the 8-ball is pocketed, but the cue ball is driven off the table, it is an automatic loss of game.
- Balls driven off the table during normal play results in ball in-hand for the opponent. Balls driven off the table in the shooter’s group get spotted. Balls driven off the table

in the opponents group stay down. If the 8-ball is driven off the table, it is a loss of game. If the cue ball is driven off the table while shooting on the 8-ball, it is a loss of game.

- If a scratch or foul is committed on the first object ball shot and the object ball is not pocketed, then the table remains open. If the shooter pockets their first object ball and then scratches or fouls, the table is still open until such time as a shooter legally pockets a ball without fouling.
- Once a shooters category or group of balls has been decided, shooting the wrong category or group will result in ball in-hand for the opponent. The shooters turn at the table is over and if a ball is pocketed, the ball stays down. Should the shooter and the opponent not realize a mistake has been made and play is allowed to continue and the next shot is attempted on the wrong category or group of balls, then the shooter now owns the new category or group of balls. It is considered unsportsmanlike to intentionally allow a player to shoot the wrong category or group of balls.
- If an object ball is pocketed into an unintended or pocket. The ball stays down and the shooters turn is over.
- If any ball is accidentally pocketed by any means other than during a legal shot attempt, (i.e. brushing up against a ball while walking around the table, or bumping into the table causing a ball to be pocketed), then the opponent has the option to replace the ball(s) as close to where it or they originally were or to leave the balls down.
- If during a shot, an object ball or any other ball falls into a pocket after coming to rest for 5 seconds or longer, then the ball(s) are to be replaced as close as possible to where it or they appeared to come to rest. This rule also applies to the cue ball.
- Handing the cue ball over to an opponent during a ball in-hand foul is legal; however, should the cue ball fall during the handoff onto the table and strike a ball(s), then all balls are to be returned to their original position and play resumes. Should both players agree that they cannot substantially return the ball(s) to their original position, then a re-rack is necessary and the game is replayed. The player that originally broke the game should break again.

#### Timeouts, Assistance or Coaching:

Each player is allowed (2) timeouts per game and each timeout is limited to 1 minute each.

During a timeout, assistance from (1) fellow team member is allowed during the timeout; however, once a fellow player is chosen to provide the assistance, then that team member is considered the players “Coach” for the entire match. No other player can talk with or advise the shooter while the shooter is in control of the table. (Any player can talk with the shooter while their opponent is in control of the table.)

Additional rules or clarifications regarding timeouts are as follows:

- Regardless of the handicap level, communication with the shooter during a timeout is limited to the “Coach” only. A “Coach may talk or get guidance from other players, but only the “Coach” can communicate directly with the shooter.

- Once the “Coach” is chosen or declared at the first timeout in a match, then that specific “Coach” must remain the “Coach” for the duration of the match. Should the “Coach” need to leave the premises during a match for any reason, then the opposing team Captain can agree to a temporary “Coach” as a replacement. Should the opposing team Captain not agree to a temporary “Coach” replacement, then no “Coach” is available to the player for the duration of the match.
- During a shooter’s timeout, the “Coach” or any other member of the team may approach the table; however, only the “Coach” is allowed to communicate directly with the shooter.
- During a timeout, the “Coach” or any other team member must refrain from disrupting any balls on the table or marking the table or rails in any manner, including positioning chalk along the rail. The “Coach” is never allowed to handle a cue stick during a timeout or to instruct a shooter by demonstrating with a cue stick during a timeout. “Coaches” are allowed to touch the table or the rails to point to specific locations. During a ball in-hand foul, the “Coach” cannot place the cue ball on the table for the shooter
- The shooter or any of the shooter’s team members can call for a timeout during a game or match at any time; however, hinting to a shooter by fellow team members that a timeout might be appropriate is not allowed. In other words, asking a shooter if they would like to take a timeout is not appropriate and would constitute the actual calling of a timeout. Obvious noise, such as, purposely coughing to garner the shooters attention is not allowed and is considered poor sportsmanship.
- It is legal for any team member or “Coach” to call for a timeout for the sole purpose of instructing their player to inquire about a potential foul by the opponent.

A violation of any of these guidelines is considered “Poor Sportsmanship” and should result in a verbal warning by the opposing captain. A second offense will result in ball in-hand for the opponent.

#### Unlimited Assistance for Lower Level Players:

The H.I.P.L. has adopted a policy to allow unlimited assistance for lower level players with a handicap rating of 2. Specifically, this means that the “Coach” may give unlimited shooting advice to the player during the match from the bench or sidelines.

Unlimited assistance is different from a timeout, as the assistance does not require the use of a timeout and can be given continuously during a match; however, the “Coach” is not allowed to approach the table, except when a timeout is called.

#### Rule Clarifications:

A player can ask their designated team captain for a rule clarification at any time without the use of a timeout; however, the rule clarification cannot be a question pertaining to game strategy or shooting options, but simply a question regarding the rules of the game. Designated team captains from both teams should be involved in addressing these types of clarifications. (i.e. asking how many timeout are left is a clarification or asking for an update on the number of games won or lost is a clarification.)

Captains are encouraged to keep a copy of the rules with them during matches. At all times, the rules of the H.I.P.L. are to be enforced, regardless of what the players at the table agree to; however, the players at the table are considered the match referees, so any decisions or rulings made by both players at the table stand for the entire match.

#### Interference:

Any individual that interferes with a match by offering advice outside the guidelines of a timeout or distracting/disturbing the players may subject their shooter at the table to an interference foul.

Interference is considered “Poor Sportsmanship” and should result in a verbal warning by the opposing captain. A second offense will result in ball in-hand for the opponent. A third offense will result in a player being asked to leave the premises for the remainder of the matches. Should this occur, then the team is left with only those remaining players for match play, even if this requires someone else to play more than once. (Refer to “Playing Multiple Times”.)

#### Game Concessions:

A game is conceded and marked as a loss on the score sheet if any of the following occur:

- An opponent begins racking the balls for a new game before the game is completed.
- The opponent offers to shake hands as a game concession before the 8-ball is pocketed.
- The shooter places a hand inside a pocket to stop the cue ball from scratching during a shot on the 8-ball.
- Any player or coach that throws a towel or any other type of surrender device onto the table as the opponent is shooting on the 8-ball.

#### Stalemated Game:

If both players reach a point in a game where neither player wishes to risk taking a shot or both players agree that neither player will attempt to win the game by way of an offensive shot, then both players can agree that the game is a stalemate. When this occurs, the balls are re-racked and the game is replayed. The original breaking player breaks again.

#### Shot Clock Infraction:

The H.I.P.L. has adopted a 45 second shot clock to execute a shot. This shot clock commences from the time the opponent retires from the table. After 45 seconds, the opponent should issue a warning, whereas the shooter then has an additional 15 second grace period to attempt a shot. Should the 15 second grace period expire (1 minute in total) and a shot is not attempted, then the shooter is penalized (1) timeout. Should not timeouts remain, then this will result in ball in-hand for the opponent.

*Note, since many shots are attempted in much less than 45 seconds, some latitude should be given when difficult circumstances arise during a match. (i.e. difficult shots on the 8-ball or extra time needed to align for combination shots, etc...)*

#### Individual Players Playing Multiple Times:

If a team is shorthanded during regular session matches, then players are allowed to play multiple times, provided the team is in compliance with the “Maximum Handicap Rule”; however, players are not allowed to play more than once in a single team match during playoffs.

### **Section 5**

#### **Playoffs**

The H.I.P.L. generally plays a 15 week fall session and a 15 week spring session, depending on the number of teams involved, each followed by a 3 week playoff period. The playoffs result in prize money awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishes.

To qualify for the playoffs, teams must be in good financial standing and have paid all match fees. For individual players to qualify for the playoffs, a player must have played in a minimum 1/3 the number of total weeks in the regular session. (Playing twice in an evening only counts as (1) week qualified for playoffs.)

Teams are seeded at the start of playoffs based on their winning percentage in total match wins. If there is a tie, then the team with the higher total game winning percentage will prevail. If there is still a tie, then a head-to-head total match score will prevail.

The seeded format for playoffs provides an advantage to the higher seeded teams, as higher seeded teams will play weaker seeded teams in the early rounds. The following sample playoff format is used for 6 teams:

#### Round 1:

Seed #1 Bye  
Seed #2 Bye  
Seed #3 vs Seed 6  
Seed #4 vs Seed 5

#### Round 2:

Seed 1 vs winner of Seed 4 and 5  
Seed 2 vs winner of Seed 3 and 6

#### Round 3:

Winners of Round 2 in the finals to decide 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place.  
Losers of Round 2 to decide 3<sup>rd</sup> place.



Playoffs rounds are typically single elimination best of 5 matches.  
Additional playoff rules that apply:

- The higher seeded team has choice of available table at any location. Remaining seeded teams must choose from what is left for available locations.
  - Teams in the Winners Bracket of Round 3 choose table location regardless of Seed! Loser Bracket teams must choose from what is left for available locations.
- The higher seeded team has the choice in the first match to either throw a player first or force their opponent to throw a player first. (Coin toss is not utilized.)

“Maximum Handicap Rule” of 25 is in effect during playoffs! (See “Maximum Handicap Rule” for details)

A single player is NOT allowed to play more than once during a playoff match . Should a team be short players available to play during a playoff match, then a head-to-head match forfeit or forfeits may result. Teams must throw all their available players in attendance, before a short of player or players forfeit(s) is utilized.