



## Snooker Tips and Information – Bob Bryntwick

### 1) The “Touching Ball”

**To determine this situation**, take a viewpoint above the 2 balls, swipe your hand over them to see if you can see the cloth beneath and if you can't, declare it a **“Touching Ball”**.

Because we have no referee and unlike a foul declaration (which in most cases, once done, cannot be verified or undone), both players must agree for play to continue. It is highly unlikely the other player will disagree, but if they do, bring in any captain for a 3<sup>rd</sup> and deciding opinion. **Because we have no referee at our games, it is the right of your opponent to verify your opinion and should not be looked at as a disagreement or affront to you.**

There are 2 different scenarios around this – a) touching ball is “Object Ball” or also called a ball on, or b) touching ball is not the ball on.

“Ball on” is the ball the white must first hit for the shot to be fair and not foul. There are 15 red balls and 1 of each other colour, so you may have up to 15 balls on should you be starting to shoot following your opponent with reds left on the table, unless you are at the colours. At that point, your object ball is only one, as in yellow to start, etc.

#### a) **“Touching Ball” is a ball on**

**Scenario - White is touching a Red**, with only that 1 red left. Official rules state that you may not disturb the touching ball, nor move it in any way or it is a foul of 4 points, and to not disturb it, you must play away from it at 90 degrees or more to the axis of both balls. It is deemed **already hit** so you can elect to play anywhere on the table, even into another ball that is not the ball on should that help you create a disadvantage to your opponent. In other words, **you could play into a yellow ball** directly from your touching ball position around the pink, and snooker your opponent behind the green (as an example). It is not only a fair shot, it is your best play.

**Scenario - White is touching a Red**, with 10 reds left and red is the ball on. Again, play away with no need to hit another red or any other ball. No penalty. You could pot another red as long as you don't disturb the touching red. You could hit any other ball as a way of playing a safety shot, no penalty.

**Scenario - White is touching a Blue or any other colour** currently your ball on. Again, it cannot be moved but you could play to the black or behind the black, with no penalty and snooker behind it, or you could play to any part of the table you can reach and not hit anything. Not a penalty. You have already hit the blue as you played away from it.

b) "Touching Ball" is Not ball on

**Scenario - White is touching a Red, it is not your ball on, you are playing any colour ball.** The Official Rules state that you are not to disturb the red and it is not deemed as already struck. You must declare the colour you intend to hit as your **ball on**. Hit it or suffer a foul equivalent to value of the ball you selected, to a minimum of 4 points or greater, depending on the ball selected and its value.

**Scenario - White is touching a Blue or any other colour not your ball on.** Similarly, you must declare your **ball on**. Hit that ball (or its equivalent should it be a red) or suffer a foul. Any disturbance of the touching ball is a foul equivalent to the value of the **ball on** you declared, minimum of 4 points or greater.

Your choice of **ball on** is always subject to the logical next ball to your current position.

2) The "Free Ball"

**Only produced after an opponent's foul.** The snooker in this case is produced by a foul and thus not considered legitimate. If the offending player is asked to play the shot again, then the "Free Ball" is void. A "Free Ball" scenario does not occur when the ball gets stuck at the edge of a pocket jaw (commonly referred to as "angled") in such a manner that the player is unable to hit any ball on. This is because, according to the official snooker rules, a ball is snookered only if its way is obstructed by balls not on. However, you cannot snooker behind the free ball, then the strike is a foul and a penalty of the value of the ball on is awarded to the opponent. The reason is that the free ball was to be treated as the ball on, and one cannot snooker a ball on by another ball on. **A snooker is awarded to the nearest ball to the white, should there be more than one ball in front of the ball on.**

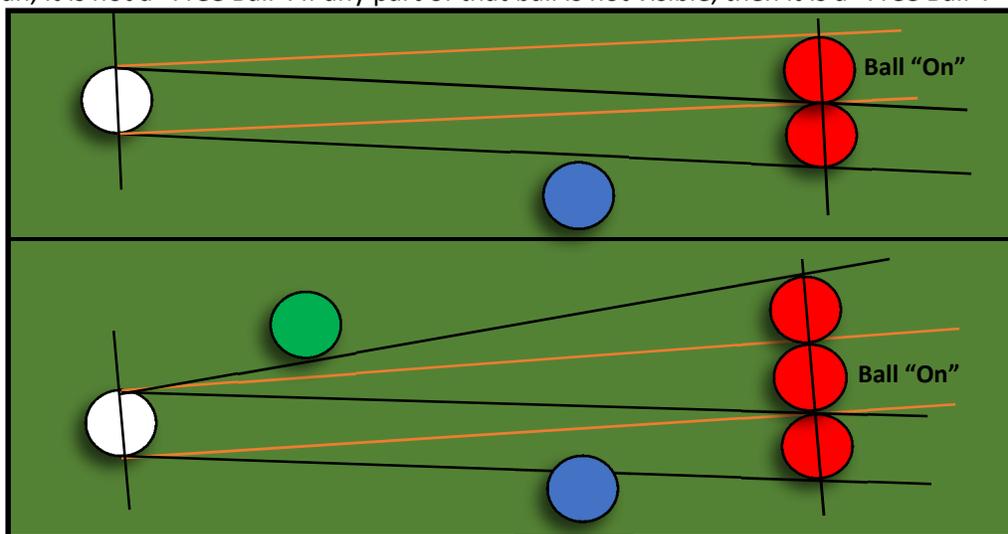
**To determine this situation,** take a viewpoint behind the white ball, both sides of the ball on must be cuttable to the finest degree and, if it cannot be done, declare it a **"Free Ball"**.

**Again, because we have no referee at our games, it is the right of your opponent to verify your opinion and should not be looked at as a disagreement or affront to you.**

On rare occasions, **acting as a referee,** you can take a potted ball and place it carefully beside the ball on in the same plane as the white to see if that extra ball can be seen in full from the white position. If it can, it is not a "Free Ball". If any part of that ball is not visible, then it is a "Free Ball".

Illustration:

Not a "Free Ball"



A "Free Ball" because of the Blue, Green does not impede the red.

On extremely rare occasions, both sides of the ball on will have to be verified in this manner, as shown above.

I have seen 3 examples in the past of such a move performed by official referees under tournament conditions in England over the years so I know it is rare but allowed. They are now also using a special tool, shown below, to replace the off-table ball. It's called a Peradon Ball Position Marker sold in England but not in Canada. In this case, we are **acting as referees** due to the lack of one at our games. So, stick with the off-table ball for now.



**Interesting situations** could occur if somehow both the “Free Ball” and the real ball on are potted. If a colour was the ball on (all reds were potted), and both the free ball and the actual ball on are potted (say the green and blue), only the declared ball on is scored and returned to the table. In this case, Blue is respotted and green remains in the pocket – score is only 3. The real ball on remains off table. If, however, the ball on is red and both the “Free Ball” and a real red are potted, then each ball potted is scored as a red for a total of two points. The colour ball is returned to the table. Weird!

Other topics we will cover at another time:

- The fair Break
- How to break
- The Stroke
- How to draw
- How to roll through with pace
- The Bridge
- The Stance
- Playing with a rake
- Playing from the rail

If any of you would like information on something not covered here, feel free to contact me via text and I will endeavour to assist. (416) 910-2223 is my cell. Also, you can follow these links:

<http://www.billiardworld.com/snooker.html>

<https://www.wpbsa.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/official-rules-of-the-game.pdf>