

# INDEPENDENT BILLIARDS LEAGUE POLICY GUIDLINES

The purpose of this procedure is to define the policy guidelines for the administration of the *Independent Billiards League (IBL)*. The information contained here-in provides guidance to members to make intelligent and logical decisions for most of the situations that occur during the course of the playing session. However, be aware that new situations can arise that might not be covered by these guidelines. In this event, a responsible league administrator should be contacted to resolve the issue. Changes to the policy guidelines might be required.

Please keep in mind a few simple guiding principles.

- The game of pool is won and lost on the table, not through mathematical errors.
- Be flexible, patient, and tolerant of the various pool playing personalities.
- Every league decision made might not be the decision that you might have made under similar circumstances. **Try to be understanding!**

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## A. NEW TEAMS & PLAYERS

- 1) **New Teams** – A request to add a new team after the session has started will be considered on a case by case decision.
- 2) **New Players** – May be placed on a roster if there are enough matches remaining in the session so to qualify for post season play. The minimum number of weeks and matches will vary by player status. **Veteran Player** – former or current SECPL/IBL player. **New Player Ranked** – Has a handicap ranking from another league. **New Player Unranked** – Has no prior handicap. Unknown.
  - a. Veteran Player (VP): Shall have a minimum of 6 weeks and 30 matches played.
  - b. New Player Ranked (NP): Shall have a minimum of 6 weeks and 30 matches played.
  - c. New Player Unranked (NPU) Shall have a minimum of 8 weeks and 40 matches played.
- 3) **Players Switching Teams** – Players may switch to another team with the approval from the League President or committee.
  - a. The President and/or committee will consider the following factors:
    - 1) The teams' roster needs,
    - 2) The number of matches played by the player,
    - 3) The length of the league session remaining.
  - b. Players who switch to another team:
    - 1) Will retain their current statistics,
    - 2) Games & points scored by the player for their former team will remain with that team.

## B. MEMBERSHIP DUES (Player Session Fees)

Membership dues are \$10 per player, per session.

## C. PLAYER HANDICAPS (HCPS)

### **1. New Players -**

- a. The league president will approve all new players' starting HCPs.
- b. ***Players from other leagues*** –
  - 1) From an 8-ball league – the initial HCP shall be the same as the HCP in the league,
  - 2) From a 9-ball league – the initial HCP shall be 1 less than the other league's HCP,
  - 3) The captain of the team may state the player's HCP for the 1st match. If discovered that the HCP is higher than that used in the match, the newfound HCP shall be used when recording the results of match. This could result in altering the match scores, and thus the match outcome. If the newfound HCP is lower, the HCP used for the match will stand as is for that match. The newfound lower HCP

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will then be used in the next match. Subsequent play by the player will require the League President's approval.

- c. *Players who had played in a league but haven't played for a while.*
    - 1) The player's initial HCP will start at his last known highest HCP.
  - d. *Players who have never played in a league :*
    - 1) Experience or ability is **NOT known:**
      - a) MALE players start at a 4.0,
      - b) FEMALE players start at a 3.0,
    - 2) Experience or ability **IS known:**
      - a) League members who know the new player will be queried as to the individual's experience and/or ability. The league President will evaluate the responses and assign the initial HCP.
  - e. The AVERAGE HCP of new players will be equal to their initial HCP. The purpose of the AVERAGE HCP is explained in section D. Handicap (HCP) Calculation.
2. **League Players from a previous session:**
- a. A player's INITIAL HCP for a session shall be equal to the player's final HCP at the end of the previous session.
  - b. A player's AVERAGE HCP shall be equal to the player's final AVERAGE HCP from the previous session.

### **D. PLAYER HANDICAP (HCP) CALCULATION**

1. Handicap calculations consider the difference in HCPs between the player and their opponent, the outcome of the game (win or loss), and the points scored by both players. A player who beats a higher ranked opponent by a certain score will receive more handicap points than if that higher ranked opponent won by the same score. At the end of the match, each game's HCP points are summed, and the total is added to the player's HCP at the beginning of the match, resulting in a new HCP.
2. A player's HCP can decrease only to a value of 1.0 below their AVERAGE HCP. The player's HCP will then be observed for the next two matches played. If their HCP has not increased, their AVERAGE HCP will then be reduced by an additional .5, which will then allow their HCP to decrease further.

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## **E. REGULAR SESSION MATCHES**

1. **START TIME** - The designated start time for a match is 6:00 PM, and should start no later than 6:15 PM, or at a time agreed upon by both team captains.
  - a. A match may begin with a minimum of two (2) players – refer to this section, #2.a.2) With only two (2) players
  - b. A team that does not have two (2) players present **to begin the match by 6:15 pm** shall be penalized by **FORFEITING THE FIRST ROUND** (See section J.2 ROUND FORFEIT for scoring the round).
  - c. A team that does not have two (2) players present **to begin the match by 6:30 pm** shall be penalized by **FORFEITING THE SECOND ROUND**. (See section J.2 ROUND FORFEIT for scoring the round).
  - d. A team that does not have two (2) players present **to begin the match by 6:45 pm** shall be penalized by **FORFEITING THE ENTIRE MATCH**. (See section J.3 MATCH FORFEIT for scoring the match).
  - e. A team that finds that it cannot play their match on the scheduled day must:
    - 1) Contact their opponent no later than **5 pm** the day of the scheduled match to inform them of the situation. The captain of the team who was unable to play shall work with their opponent’s captain **to reschedule the match to be played within the next** fourteen (14) days. ALL efforts to play the rescheduled match must be made by both teams. If a day for the rescheduled match cannot be agreed upon, both Captains must contact the League President to make decision for the match.

**Note:** If a new team has entered the league beyond the initial start date, they shall play their makeup matches as soon as possible. However, the 14 day rule does not apply. The league President will determine the makeup match timeline based on the circumstances.
2. **FORMAT** - The regular session matches will be a 5 round, 4-man round-robin format.
  - a. Should a full complement of 4 players not be present at the start of the match, comply with this section a.1) or a.2) as applicable, utilizing the ghost player as required (see section H.2 “Substitutes & Ghost Player” for guidance). As players show up, they will assume the designated unassigned positions on the score sheet.

**NOTE**

To determine the Handicap Spread ( $\Delta$ HCP) for the round, see this section, #5, “Team HCP spread ( $\Delta$ HCP) calculation:” for each round.
    - 1) **With only three (3) players** - the 4th player spot shall be played by a ghost player, **EXCEPTION**: see section M. *PLAYERS WHO HAVE TO LEAVE (What to do)*.

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- 2) **With only two (2) players** - the 3rd player spot shall be played by a ghost player, and the 4th player spot shall be scored as a forfeit. **EXCEPTION:** see section *M. PLAYERS WHO HAVE TO LEAVE (What to do)*.
  - a) Always play the 2 players' games before playing the ghost player game. This might result in playing out of the sequence listed on the score sheet.
  - b) Always play the 3 games of a round first before scoring the 4th game as a forfeit (a 3rd player might show up before the round is over). This might result in playing out of the sequence listed on the score sheet.
  - c) With only 2 players listed on the score sheet and a 3rd player shows up to play, that player shall:
    - 1) Be added to the score sheet in the 3rd player position. Play shall continue as in the 3-player format – see E.2.a.1) “With only Three (3) players”, above,
    - 2) Play in the current round, even though the 1st game of the round has started, and
    - 3) NOT BE COUNTED as a substitute. (See the EXCEPTION listed in section H. SUBSTITUTES & GHOST PLAYERS, #1.b).
3. Only one (1) ghost player per round may be used,
4. Only one (1) substitute player per match is allowed (see section H. GHOST PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTES, #1),
5. Team HCP spread ( $\Delta$ HCP) calculation:
  - a. For each team, add together the HCPs of the players who ACTUALLY PLAY in the round,
    - 1) If the round includes a forfeit, DO NOT try to calculate a HCP for this spot; calculate the team's HCP using only the three players who play in the round. This might result in a different  $\Delta$ HCP each round.
  - b. Round off the results to the closest whole number,
  - c. Calculate the handicap spread  $\Delta$ HCP (i.e. the difference between the two teams' HCP calculations)
  - d. The team with the lowest calculated HCP will receive the  $\Delta$ HCP points for the round.
6. **For players who have to leave the playing site** (are not available to play) – refer to section *M. PLAYERS WHO HAVE TO LEAVE (What to do)* - page 12 & 13. A player who leaves the site may return and assume their original assigned spot if it is still available in accordance with these Policy Guidelines.

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### 7. Time-Outs / Coaching

- a. 2 *time-outs* are allowed per round, and may be taken by 1 player only, or by 2 different players.
- b. *Time-outs* shall take no longer than 2 minutes.
- c. The shooter, or any other team member, may call for, or ask for a *time-out*. If the shooter is down on the shot, they SHALL BE ACCREDITED WITH A TIME-OUT and DOES NOT have the option to decline. If the shooter is standing or walking around the table when a *time-out* is called the shooter DOES NOT have to take the *time-out* and CAN decline.
- d. **When all 2 time-outs for a round have already been taken:**
  - 1) If the player asks for a time-out, they shall be informed that no more time-outs are available.
  - 2) If a team member calls for, or asks the player if they want a time-out, **either of these actions shall be considered a foul resulting in ball-in-hand to the opponent.**
- e. When a *time-out* is called, only one coach of the player's choice must proceed to the player immediately. The coach MAY NOT confer with anyone else for advice after the time-out is called – NO TEAM CONFERENCES!
- f. Only one coach allowed per *time-out*. If another person offers coaching advice to the player during a *time-out*, a second *time-out* will be accredited to that player.
- g. If the coach leaves the player and then later returns to the player before the player shoots:
  - 1) This shall be considered as the same *time-out*, as long as the coach does not talk to anyone,
  - 2) If the coach talks to anyone, this action shall be considered a second *time-out*.
- h. During a coaching *time-out*, when player has ball-in-hand, the coach MAY NOT touch the cue ball when directing the player for cue ball placement. The player SHALL be the only one who can touch and place the cue-ball.

## F. CAPTAIN'S RESPONSIBILITIES – Team Weekly Fees & Score Sheets:

1. Team Weekly Fees & Score Sheet, the weekly fee, currently \$40 per match. Scoring will be kept utilizing a cell phone or tablet. Weekly fee will be paid via Venmo, PayPal, or Cash App. Weekly fee shall not go unpaid for more than two weeks. Any team who owes dues beyond that point will be penalized by forfeiting all future matches until dues become current.
2. Team Captain Responsibilities:
  - a. Team Fee/Payouts - the team captain, NOT the individual team members, has the sole responsibility for the weekly fee, and to submit it in a timely manner.
  - b. Prize Money Payouts – are given only to the team captain, or to a designated player appointed by the team captain.

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### G. EQUIPMENT USE – TABLES, CUE BALL, & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

1. **Tables** – If the home team site has more than one table, both tables *SHALL* be utilized unless the bar owner does not allow it. Please finish each round prior to starting the next round on the other table so there is no confusion. Captains should consider playing on one table in the 5<sup>th</sup> round.
  - a. **Exception:** when playing at Scottish Dave’s or any other bar room where the pool tables are not near each other. In this situation, both captains shall agree to play on two tables if available.
2. **Cue Ball** – If a regulation size & weight cue ball is available, no matter the source, then that cue ball shall be used during the match. Please remember to replace the original cue ball at the end of the match.
3. **Electronic Devices** – When actively engaged in a game, No ELECTRONIC DEVICES are permitted to be used or worn. These include:
  - a. Cell phones – leave it with a teammate and let them answer if it is called,
  - b. Ear pieces – No musical playing devices with dangling wires from ear pieces allowed – remove them. **Exception:** physically required hearing aids.

### H. SUBSTITUTES & GHOST PLAYERS:

1. **Substitutes** – a player designated to: 1) replace a player who is listed on the score sheet, or 2) to be a 4<sup>th</sup> player if only 3 players were originally listed on the score sheet and the match has begun:
  - a. Only one (1) substitute player per match may be used, unless approved by the league President.
  - b. A substitute player cannot play in a round that has already been started; they must wait until the round is over and then be added to the score sheet before the next round begins – **EXCEPTION:** with only two (2) players listed on the score sheet, refer to this section, #1.d.
  - c. With only three (3) players listed on the score sheet (i.e. the 4<sup>th</sup> spot is to be played by a ghost player), and the first game of the match has started, if a 4<sup>th</sup> player shows up to play, the 4<sup>th</sup> player shall be designated as a substitute player (enter their name in the slot marked “Substitute” – NOT IN THE 4<sup>th</sup> PLAYER SPOT. No other substitute players are allowed for the duration of the match, unless approved by the league President.
  - d. With only two (2) players listed on the score sheet, and a **3rd player shows up to play**, the third player shall:
    - 1) Be placed into the 3rd player position on the score sheet (the 4<sup>th</sup> player position shall now be played by the ghost player).

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- 2) Play in the current round, and
- 3) NOT BE considered as a Substitute.

2. ***Ghost Player*** – a player who is listed on the score sheet and is designated to play in a position for which either: a) the assigned player is not present, or b) no one is assigned.

- a. A team may field only one (1) ghost player position per round (5 ghost players per match),
- b. Ghost players are selected by the opposing team captain.

- 1) In the event that both teams are using a ghost player, the team that is NOT BREAKING shall be the first to designate the ghost player for the team that is to break.

- 2) If the 2 ghost player positions are to meet a second time, the team who did not pick first for the first ghost player match up shall be the first to designate the opposition ghost player.

c. If a ghost player has been selected for a game, and/or:

- 1) The absent originally designated player shows up:

- a) If the 1st shot after the break HAS NOT BEEN taken - **the balls will be racked again, and the original player will play the game instead of the ghost player.**

- b) If the 1st shot after the break HAS BEEN taken - **the selected ghost player shall continue the game.**

- 2) **If the ghost player has to leave the site of the match:**

- a) Refer to section *M. PLAYERS WHO HAVE TO LEAVE THE MATCH (WHAT TO DO)* – page 12 & 13,

- b) With only three (3) players listed on the score sheet, the match will continue as detailed in section *E. “Regular Session Matches”, #2.a.2), “Playing with only two (2) players”.*

- c) Refer to Section J.2 “Individual Forfeits” for how to score & record a forfeited game.

d. Points scored by a ghost player will count toward the player’s handicap calculation.

3. ***The Ghost Rule*** – A team may use the “*Ghost Rule*” no more than three (3) times during a session. In order for a team to be charged with the “*Ghost Rule*”, a ghost player will need to be used for

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three (3) or more rounds in any given match. (i.e. a ghost player is used in rounds one and two, but a 4<sup>th</sup> player arrives by round three and the team uses 4 players for the remaining three rounds will not be charged with using the “*Ghost Rule*”).

### **I. BYE MATCHES:**

When the league session schedule has an odd number of teams, some teams might have an extra bye during the session. At the end of the session, in order to determine a team’s final finishing placement, teams that have the extra bye will receive:

1. Their session’s average Match Point, winning percentage, and
2. Their average of their total points (for and against).

### **J. FORFEITS:** Note: section 1. “Individual Forfeits” will be re-written for the new scoresheet app.

1. **INDIVIDUAL FORFEITS** – An individual game will be considered a forfeit if a player is not present to play his designated game, and that game cannot be played by either a substitute or a ghost player,
  - a. On the score sheet, mark the non-forfeiting player’s game with an “FW” (*for Forfeit Win*), and the forfeiting player’s game with an “FL” (*for Forfeit Loss*).
  - b. The non-forfeiting player **DOES NOT RECEIVE CREDIT** for a win, and **DOES NOT RECEIVE ANY POINTS** towards his score. A player can only receive credit and points for games actually played.
  - c. The team’s score for the round will count the forfeit win (FW) as 10 points and the forfeit loss (FL) as 0 points.
  - d. Calculate the handicap spread ( $\Delta$ HCP) for the round using only the handicaps of those players who **ACTUALLY** played the games; do not use the handicaps of the players involved with the forfeited game.

#### **2. ROUND FORFEITS**

- a. **Fees for forfeited rounds are still required to be submitted by both teams no later than the following week of play.**
- b. The team receiving the ROUND FORFEIT WIN will receive:
  - 1) **40** Game Points FOR & **0** Game Points AGAINST for the round.
- c. The team receiving the ROUND FORFEIT LOSS will receive:

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- 1) 0 Game Points FOR & 40 Game Points AGAINST for the round.

### 3. **MATCH FORFEITS**

- a. Weekly fees for forfeited matches will be required by both teams.
- b. The team receiving the FORFEIT WIN and will receive:
  - 1) 10 Match Points FOR & 3 Match Points AGAINST.
  - 2) 180 Game Points FOR & 0 Game Points AGAINST.
- c. The team receiving the FORFEIT LOSS will receive:
  - 1) 0 Match Points FOR & 13 Match Points AGAINST.
  - 2) 0 Game Points FOR & 140 Game Points AGAINST.

### **Match forfeits and fairness to all teams**

The Last Chance Qualifier provides a chance for **ALL** teams to make it into the Finals. In addition to a second chance to compete for top prize money, it's designed to help keep struggling teams interested through the end of the session. This also goes for a dominate team who has clinched a playoff berth and cannot be knocked from their current standing. Teams who forfeit a match within the last 3 weeks of the session thus causing a meaningful change in the standings (playoffs and money implications) will be required to make that match up. Failure to do so will cause the following sanctions.

- A team not in contention to finish in the top six will not be eligible for the Last Chance Qualifier.
- A top six team that cannot be knocked out of their position will be bumped down one position in the standings which will affect their prize money and possibly may have to fight their way back into the playoffs through the Last Chance Qualifier.
- No sanctions will be imposed for a team that exhausts all efforts to play the makeup match.
- A team who forfeits more than twice in a session will not be eligible for playoffs unless authorized by the league committee. Also, teams who habitually forfeit matches may not be eligible to play in the next session. That would be determined by utilizing a captain's vote.

## **K. LEAGUE STANDINGS**

1. **TEAM STANDINGS:** are ordered by: 1) winning %, then by 2) total game points (this includes any handicap points received). Game points equal the sum of the number of balls pocketed plus any handicap points that were received during the session. Each ball= 1point + each 8-ball= 3points + handicap points received= Game Points.
2. **INDIVIDUAL STANDINGS:** a player's standing is determined by the following calculation: (game wins %) X (win point %). A player must play a minimum of 45% of the possible games played by the team to date, or that calculation will be reduced by 2% for each game less than the minimum required. This calculation is then divided by the highest calculation of all the league players and is expressed as a %. The list is the ordered from highest to lowest.

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## **L. END-OF-SESSION FINALS**

**ALL TEAM SESSION FEES FOR A GIVEN TEAM SHOULD HAVE BEEN PAID NO LATER THAN THE SESSION'S LAST SCHEDULED MATCH DATE. PAYMENTS AFTER THIS DATE REQUIRE THE APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENT FOR THE TEAM'S ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY IN THE PLAYOFFS.**

1. **Player eligibility** – must attain the following:
  - a. The player's Player Session Fee has been paid.
  - b. Must have played  $\geq 30$  games in  $\geq 6$  weeks for Veteran and Ranked players.  $\geq 40$  games in  $\geq 8$  weeks for New Unranked players,
  - c. A week will be counted if the player plays at least 1 game in that week.
  - d. Games played as a ghost player count as a game played.
  
2. **Matches**
  - a. Each match will be a 4 round, 4-man round-robin format.
  - b. A minimum of 3 players is required in order for a team to compete in the playoffs.
    - 1) A team that does not have at least 3 players to start their match by no later than 15 minutes after the official start time shall forfeit the first round or be allowed to play with the approval of the League President.
    - 2) A team that has only 3 players for the playoffs:
      - a) Ghost players are not allowed in the playoffs.
      - b) If a team lacks a 4th player, the 4th player position will be scored as a **0/10, Forfeit Loss.**
  - c. The teams' handicap spread ( $\Delta$ HCP) will be calculated utilizing only the handicaps of the players who actually played the games (this might result in a different  $\Delta$ HCP each round).
    - 1) Handicaps WILL NOT be rounded off prior to calculating the handicap spread ( $\Delta$ HCP). This will usually result in fractional points in the handicap spread. The reason for this is to minimize the possibility of any ties that might result, thus necessitating the playing additional games.
  - d. **Two (2) TIME-OUTS** per round.
  - e. **RACKING** - The player who is to break shall have the option to RACK HIS OWN BALLS.

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- f. The higher seeded team shall: 1) choose the tables on which to play, AND 2) decide the choice to be either the HOME team, or the VISITING team. However, the team who made it to the final round in the winner’s bracket shall take HOME/VISITOR and table choice away from the higher seeded team if applicable. This may change again if knocked out of the winner’s bracket and forced to play one more final and deciding match.
- g. While a match is in progress, players on the score sheet for that match are not allowed to shoot any practice shots on any available table.
- h. What to do if a game is played out of sequence on the score sheet? 1) If the match is not complete prior to realizing the opponents are playing out of order, halt the match and start a new game with the correct opponents. 2) If the match has been completed prior to realizing the opponents played out of order, look at the score sheet to see if the same two opponents are scheduled to play each other in a later round? If so, record the results of their match in the later round. If this is not possible, discard the out of sequence match results and have the correct opponents play their match as scheduled.

**M. PLAYERS WHO HAVE TO LEAVE (What to do)**

<b>4 Players</b>	The Player Who has to leave the Match	1 <sup>st</sup> Shot After The Break – <b><u>HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN</u></b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Shot After The Break – <b><u>HAS BEEN TAKEN</u></b>
	IS AT THE TABLE TO PLAY HIS ASSIGNED GAME	<b>SELECT A GHOST PLAYER FOR THIS GAME.</b> The position of the player who leaves will now be the GHOST PLAYER position in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 3 player format	<b>LOSS OF GAME</b> The game will be scored the same as an 8-ball pocketed out-of-turn (aka “Early 8 Ball”). This position of the player who leaves will now be the GHOST PLAYER position in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 3 player format.
	HAS PLAYED HIS ASSIGNED GAME	<b>NO ACTION REQUIRED</b> The position of the player who leaves will now be the GHOST PLAYER position in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 3 player format.	
	HAS NOT PLAYED HIS ASSIGNED GAME	<b>SELECT A GHOST PLAYER FOR THIS GAME</b> The position of the player who leaves will now be the GHOST PLAYER position in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 3 player format.	

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<b>3 Players</b>	The Player Who has to leave the Match	1 <sup>st</sup> Shot After The Break – <b><u>HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN</u></b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Shot After The Break – <b><u>HAS BEEN TAKEN</u></b>
	IS AT THE TABLE TO PLAY HIS ASSIGNED GAME	<b>GAME IS A FOFEIT LOSS</b> The position of the player who leaves will now be considered as a FORFEIT LOSS in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 2 Player format. Refer to section <i>E. Regular Session Matches, #2, a.2, a) – c)</i>	<b>LOSS OF GAME</b> The game will be scored the same as an 8-ball pocketed out-of-turn The position of the player who leaves will now be considered a FORFEIT LOSS in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 2 Player format. Refer to section <i>E. Regular Session Matches, #2, a.2, a) – c)</i>
	IS AT THE TABLE TO PLAY AS THE GHOST PLAYER	<b>SELECT ANOTHER GHOST PLAYER</b> The position of the player who leaves will now be considered as a FORFEIT LOSS in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 2 Player format. Refer to section <i>E. Regular Session Matches, #2,a.2), a) – c)</i>	<b>LOSS OF GAME</b> The game will be scored the same as an 8-ball pocketed out-of-turn (aka “Early 8Ball”). The position of the player who leaves will be a FORFEIT LOSS in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 2 Player format. Refer to section <i>E. Regular Session Matches, #2,a.2), a) – c)</i>
	HAS PLAYED HIS ASSIGNED GAME FOR THE ROUND	<b>NO ACTION REQUIRED</b>	
	HAS NOT PLAYED HIS ASSIGNED GAME FOR THE ROUND	<b>GAME IS A FORFEIT LOSS!</b> The position of the player who leaves will now be a FORFEIT LOSS in subsequent rounds. Continue subsequent rounds in the 2 Player format. Refer to section <i>E. Regular Session Matches, #2,a.2), a) – c)</i>	