
Note: Supporting narrated video (NV) demonstrations, high-speed video (HSV) clips, and technical proofs (TP), and all of my past articles, can be accessed and viewed online at billiards.colostate.edu. The reference numbers used in the article help you locate the resources on the website. If you have a slow or inconvenient Internet connection, you might want to view the resources from a CD-ROM or DVD. Details can be found online at: dr-dave-billiards.com.

This is the third article based on the “[The Video Encyclopedia of Pool Shots \(VEPS\)](#),” an instructional DVD series I recently created with past BD columnist and good friend Tom Ross. VEPS contains over 750 shot types within 50 main categories and 5 major areas. Many clips in the series are also designated as “gems” indicating shots or concepts important to know as a pool player, whether understood explicitly or in a more intuitive way. An outline of the entire VEPS series, the complete list of shot types in each major area, the gem designations, and video excerpts from each DVD can be viewed online at: dr-dave-billiards.com/veps. Last month we looked at some gems from the first DVD: “VEPS I: Basic Shot Making and Position.” This month, we’ll look at selected gems from the second DVD: “VEPS II: English and Position Control.”

Diagrams 1 and 2 illustrate example rail cut shots where English is required to get position on the next ball, and where the outcome very much depends on whether or not you hit the ball or rail first. The first example, **Diagram 1** (VEPS Shot # 226), calls for a rail-first hit along with running-English and stun (no follow or draw). With the rail-first hit, the cue ball (CB) comes off the tangent line of the 13-ball nearly straight across the table. Upon reaching the second rail, the counter-clockwise spin from the right English then sends the cue ball slightly up-table for excellent position on the 8-ball.

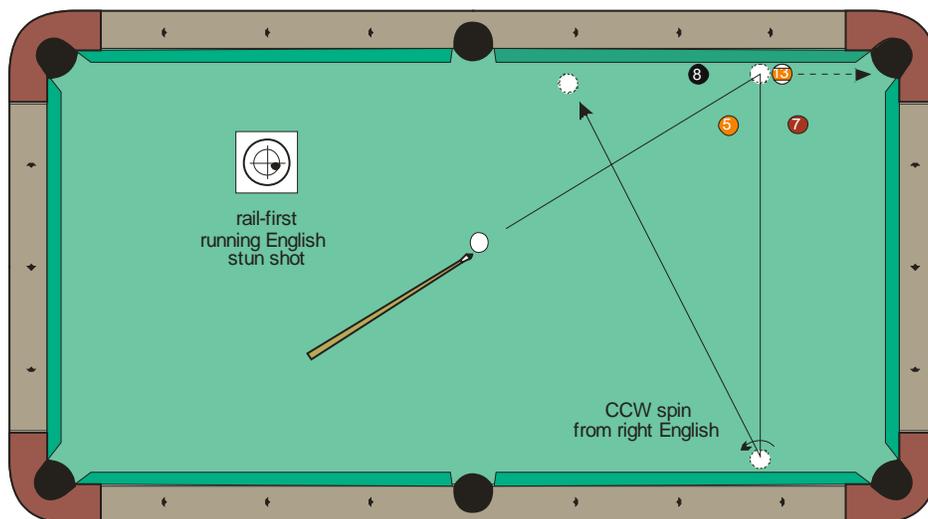


Diagram 1 Rail-first running-English position play

With the layout in **Diagram 2** (VEPS Shot # 227), the 5-ball and 7-ball obstacles force us to use a ball-first hit. Hitting the 13-ball just before the rail allows the English to “take” after contact, sending the CB well forward of the 7-ball and onto the up-table path for position on the 8-ball. Because the 13-ball will be cut into the rail slightly, this shot would not work if the pockets were really “tight,” or if the 13-ball were farther from the pocket. See **NV B.72** for demonstrations of the shots in both Diagrams 1 and 2, along with other rail-first vs. ball-first examples. Also included are slow-motion clips and detailed explanations that help you understand how and why the shots work. If you want to learn more about rail cut-shot CB control, my [HSV DVD](#) has a feature on this topic as well (see the website for details).

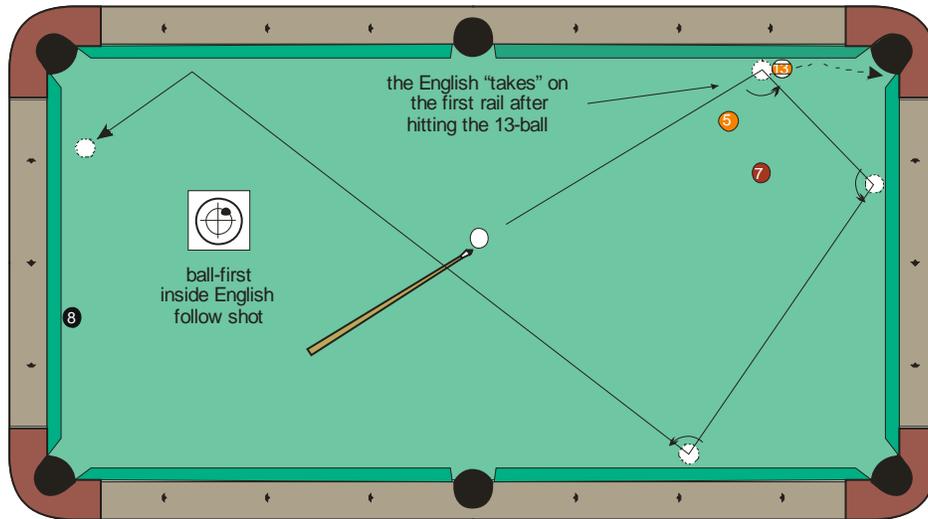


Diagram 2 Ball-first inside-English position play

Diagrams 3 and 4 show gems related to position routes through the center of the table. **Diagram 3**, in particular, illustrates a very useful principle I call the 45° rule. If the CB rolls into the short rail at roughly a 45° angle, it will head fairly close to the center of the table after contacting the long rail (see Shot # 290 in **NV B.74** for several demonstrations). With the layout in **Diagram 3** (VEPS Shot # 291), stun off the 13-ball ball sends the CB into the short rail at the necessary 45° angle to create the table-center route for position on the 8-ball. There are at least two important reasons for learning how to send the CB on a path through center table. One is that the CB cannot head straight for a pocket (i.e., scratch) after coming off a cushion to the table center (see **NV B.74** for more info), and the other is illustrated in the next example.

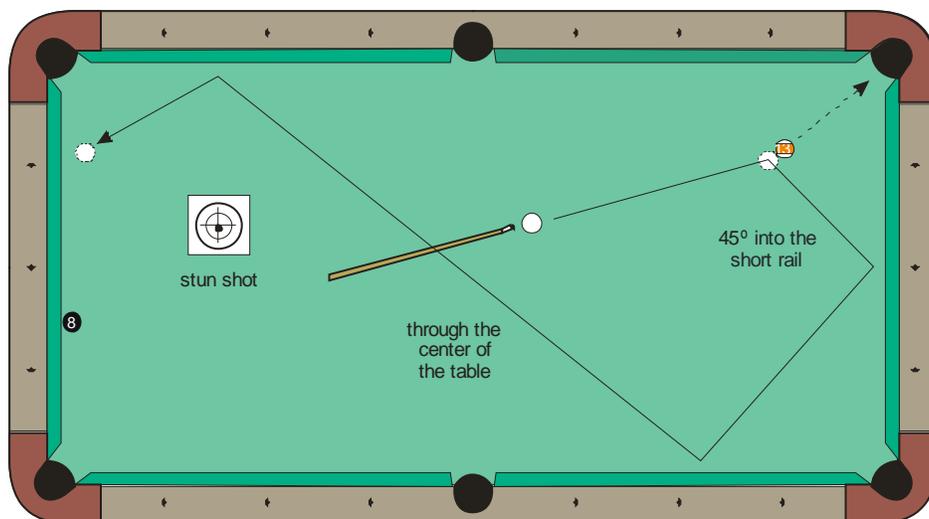


Diagram 3 45° rule position route through the center of the table

Once you've acquired the skills and are comfortable sending the CB through the center of the table, it is relatively easy to make adjustments to that route. **Diagram 4** (VEPS Shot # 342) shows two ways to do this for multiple-rail position on the 8-ball, where the table center is blocked by the 5-ball and 7-ball. The tangent line off the 13-ball is approximately 45° into the short rail, so a stun shot would send the CB into the obstacle balls. We don't want this, but this route is a useful reference. Relative to stun, using a little draw allows us to avoid the obstacles on the short side of center table, while a little follow has the CB passing on the long side.

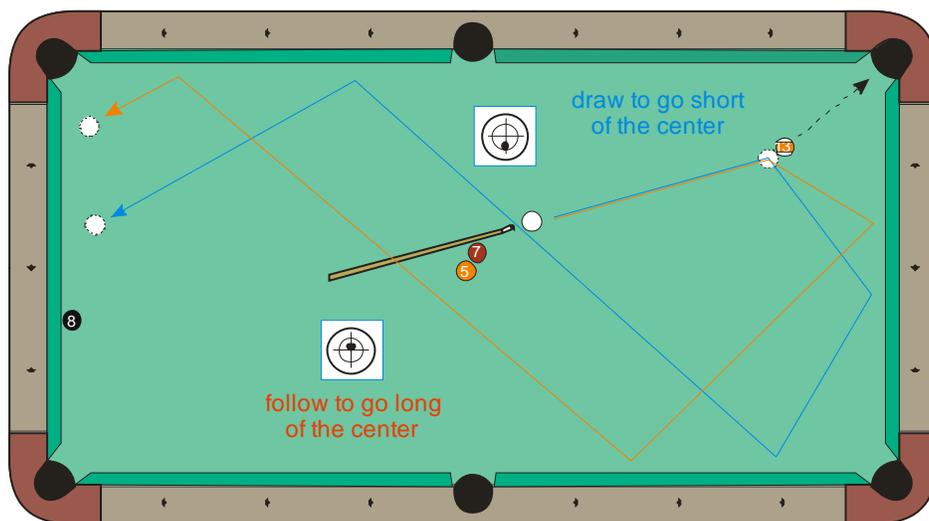


Diagram 4 Using draw and follow to go short and long of the table center

Example gems from the second VEPS DVD, including the ones discussed above, can be viewed on the VEPS website or at billiards.colostate.edu under **NV B.70** through **NV B.74**.



- [NV B.70](#) – Squirt, swerve, and throw, from VEPS II
- [NV B.71](#) – Back-hand English (BHE), from VEPS II
- [NV B.72](#) – Rail-first and ball-first shots with English, from VEPS II
- [NV B.73](#) – Leaving an angle and coming into the line of a shot, from VEPS II
- [NV B.74](#) – Center-of-table position and routes, from VEPS II

Well, I hope you enjoy and benefit from my series of articles highlighting shots and “gems” from the “[Video Encyclopedia of Pool Shots](#)” series. Next month, we’ll look at selected “gems” from the third DVD: “VEPS III: Safety Play and Strategy.”

Good luck with your game,
Dr. Dave

PS:

- I know other authors and I tend to use lots of terminology (e.g., squirt, throw, stun, ball-hit fraction, etc.), and I know not all readers are totally familiar with these terms. If you ever come across a word or phrase you don’t fully understand, please refer to the [online glossary](#) on my website.
- I want to thank Jim Valasina. He graciously proof-reads my articles every month to help find errors and make suggestions. My article quality is better as a result of his efforts. Thanks again Jim!

Dr. Dave is author of the book, DVD, and CD-ROM: “[The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards](#),” the DVD Series: “[The Video Encyclopedia of Pool Shots](#),” and the DVD: “[High-speed Video Magic](#).”