

“VEPP – Part IV: Target Practice Card Trick” David Alciatore, PhD (“Dr. Dave”)

ILLUSTRATED PRINCIPLES

Supporting narrated video (NV) demonstrations, high-speed video (HSV) clips, 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 articles 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 fourth article in a series based on the “[The Video Encyclopedia of Pool Practice \(VEPP\)](#),” a five-disc instructional DVD series I recently created with fellow BD columnist Bob Jewett. VEPP is an organized and methodical training program and pool workout. It teaches you how to develop, assess, and track progress of skills for all aspects of your game. An outline of the entire VEPP series and video excerpts from each DVD can be viewed online at: dr-dave-billiards.com/vepp. Last month, we looked at useful “wagon wheel” drills from Disc II: “[VEPP II – Position Control and English](#).” This month, we’ll look at position-control target-practice drills and a useful supporting “card trick.”

VEPP-II includes a variety of “target practice” drills where you attempt to leave the cue ball (CB) in a designated position (i.e., on a “target”) after pocketing an object ball (OB). (“Target Pool” was originally popularized by Kim Davenport who first offered a target product to help with drills.) When practicing “target drills,” you should place the OB and target in random positions so you get a wide range of practice over time. One way to ensure randomness is to use a deck of cards as shown in **Diagram 1**. An ace is placed in front of the side pocket indicating the one position. Red cards of increasing number are placed along the long rail to the right, and black cards are placed to the left. Diagram 1a shows alternating colors for cards across the table, but color doesn’t matter here. As shown in Diagram 1b, all of the cards are placed at one-third-diamond increments, so the cards at the diamond positions are the 4, 7, and 10. The king, the 13th card, is against the rail cushion. The layout is the same for the black cards to the left and for the cards across the table.

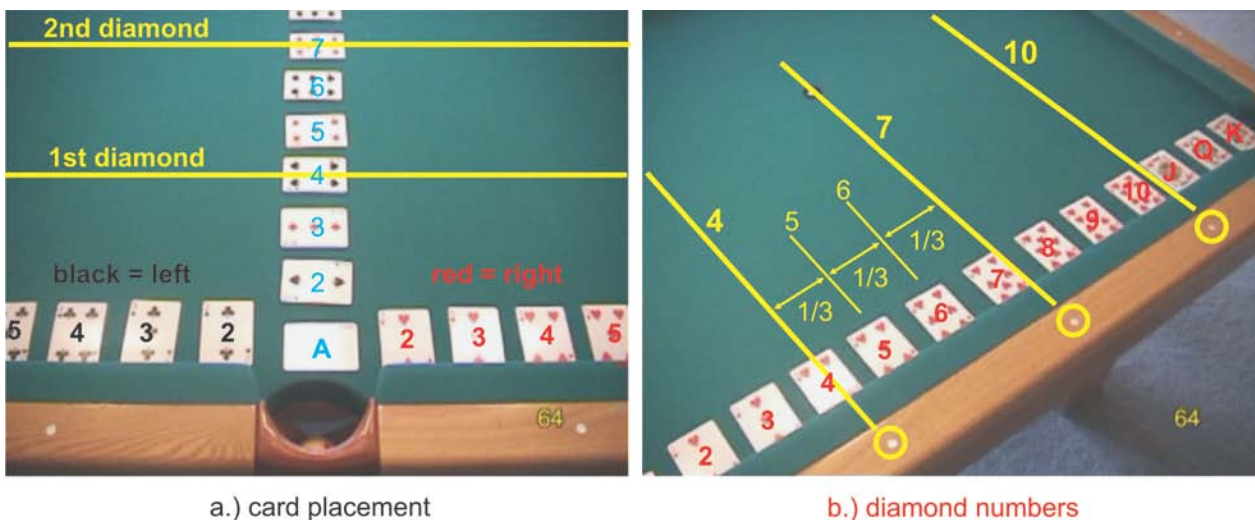


Diagram 1 Card grid layout

To define the OB or target position, you draw two cards from a full deck (52 cards). The 1st card defines the position across the table, and the 2nd card defines the position along the long rail. If the 2nd card is red, you move to the right of the side pocket; otherwise, you move to the left. By matching the drawn card numbers to the card positions on the table, you define the selected position. The first time you try this, you

should lay out a set of cards on the table, as shown in Diagram 1, for practice. To prepare for the drill, draw two cards to define the OB position. For example, if the 1st card is a 7 and the 2nd card is a red 4, place the OB two diamonds from the long rail (on the centerline of the table) and at the first diamond to the right (see **Diagram 2**). Now draw two cards for the target position. For example, if the 1st card is a 5 and the 2nd card is a black 9, place the target 1/3 diamond past the 1st diamond line and to the left 1/3 short of the 2nd diamond at 10 (see Diagram 2). After a little practice, you won't need the cards on the table to apply the system. Just remember the diamond numbers are 4, 7, and 10, and other numbers are at diamond thirds in between. The grid and example shown in Diagram 2 can be helpful as a reminder. **NV C.6** demonstrates the system and includes additional examples. A printable "target" is available on the [resource page available on the VEPP website](#).

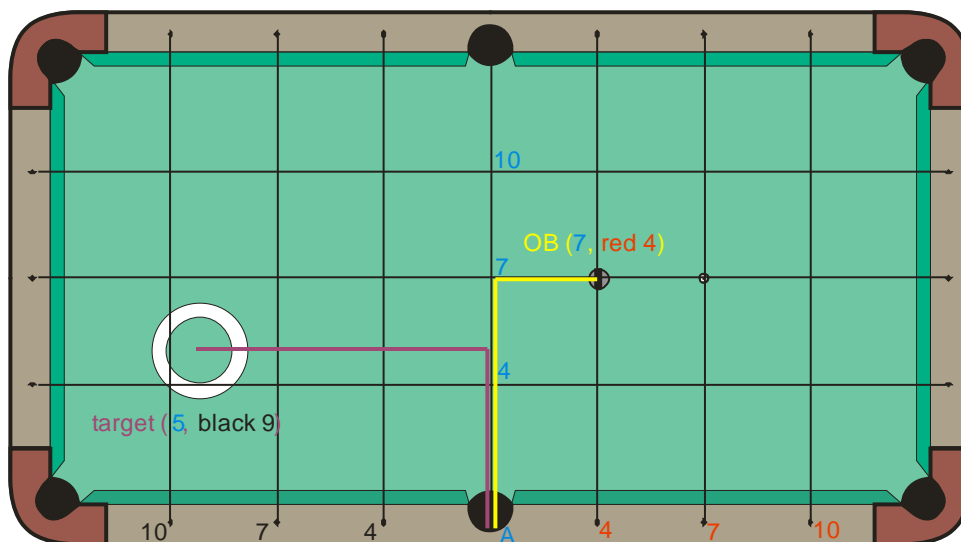


Diagram 2 Diamond grid with placement examples

Now that the OB and targets are placed in random positions, you can do some target practice. We present a wide range of target practice drills on the VEPP DVDs. **Diagram 3** illustrates a simple example. The goal is to pocket the OB and use stun, follow, or draw to send the CB straight to the target with no cushion contact. For each of the six possible pockets, attempt each path possible with stun, follow, and/or draw, placing the CB where you desire for each shot. When available, the easiest position play is usually along the natural angle, where you can use the 30° rule "peace sign" to determine the necessary line for the ball-in-hand CB position. Remember, you point one finger where you want the CB to head, and the other finger indicates the necessary initial CB direction (see the [30° rule resource page](#) in the [FAQ section of my website](#) for demonstrations and more information). **NV C.6** demonstrates how to do this for both shots "a" and "b" in the diagram. Shot "c" in the diagram shows an example draw shot, where the trisect system can be used to visualize the necessary ball-in-hand position (see "[trisect system](#)" under draw in the [FAQ section of my website](#) for demonstrations and more information). **NV C.6** demonstrates these and other possibilities for all of the pockets, so check it out the next time you're online.

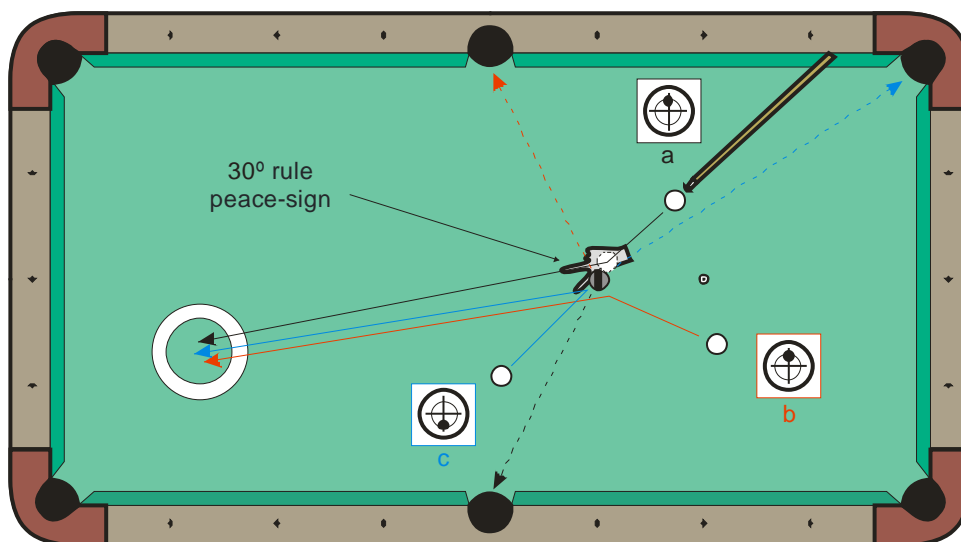


Diagram 3 CB path examples

I hope you enjoy and benefit from my series of articles featuring drills from the “[Video Encyclopedia of Pool Practice \(VEPP\)](#).” Example clips from the second VEPP DVD can be viewed on the [VEPP website](#) or at [billiards.colostate.edu](#) under **NV C.5** through **NV C.8**. Next month, we’ll look at some additional CB control drills from the second disc.

Good luck with your game,
Dr. Dave



normal video

- [NV C.5](#) - Wagon wheel cue ball control drill, from VEPP II
- [NV C.6](#) - Target practice for position control, from VEPP II
- [NV C.7](#) - Center-table position-off-hanger drills, from VEPP II
- [NV C.8](#) - Line-of-balls position control drill, from VEPP II

PS:

- I know other authors and I tend to use lots of terminology, 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.

Dr. Dave is author of the book, DVD, and CD-ROM: “[The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards](#),” and co-author of the DVD Series: “[The Video Encyclopedia of Pool Shots \(VEPS\)](#)” and “[The Video Encyclopedia of Pool Practice \(VEPP\)](#).”