

November 2010

## Double-Kiss Game Winners

For most of us the pool education progresses in roughly the same manner from our initial struggle with shot making to our first awareness of position play. Then through practice and play we learn to refine both foundational skills with a process we employ to sharpen those refinements for as long as we continue to play. And along the way, if we pay attention, we also assemble what might be called a bag of tricks, which contains shots that we usually don't figure out on our own but tend to learn from watching others play them. Many of those shots lie well within intermediate players' skills but outside of their vision until they first see them executed. That is one reason those who associate with and compete against the best players speed their improvement so much more dramatically than those players who are content to linger at the game's bottom tiers.

In the diagram we face two different 9-Ball setups with no good shot on the object ball. And because these situations arise so infrequently most beginning and intermediate players are not likely to see the game winning opportunities that they offer.

In shot A we're shooting at the 8 ball with no good shot or easy safety. And with the 9 hanging in the lower right corner we must look for an offensive opportunity to win the game. The first thought that would occur along those lines to most players would be an attempt to bank the 8 cross corner to knock in the 9 that's begging to be pocketed. However, in light of the positions of the cue ball and 8 ball, that shot is not an option because of the inevitable double kiss inherent in this setup. With the cue ball and 8 positioned even with each other as shown they would have to lie another foot or so away from the bottom rail for that bank to be a viable option. But, while the double kiss prevents the bank, it also offers an easy game winner if we alter our hit on the 8 ball. Instead of cutting the 8 ball as we would for the bank shot we're going hit it almost full and pocket the 9 with the cue ball. To make the shot, aim at the 8 very slightly left of a straight on hit with a little draw on the cue ball and moderate speed. The almost full hit on the frozen 8 will send the cue ball back along the line we see in the diagram to pocket the 9 ball for the game winner.

Shot B is a little more difficult but a lot more fun. Here we're shooting at the 7 ball with no good shot and the 8 ball blocking a standard rail dribble to the 9. Again the double kiss prevents banking the 7 back to the lower left corner, but also again we can employ the double kiss to win the game. To pocket the 9 ball as shown aim to hit the 7 ball slightly right of straight on with follow on the cue ball. If the cue ball runs into the 8 you're cutting the 7 too thin. If it rebounds straight back with no turn toward the 9 you're hitting it too full. A perfect hit on the 7 will bounce the cue ball backwards enough to get around the 8 before the top spin grabs and sends the cue ball along the path we see for another game winner. When first attempting this shot most players hit it way too hard and miss wide since too much speed prevents the cue ball from changing direction in time. The shot requires an accurate hit on the 7 ball with follow and moderate speed.

Neither shot is difficult to learn and execute but, because neither can be considered ordinary, they will some require practice to marry the variables of aim and speed for consistent and confident execution. Dr. Dave and I had a lot of fun filming these shots for the *Video Encyclopedia of Pool Shots* where these two and another dozen or so more creative double-kiss examples turn up on Disc IV.



