



## Foul and a Miss Rule

*Rules of the Games of Snooker and English Billiards* are approved for use by the World Professional Billiards & Snooker Association (WPBSA) and the International Billiards & Snooker Federation (IBSF) and are subject to periodic review by those organisations. As the peak body for the sport of Snooker and Billiards in Australia, the Australian Billiards & Snooker Council (ABSC) recognise and endorse these as the official rules for the sport in this country.

The official rules booklet known as *Rules of the Games of Snooker and English Billiards* is updated from time to time – with the latest print published with a yellow/gold cover in October 2014 by Oceania Billiards & Snooker Federation (OBSF).

**As the governing body for the sport in the Central Coast Region, Snooker & Billiards Central Coast (SBCC) is bound to uphold and enforce the rules of the games of both Snooker and Billiards in all sanctioned competitions conducted.**

SBCC team competition formats therefore contain clear directions and are issued for the benefit of all players. Team Captains **DO NOT** have the option of waiving the “Foul and a Miss” rule – or any other rules and format stipulations.

Application of the “Foul and a Miss” rule can at times be a source of frustration for some players. This may be particularly so in games that do not have the services of a qualified referee and a fellow player is acting as a marker. All players are asked to show tolerance in these situations and refrain from instances of poor conduct and/or bad sportsmanship.

Markers are also urged to show sound judgement at all times – particularly where players have failed to get out of a snooker. Ensure you fully consider the difficulty of the shot involved and the ability of the player, as calling “Foul and a Miss” may not be appropriate in the circumstance and a simple call of “Foul” is all that is required.

---

**As a measure of support for players who may be experiencing difficulty with the “Foul and a Miss” rule, the Board makes the following comments and suggestions:**

1. Most confusion about “Foul and a Miss” comes from a lack of knowledge and understanding of the rule. Don't be ignorant - find out how it works! Obtain a copy of the rule; obtain a copy of the rule flow chart; ask a qualified referee for an explanation, guidance, etc.;
2. Attend scheduled Referee and Rules Workshops conducted periodically by SBCC;

3. The “Foul and a Miss” rule is not clearly defined in the *Rules of the Game of Snooker*, being dependent upon a player “endeavouring to hit the ball on to the best of his/her ability”. Because of the non-black-and-white nature of the infringement and the subsequent reliance upon the referee’s opinion as to whether the stroke was played to the best of his/her ability, we will always have the possibility of people having different opinions of the same incident;
4. Many aspects need to be taken into consideration by the referee/marker before a “Foul and a Miss” is or is not called such as the ability of the player involved, difficulty of the shot involved, etc. The referee/marker is the only one who knows how he/she arrived at their opinion and it is important that both their decision and their overall position of being in control of the game are respected at all times;
5. If a player is unsuccessful in escaping from a snooker it is not automatically called a “Foul and a Miss”. Did the player endeavour to hit the ball on to the best of his/her ability? At SBCC competition level, this decision needs to be reasoned and calculated. Our SBCC players are not at the professional standard that this rule was originally intended – and whether the player’s ability was A-grade, B-grade or C-grade will most certainly impact on any potential ruling of “Foul and a Miss” or simply “Foul”. Be honest in your assessment;
6. Whenever a “Foul and a Miss” is called, the referee/marker must not automatically reposition balls. It is up to the incoming player to enforce the “Miss” and no balls are to be repositioned until the incoming player has decided that is what he/she wants to do. The incoming player will always have the following options:
  - (i) play the shot him/herself from where the balls have come to rest
  - (ii) request the offending player to play again from where the balls have come to rest
  - (iii) enforce the “Miss” and request the referee to replace the balls with the offender to play again from the original position
  - (iv) play a ‘free ball’ (if available)
7. If in any doubt, the following two simple points should always be borne in mind:
  - (i) when there is a clear unobstructed path in a direct line from the cue ball to a ball that is on, even if this constitutes barely a fine edge, then the player is always expected to hit such a ball on. Should he/she fail to do so, either by striking a ball partly obscuring the object ball or by missing the object ball altogether, then this is a “Foul and a Miss”;
  - (ii) in a snooker situation the player should take the more direct option in an attempt to hit the object ball and, in all cases, ensure that the cue ball is struck with sufficient force for it to at least reach the object ball. Should the cue ball fail to reach the object ball then this is a “Foul & Miss”.

***Issued by Direction of the Board of Snooker & Billiards Central Coast***

**Dated: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018**