



DIAMOND DANDIES

The Plus 2 System is one way to simplify two-rail kicks.

RECENTLY I was at Joe Laufenberg's billiard room, the Southside Billiard Club in Savannah, Ga. I was doing an exhibition and clinic for Joe and a few players, when one of the players asked about diamond systems. One system I have used a lot during my career is the "Plus 2 System." One day over 20 years ago, I was looking over Bob Byrne's "Standard Book of Pool and Billiards," when I noticed this particular entry in the back of the book in the billiard section. I wondered if this system would work on the pool table. Going straight to the poolroom, I found out that the system worked surprisingly well. Plus, by that time, most of the 9-ball tournaments were one foul for ball in hand, so kicking was a very crucial part of the game.

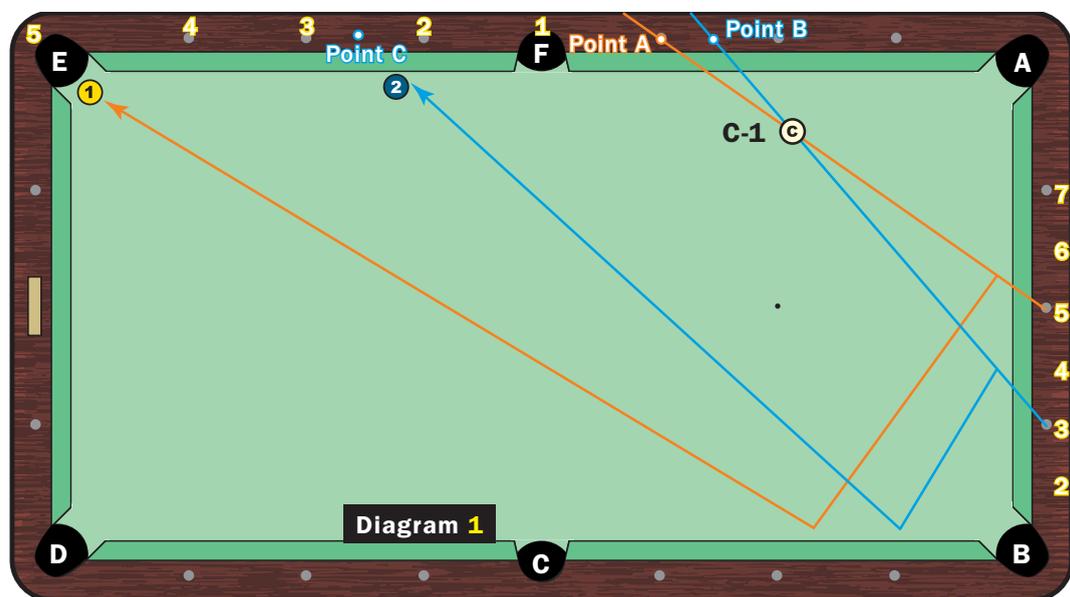
Over the years, the use of this system has helped me win a lot of games and a few tournaments. (And I want to take this opportunity to thank Bob Byrne and recommend his book.) By now one of your questions might be, "What exactly is the Plus 2 System?" Well, it is what three-cushion players use to help make billiards, all based on a number system that will tell you where the cue ball will go after you hit two rails. In **Diagram 1**, the three diamonds on the short rail are numbered 3, 5 and 7. The rail is numbered by the half diamond, so 6 is between 7 and 5 and 4 is between 5 and 3. Also, the number 2 is a half diamond from number 3. What these numbers tell you is how far away from the point where your cue crosses the rail (point A in the diagram) the cue ball will go. When you aim at diamond 5 (the middle diamond on the short rail), your cue will

cross the long rail at point A when the cue ball is at position C-1. As shown in orange, aiming at the number 5 on the middle diamond tells you that the cue ball will go two rails and make the 1 ball into pocket E. The big key here that ties the number 5 to the 1 ball is that the 1 is exactly five diamonds from point A (shown in yellow numbers).

Now let's try another example. This time, aim at the diamond marked No. 3 on the short rail. Notice that point B is

ponent won't wait for you to draw it out on paper.

Also, there are a lot of variables when you're dealing with two-rail kicks, so you need to try and keep them the same on every shot. Try to keep your cue stick parallel to the bed of the table (or as close to parallel as possible). If you vary the angle of your cue stick, your results will be inconsistent. Also, keep your speed the same to make sure you get consistent reaction from the rails. Another variable



the spot where your cue crosses the rail between the diamonds. Since you are aiming at number 3, the cue ball will go two rails and head toward point C (as shown), which happens to be three diamonds from point B. Take a look at the 2 ball; if the 2 were sitting here, I would be able to make a good hit on it. Sometimes I might even make it in corner pocket E.

When I first started working with the Plus 2 System, it took a while to learn how to count and figure out where to aim on the short rail. And, since you'll be using this when you're playing a match, it's important you are able to do the math in a hurry. After all, your op-

ponent where you contact the cue ball. I usually try to use about 1 1/2 tips of running English (right English in this case).

Hopefully you will be as excited as I was when I started playing around with the system. It certainly has paid big dividends over the years. While some tables may play a little short or long, it is easy to learn to adapt to different tables once you become familiar with the system. Plus, more evidence to the effectiveness of the system, it is amazing that it works on all size tables. So you may want to drop by your local billiards store or poolroom to pick up your copy of Byrne's "Standard Book of Pool and Billiards." Thanks again, Bob.