

How To Improve Your Game

By DR. G. A. WHITE (excerpted)

The following suggestions apply only to a right-handed player. Left-handed players must reverse some of these suggestions.

Before making a shot, stand with feet together, and fork of cue in close contact with disc holding cue loosely in right hand against right leg. The grip on the cue handle must be such that there will be no jerk or twist of the cue when the stroke is made; be relaxed; check score, and determine which player will get the last shot. Look the board over carefully and decide what shot you should attempt. Never change your mind after a decision is made.

Advance a medium short step with right foot; lean the body well forward as you take a somewhat longer step with the left foot. The arm is down and back at this stage; a very slight bend in the elbow is permissible. The stroke is started as the second step is completed. (If only one step is taken it must be with the left foot.) The stroke must be started with the arm close to the body. Bring the arm straight forward with no twisting of the body or dropping of the shoulder. The stroke is made with the arm only. Start stroke slowly and increase to desired speed as disc advances. Follow through as far as the arm will reach without straining. Always shoot for a target. If you have no disc for a target pick a spot on the board where you want your disc to stop and shoot for that spot.

When shooting at a disc, shoot at a certain part of the disc. Keep your eyes on the target until after the disc leaves the cue. Then, hold your pose and watch the disc as it travels to its destination. Cue should not be lifted from court until disc has stopped moving.

Watch for drift, slow or fast places on the court, etc. When shooting for a cross pilot, try to place disc about 18 inches beyond far deadline and about 18 inches from opposite edge of court, measurement taken to center of disc. A slight variation of distance from deadline is not too important.

A Tampa pilot is placed just to the side of the point on the shooter's side of the board. Exact location is very important.

The object of the game is to hide a score behind another disc, either yours or your opponents, in such a way as to make it difficult for your opponent to hit it. In attempting to hide a disc behind a pilot, cross or Tampa, your outside disc is used. By so doing you can hide the disc without the risk of "nicking" the pilot. In most other shots, however, the inside disc is used.

It is often well to step to your opponents side of the court to see where you should place a disc so it will be difficult or impossible for him to hit it. The disc should be placed so it and the pilot will be in direct line with the center of your opponent's shooting area.

In placing a block to protect a scoring disc, you should have the block about five to seven feet in front of the score; however, if by so doing it makes a place for the opponent to hide a score you may put the block much closer.

Kitchen shooting is usually not advisable unless you are behind or you have the last shot. If you attempt to put an opponent's seven in the kitchen, it is usually easier to do if you hit the disc on the side and drive it in the kitchen on a slant. This also makes it much harder for the opponent to take his disc out with your disc and maybe leave your disc in the kitchen. This shot must be made with care, however, for if you hit the disc too thin your disc may also land in the kitchen.

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When your opponent is far behind in score he will probably try to put your disc in the kitchen, as this is about his only hope of catching up with your score. In order to do this he probably will shoot his disc down on the open board in order to get you to shoot there, where your disc will be easier to put in the kitchen. Probably the best way to combat this strategy is to clear the board by hitting his disc on the side with considerable force driving both discs off the board.

Sometimes, especially if the court is slow, this is a hard shot to make. Another way to combat this strategy is a "snuggle shot." This shot is made by scoring your disc directly in front of his disc in such a way as to make it difficult to take your disc out. In this situation, if he hits your disc it will probably bump against his disc and yours will stay on the board and his will be knocked off. This strategy sometimes works very well provided you can get the discs very close together.

If you have the last shot and you have a disc in the kitchen and your opponent has a disc in the seven, remember that by taking his disc out and leaving you a seven you have gained fourteen points. If you take your disc out of the kitchen you have only gained ten points and sometimes you fail to get your disc out of the kitchen, especially if it is very deep in the 10-off position.

One of the most important shots you have is when you put up a block to protect a score you have on the board. Failure to get your disc properly placed will quite often allow your opponent to take your disc off and maybe hide his own.

If you are missing your target, observe whether you are missing it to the right or to the left. If you are missing to the left you may not be holding your arm close enough to your side, or you may be dropping your shoulder or swinging your body in a sort of a "round house" swing. If you are missing to the right you may be bringing your arm around in front of you as you shoot. Quite often it is necessary to get some one to watch you shoot in order to determine what you are doing wrong.

Basic Features of Shuffleboard

TESTING the court for drift and depth. Shoot straight down the center noticing which way the disc drifts from the center line. Use slow speed as disc drifts more when propelled slowly. Then, after two discs are used to test the drift, use the next two to test placing same in scoring area. This procedure should give you the necessary information to use should the "color shot" be won.

STANCE: It is important to have proper position and balance when making a shot. It is also well to have a good "follow through" such as needed by the better golfers, tennis players and baseball hitters. When shooting stand erect with feet together. Place cue against disc, take a short step with right foot then, bending forward, a longer step with left foot, and propel the disc with a long, smooth stroke to the spot which you wish to cover. Remember **keep your eye** on the spot you wish to cover and **NOT** on the disc you are shooting.

WHERE TO SHOOT: Assume you have the red (or yellow discs), use your inside disc and propel it to a spot halfway between the point and edge of court at a depth of a point just across the foul line and a position even with the ten area. This first disc is very important. Do not shoot it carelessly, as many frames are lost by misplacing the first disc. It serves as a guard for the one you may be able to place behind it at your later opportunity. When discs are so situated on the court to furnish you with a guard, always take advantage of the chance to place a scoring disc.

PRACTICE: It would be a valuable aid to your play if you would take a set of discs to a court by yourself. Work at placing discs where you want them, taking discs off by glancing shots, finding just how to hit a disc to place it in the **TEN OFF**. Play a game against yourself. Red out at head of court, black out at foot. Even a half-hour a day at this would make you more proficient at the game.