

Rules

By Daniel Klaas Beckwith

Eschaton¹ is a tennis-based geopolitical end-of-days strategy game of precision lobbing as proxy for the launching of 5 mega-ton thermonuclear warheads at specifically coded articles of clothing: T-shirts, Tennis shorts, arm bands, socks, etc; representing specific and respective targets of interest: MAMAs —MAJor Metropolitan Areas—, CONFORCONs —CONventional-FORce CONcentrations—, uranium enrichment facilities, linear accelerators, missile/antimissile installations, etc; laid out within the area of 4 contiguous tennis courts. And while the precision of launching tennis ball nukes befits the calculation of a basic EndStat² computational difference between players' INDDIR —INfliction of Death Destruction and Incapacitation of Response— versus SUFD DIR —self-evident—, the tennis base-game lacks the artistry or dexterity needed to play at events described in it's own Triggering Situations and suffers in both realism and entertainment for this. And so it came to be that another base was found and brought here to our Happy Tomb³, Oh My Brothers⁴, by who-even-knows, that better suits the games of social subterfuge, obfuscation, public opinion, and general geopolitical horsing-around the likes of which are a favorite amongst our CIA sons and fathers⁵, and give a little toothsome nuance to cut the teeth on these affairs.

Adapting Eschaton from tennis to snooker effectively boosted the nuance of conflict play at least as much as the jump in resolution from SNES to N64⁶, meaning that instead of only participating in the types of war games all civilians have access to with cable news or first hand annihilation, now there is an available tree of 4GW —Fourth Generation Warfare— and MOOTW —Military Operations Other Than War—, UW —Unconventional Warfare—, IR —Irregular Warfare—, Lawfare, and the other real world articulations of decentralized influence. The process of this adaptation, rumor has it, was so complexly heated and full of the clashing-of-skulls that there is still a rift today between concerned factions within the FBI and CIA. Snooker itself is eponymous to the

act of forcing the opponent into a position so clever with the cue that they are unable to return play and instead frustrate themselves and squander their own points attempting to respond; the familiar MOOTW calculations of GDP attrition or cultural influence values in terms of Loss Exchange Ratios combined with occasional live-fire COM/CIV death tolls often makes the naming of winners so murky and technical and annexed with nonconvertible units that we had to ban alcohol outright to avoid nondiegetic bloodshed.

Like the original, snooker's Eschaton takes eight to twelve people to play, using a snooker ball set so battered and worn that in placing english on the cue you could risk shaving up some fine mist of green baize following the curved arc it made. While a normal set of snooker balls arranged in the typical snooker configuration⁷ (diagram) include 15 red balls (reds) racked triangularly toward the top cushion and the Yellow, Brown, Green, Blue, Pink, and Black balls (colours) in an elongated 'T' whose top arm denotes the baulk line etc; snookered Eschaton starts with the same orientation of the colours, but with 55 Reds arranged in monstrous ten rowed triangle⁸. Because of the size of this triangle, and subsequent mess of balls, the game has since moved from the Snooker table to the floor of a large parlor room, the alterations in play involved for this are many and complicated and not always fully resolved including what to do about cueing, how to account for floor slope or open doorways, lack of pockets and bumpers, etc.

Strewn bits of shucked off clothing are positioned on the checkered floor representing targets on an imaginary Equirectangular Projection World Map. Blue Brooks Brothers blazers represent corporate offshore tax havens; Ralph Lauren sport coats obviously being major metropolitan sport arenas and often Olympic Park sport campuses in whatever country was hosting in whatever past year is being played at. White Polo t-shirts with the little horse on the breast serve as malls or university campuses or water parks or large music concert venues. Calvin Klein boxers are business districts, High Frequency Trade offices, headquarters of corporate entities, and banks; tightie whities being the more point-heavy precious mineral mining operations, reserve banks, national mints, and oil fields. Certain bespoke track shorts are major freshwater aquifers, agricultural zones, national parks, municipal or industrial landfills, sewage treatment centers, and hydroelectric dams. Blue unfurled ties are syndicated television lines, radio trans-

mission bandwidths, undersea internet cables, cellular phone tower corridors, and in more rustic plays newspaper delivery routes. Gold watches, accouterments and Armani socks being various gossip tabloids, game shows, singing competitions, partisan talking head cable tv shows, music industry offices, motion picture studios, video game manufacturers, televangelist style megachurches (or regional denomination), fashion brands, toy merchandisers, and marketing firms. Speaking of, there is a much repeated rumor that Magog of '48 once potted a red so that it perfectly came to rest in the cup of a class ring, bribing Hitler himself into taking to the Reich's radio waves to endorse season picks for the American National Football League, bringing on the swift and full collapse of the NSDAP much to the bleary eyed frustration of the other GJIAXIS players.

Snooker has several idiosyncratic technical mechanics that lend themselves well to the simulation of clandestine operations or political obfuscation, depending of course on the Triggering Situation prompt as decided by he who "Wears the Beanie". To start, it is at it's base a cuing sport, and as such is finessed with a multitude of nuance and precision w/r/t the normal potting of balls, but more importantly the anticipation and set up of future shots via spin control⁹. The second is the alternation of potting reds and colours; every turn in normal snooker begins with a red being 'on' followed, if a red is potted, by a colour being 'on', and where the engagement of any object ball that is not 'on' is a foul. This lends to a main mechanic whereby a player must first influence a red, usually representing the allocation of dark funds via business deals, IVTSs — Informal Value Transfer Systems— and lobbyists, to some subrosa COIN asset, or political strong man, or pop icon, etc. This being done, the red potted, and influence prepped, the player now can make a shot on a colour; each specific colour being of different value in the overall schema and certainly EndStat point calculations, with these values ranging dependent on the previous pots and also differential calculus and hardcore game theorem applied to future moves. Further, colours, so long as there are still reds available, upon being potted, respawn back to their original spot, affording the game many of the cyclical aspects of say the repeating need to refresh fashion trajectories in the eyes of the youth, or maybe nationalistic morale boosts like Die Hard 1, 2, & 3 etc. deposing and replacing certain Middle Eastern or Latin American regimes, etc. The reds

do not respawn, when the petty cash is used up its used up, but being there are 55 of the damned things kicking around its very easy to work some back in the mix, and while this is not technically legal, exploiting the chaos is to be expected. And finally the act of 'snookering' the opponent, essentially the tying of the left and right shoes' strings together from beneath the Resolution Desk; tucking the cue ball into a spot so that it cannot engage the 'on' object because its path of influence has been obscured by other objects.

So say, if you can get a 'touching ball', say on an AMNAT Raytheon corporate office and make a shot onto say a AFIRSY oil field, and so long as you've potted enough applicable stock options to your dear own POTUS or maybe more realistically VPOTUS, then you could manage say a good ol' false-flag-and-response to terroristic Northern Alliance cells that some clandestine HUMINT has just now pinpointed into the very spot of said oil fields, allowing a push for NATO sanction of a portfolio boosting Tamahawk missile assault and also subsequent 4 year recurrent contracts for your own SSTRO — Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations— forces, and thus snookering AFIRSY into actually needing stabilization in guard against RUSFED trained bands of mercenaries and in the meanwhile buying all products through an singular imposed central occupying conglomerate.

Brutal games usually end in a healing chorus of Gaudeamus Igitur as people pick themselves up off the ground and unruffle their lapels, or release fellows from ankle-locks or sleeper holds, to rise up in harmony; if they can rise up at all in the moment.

Triggering Situation as told by Him who Wears the Beanie:

Pre-millennium, on set of ABC syndicated America's Funniest Home Videos, a video plays nation-wide showing highlights of the 1995 San Diego tank rampage of Shawn Nelson featuring slide whistles as he ran over a fire hydrant, and boink noises as the tank bonked into a cement bridge abutment. Co-hosts John Fugelsang and Daisy Fuentes are overdubbed along with hollow laughter from the studio audience.

"A gas guzzler, in this economy?" Daisy quips.

"Tanks but no tanks, officer" as the 57 ton Main Battle Tank (MBT) easily plows through a blockaded intersection.

“To be fair, parallel parking *is* tough!” as a line of cars gets shredded into visceral scrap to a zipping sound effect.

The video jump cuts to a “Donk!” as Nelson lodges the Patton onto the concrete divider of State Route 163, and the studio audience chuckles as the tank shimmies back and forth to an affected slide whistle noise while attempting to fling off police officers as they board the incapacitated military vehicle. The video does not cut as officers open the hatch doors, lean in, and shoot the driver. Sound effects have completely stopped and the video now streaming live into viewers homes is a long cut of Desert Storm’s Bulldozer Assault in February of ’91, with U.S. troops bulldozing the trenches at the Saddam Line and burying Iraqi soldiers alive, their legs and arms sticking out of the ground at broken angles.

“Sober up everybody, this is very serious” John smirks and looks around cleverly as Daisy smiles into the monitor.

They wave goodbye as the video cuts back to the bulldozers and the limbs and sand as the America’s Funniest Home Videos theme jingles:

Stories from your Friends Next Door

They never told

You could be a Star tonight

So let those cameras Roll

You’re the Red White and Blue

It’s the funny things you do

America, America, this is you!

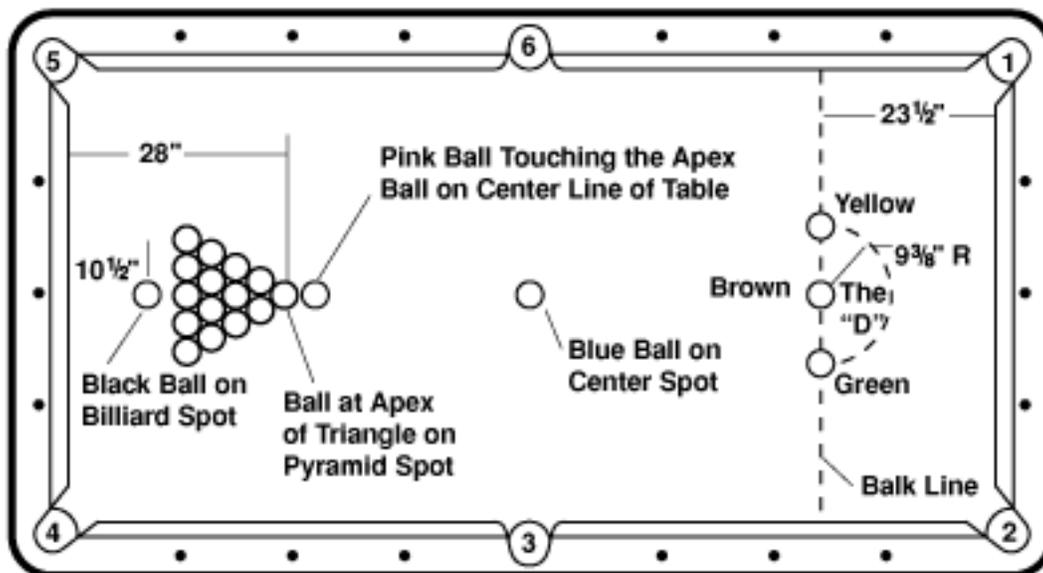
Near-simultaneous explosions rip through U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tunisia, reportedly claimed by leaders of Al Qaeda. Members of boyband N’SYNC make a red carpet appearance in head to toe F.U.B.U. gear. Nike marketing interns, upon receiving a hurried phone call, are allowed into the Heaven’s Gate mansion before first responders and press show up. ICAO votes to adjust legroom in order to fit in another two rows of seating in all ‘C’ class airliners. A Plymouth Prowler is sealed into a large plastic box in a mausoleum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, not to be opened until 2049. Super Bowl XXIII halftime is introduced with E.T. and Stevie Wonder saving Miami’s Pro Player Stadium from a sudden blackout, followed by a performance by neo-swing outfit Big Bad VooDoo Daddy and an all-white jazz dance troupe; Stevie Wonder drives onto the field in a car and top hat. Simulcast on USA Network the Rock is blackmailed into fighting Mankind for the title of WWF Championships in an empty arena match, to no soundtrack or cheers; Mankind eventually regains his belt after crushing the Rock under a forklifted pallet of beer kegs¹⁰. At a meeting of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Nelson Mandela reaches out to shake P.W. Botha’s outstretched hand but instead continues to

reach up while pretending to slick back his hair and making a “whoosh” noise; Mandela and Desmond Tutu share a high five. Israel’s primary schools stop teaching geography courses altogether. Leaders of North Ireland and Republic of Ireland finalize arbitration of terms in the mid six figures with Eon studios for respective cameos in an upcoming James Bond film. CBC News reports that A.L.F./E.L.F. set ablaze twenty luxury cars in a dealership within Montreal, Ontario. The U.S.A. launches full subrosa counter-opinion program against generic Asian sentiments via launch of and subsequent personal espionage rumors about Furbies and their purported ability to remotely record and report audio/video, brought to you by Tiger Electronics and Hasbro. Japan responds, activating Tamagachi assets to subtly change their pixelated shapes over time to coincide cuter avatars with an increase in on-screen hiragana symbols. A Chechen-born pro-Russian FSB provocateur, dressed as a bedraggled homeless man, drains a suspiciously orange stream of liquid onto Igor Stravinsky’s star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Aum Shin-rikyo receive promising polling numbers within targeted age demographics following beta unveiling of cartoon bird mascot named Aleph. World Music achieves a dominating portion of Billboard’s Hot 100. South Korea releases a dwarf look-a-like of current President of the Presidium of the DPRK into the woods just south of the DMZ. A certain Welsh-born princess of England dies amid mysterious and well photographed circumstances in a traffic incident in a London tunnel. The Iron Sheik shivs Tito Santana in the ring for a disputed and anticlimactic win, the crowd boos half-heartedly and the announcers crack some jokes. A bank of Bondi Blue Mac G3s successfully crashes a live demo at the unveiling of Windows 98 graphic operating system via activation of assets within Project Memphis. The Pokemon TV show airs a particularly anti-tech psy op, inducing seizures in hundreds of epileptic children and adults; Pokemon trading card sales surge 150% in U.S. markets. CBS broadcasts a long cut grainy video of Dr. Jack Kevorkian activating a death machine hooked up to a man in a living room; the man does give verbal consent to go ahead with it, Mike Wallace shrugs while pointing out during the corresponding interview. BBC reports on a growing pandemic of Mad Cow Disease. Muammar Gaddafi begins to commission personalized Jean Paul Gautier sunglasses. The Dalai Lama smilingly presents President Jiang Zemin with a circle of his index and thumb in the “OK” hand gesture, held just below his waist, smirking and nodding sideways toward it until Zemin does, in fact, look.

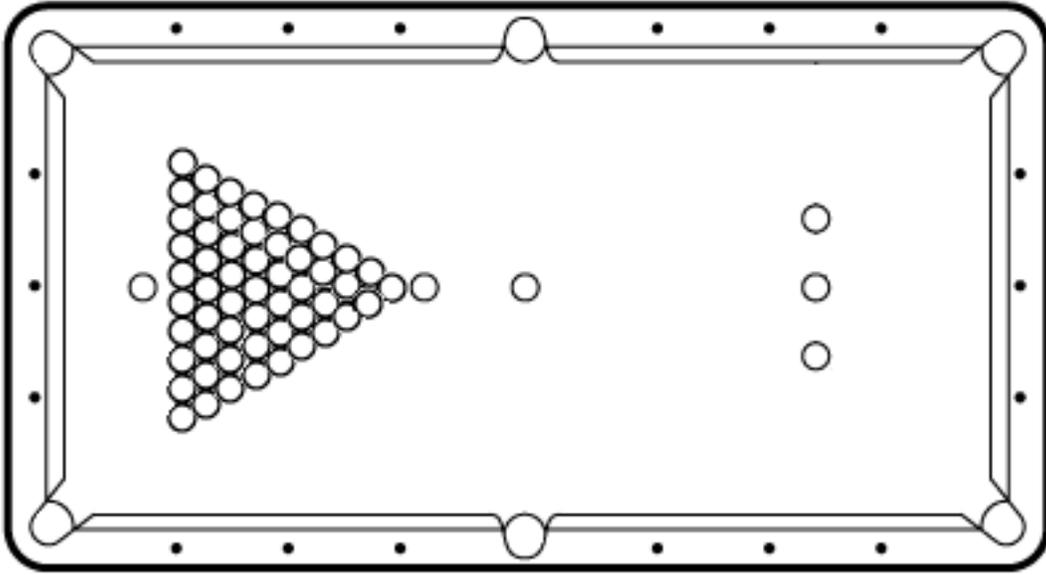
End Notes

1. © Parker Brothers™ division of HASBRO Inc, an unprofitable packaged version of the tennis game described by David Foster Wallace in his book *Infinite Jest*. 1996, 321-342 & endnotes 120-130.
2. © Aapps Inc, later a division of InterLace TelEntertainment.
3. A vernacular colloquialism based in vague ideas of Bohemian Grove meetings, of which none of us obviously are members, but we all know-a-guy-who-knows-a-guy and its all good fun anyway.
4. Affected poking of the ribs at the expense of the underclassmen, *A Clockwork Orange* being among a handful of favorite novels here.
5. A politely anticipated opening-of-doors and ongoing professional expectation that goes back to the founding of the CIA from its OSS beginnings.
6. Super Nintendo Entertainment System and Nintendo⁶⁴ are both registered trademarks of Nintendo Co, Ltd.

American Snooker — 5' x 10' Table



7.



8.

9. Pun intended, har har.

10. I remember other kids being very into this at the time.