



PACS uses the BCA rule set as the basis for most of its rules. There are some variations which can be found on the website (as can the BCA rule set). The rule set is very comprehensive and there are probably only a few people in the league that have read it in its entirety and even less (probably none) who have committed the entire rule set to memory. PACS agrees with the BCA statement of principles (found on page v of the BCA rule set) that "it is more important that the game be decided by the players' pool playing ability than by their knowledge of the rules"

Players are encouraged to exhibit proper sportsmanship and consider the "spirit of the rule" when matches are being played. Allow me to explain "spirit of the rule"....

Someone who follows the "letter of the law" is following the literal interpretation of the law. One who follows the "spirit of the law" is following the intent of those who wrote the law. Substitute "law" with "rule" and you will understand my point. For example, the rule states that once the 8 ball is legally pocketed, the "winner" should wait until all balls have stopped rolling before gathering them for the next rack. The "spirit of the rule" is designed to keep the "winner" of that game from interfering with any ball(s) that could result in the cue ball being pocketed (which would obviously be a loss of game if coupled with the 8 ball being legally pocketed on the same shot).

As another example, it is likely that a person who is driving well over the speed limit will not get a ticket if they are rushing someone to a hospital because they are having a stroke or some other life threatening condition. This is because the police officer will likely interpret the spirit of the law is not to penalize someone in this situation (rather than the literal interpretation of the law aka "letter of the law").

Many of the problems that occur on a weekly basis in league play are the result of

1. Poor communication (which is a two way street)
2. A player doing something "dumb" and then disagreeing on the severity of the punishment.
3. A disagreement on whether a particular shot hit the necessary suited ball first.
4. Players being unsportsmanlike.

So what can be done to reduce the amount of arguments? I'll address each of the 4 points above in order.

1. If you are the person shooting, always make sure that your opponent acknowledges your intention if it is not 100% obvious. On any shot in which you are attempting a bank or kick shot, call the pocket. Allow the opponent enough time to ask for a "watch" if there is a reasonable chance that you think an argument might ensue on whether the shot was a foul or not. If you are the opponent who is not shooting, pay attention!!!
2. Don't do dumb things. It sounds sarcastic, but it is very true. If you scratch, don't roll the cue ball to your opponent so that it may disturb other ball(s). Do not use your cue stick to

"push the cue ball" to your opponent after you scratch. Hands are a better option. If you are the person who won the game, no need to be a hero and grab any balls until everything has stopped rolling. What's the point? To save 3 seconds? Why give any ammunition to your opponent for an argument?

3. Ask for a watch regardless if you are the person shooting or the opponent. Many/most smartphones now have the capability to record in slow motion. It's the 21st century and we have amazing technology at our fingertips, lets use it.

4. Don't be a jerk. Complaining about someone's handicap, constantly walking around the table eyeing up shots when you aren't supposed to be at the table, or just being distracting in general are all examples of being a first class jerk. When your opponent is shooting at the table, it should be between them and the table. They should not have to hear or see you being an idiot or a distraction. Try to emulate the "pros" by finding a place to go so that you won't be a distraction.

If everyone will do their part in policing their own players and trying to resolve problems before they become problems, almost all of the problems that occur in league matches can be avoided. See your own player taking too much time between shots? Tell them. See your player grabbing moving balls after they just won the rack? No need to cause a scene, but just pull them aside after the next game starts and tell them to be careful. In other words, just use a little common sense. All players should err on the side of caution in their interpretation of the rules. You may think you know your opponent and what they might or might not call on you, but why take the chance? If you want to take that chance, there is nobody to blame but yourself if things go awry.

Sportsmanship is important to the success of the league, but it is also important to the success of the players and teams who wish to do well and have a chance to win cash. If I get numerous complaints about certain players or teams, they are hurting their good standing with the league office. It's not rocket science. If certain players or teams are a headache for me, why would I want to deal with having that headache at tournaments? Staying on my good side by exhibiting good sportsmanship will greatly enhance your chance of success in this league.

As one last final sidenote....if I am ever called or asked to make a ruling, I will do the best that I can with the information that I was given. I always try to be fair, but I am human and might make a mistake from time to time. You may also disagree with the severity of my ruling. My advice would be to not put yourself in situations that could cause me to make a ruling that is more severe than you think it should be. I will always give precedent to the "spirit of the rule" over the literal interpretation of the rule and I encourage all players to do the same. For example, if I am asked to "reverse" a win because a player grabbed a moving ball(s) after the game winning ball was legally pocketed and it is apparent that the cue ball would not have been pocketed on that shot, I will rule in the "spirit of the rule" and deny that request.