

4. Section 3 Rule 9

Ball on Edge of Pocket.

This rule that has three sections with the second section having two sub sections. So a fairly complicated rule.

The first section is about any ball falling into a pocket without being hit and not being part of a stroke in progress. If this should happen the rule states that it must be replaced.

To clarify, this means if the ball should fall in after the striker has left the table and before the incoming striker has played a stroke and ALSO if the ball should drop whilst the striker is playing a stroke that would not affect, in any way, the ball so positioned.

The referee in this situation has a duty to replace any such ball in as close a position as possible to where it fell from.

Common sense should therefore tell us that if any ball should come to rest close to the edge of a pocket the referee has an obligation to go and look exactly where on the edge it is.

Is it centrally located in the pocket opening or nearer

to one or other of the cushions?

The second section deals with a ball falling into a pocket from the edge that IS part of a stroke in progress and would have been hit.

Sub rule one – without infringement of the rules.

Sub rule two – with an infringement.

If no foul is committed the referee must replace the ball back on the edge plus replace ALL the other balls involved in the stroke. The same striker may then replay the stroke in the same way or he can also choose to play a different legal stroke.

If a foul is committed in the execution of the stroke then all the balls are replaced as above except that the striker must now be penalised by the referee as prescribed in Section 3 Rule 10 – Penalties. The incoming striker will then have all the normal options following a foul.

A word of warning here. If the cause of the foul is the result of the balanced ball dropping then the referee may not penalise the striker but must replace all balls as described. Examples of this would be if the striker in playing a stroke at the balanced ball to pot it and it fell before the cue ball reached it and the cue ball

were then pocketed, or if the cue ball strikes a ball not on but would otherwise have struck a ball on, the referee is within his rights to have the stroke replayed.

In any of the scenarios described above the referee must know exactly where the ball balanced on the edge of a pocket is in relation to that pocket as he has to replace it, not just back on the edge but in its exact location in relation to the curved edge of the opening.

In the last section of this rule no such knowledge is necessary as it deals with a ball balanced on the edge of a pocket momentarily before falling in. In which case it stays in the pocket if it is a red, or a colour in the correct sequence during the end game and spotted if it is a colour whilst reds remain, or one out of sequence during the end game and will count as either a scoring stroke or a foul.

A good rule of thumb in determining what 'momentarily' means is to consider when the striker has left the table. Is he returning to his non striker position considering his bad luck or is he watching hesitantly from his stroke playing position at the table. In the latter case the referee must admonish him if he feels that the striker has hesitated long enough.