

# OFFICIAL ARTISTIC POOL “TIMELINE” HISTORY

**Prior to 1990:** Before the advent of “artistic pool” events, competitions were referred to as “trick shot”, “fancy shot”, and / or “skill shot” challenges / tournaments. Local, regional, national, and international events were held, some conducted by specific associations, such as the BCA (Billiard Congress of America), and others were sponsored and produced by private firms / organizations. Designated “world” and/or “open” title attachments were awarded to the champions of these competitions. The terms – “world” and “open” – were the point of controversy for many years, since each group conducting an event searched for rights, so to speak, for official status over such challenges. “Trick shot” competitors earned event “titles” and used them for market promotion as needed. Each claim to “world” and / or “open” title was generically validated within its own domain or organizational structure.

Note: Paul Gerni pioneered several special “trick shot” events in the international arena during this time...up until the start of the WPA sanctioned “World” Artistic Pool events in 2000. His efforts in this regard were a major catalyst in developing player interest on the competitive scene via a selective “invitation only” process his trick shot organization created. This entity name was the WTSAA (World Trick Shot Artist Association).

Some “titles” were determined by a shot/challenge program, ranging in number of shots from six to seventy-six, and others were determined by something as simple as seeing who could make the most number of balls in one legal stroke. Some were held on the pocket billiard table, and some on the snooker table. Some drew small audience numbers, and large arena groups witnessed others. Some were open to all players and some were restricted to a select few. Some were documented, but most have no public record today with detailed results. Through it all, a common thread was evident – A champion emerged, exhibiting highest skill levels and achieving victory in a competitive format challenging each would be participant.

These titles and/or victories etched a mark of excellence in the minds of those players achieving them, and created a following by thousands of fans...believing that each particular victor was a “true” champion. Each champion, no matter how competitively recognized, was a “world” and/or “open” champion at the time. Aside from the “hype” and marketing validity of each, a continued effort to provide the billiard industry and general public with the truest of “true” champions was warranted.

**1979** – BCA National Trick Shot Tournament (Steve Geller & Suellen Warnes – Champions)

**1980** – BCA National Trick Shot Tournament (Steve Geller & Debbie Smith – Champions)

**1980** – BCA All American Trick Shot Tournament (Bob Williams & Vicki Frechen – Champions)

**1982** – McDermott World Masters Open Trick Shot Championship (Tom Rossman – Champion)

**1983** – Fredric Fechter of CueSport College International in Peoria, IL and others discovered and founded the discipline of the “Artistic CueSports”. It was developed and practiced as a non-competitive teaching and learning discipline tool to obtain self-awareness of right thinking. It is the core of all artistic cueing disciplines. “Artistic CueSports” goals and purpose are to instill, guide, transform, and appreciate all “artistic” expressions of wholesome values found in what is real, valid, and good. An integration of the “Artistic CueSports” teaching and learning discipline into the mainstream of education has abundantly blessed many individuals. “Artistic CueSports” has greatly helped in the creation of many professionals and talented cueing champions in the world today.

Note: The above “Artistic CueSports” statement was given to me by Fredric Fechter on December 30, 2004...with an assurance that it would be presented in any future releases of our sport history. Having worked with Fred during the formative years of applying the “Artistic CueSports” to specific teaching and learning situations, I, Tom Rossman, agree with this historical connection to our sport.

**1990** – “Artistic pocket billiards”, more commonly referred to as “artistic pool”, was envisioned as a special sport “gift” by Tom and Marty Rossman of Dr. Cue Promotions in July...to “crusade” the growth and appeal of pocket billiards worldwide with a new and enlightened discipline image.

**1991** – The term “artistic pocket billiards” (“artistic pool”) was copyrighted by Tom Rossman through Banks, Tricks, & “Kicks”, a “Dr. Cue” training product... designed to instruct and entertain with 70 trick, fancy, skill, and “novelty” challenges. Included was a format of photo, diagram, and objective explanation for each, plus a section entitled “adjustment analysis”, which one could use to help in making fine tuned and intricate adjustments for any particular shot / challenge...if a miss should occur.

Degree of Difficulty (D.O.D.) was assigned to specific challenges in order to provide an idea of how hard they might be, which tended to enhance individual learning curves. In addition, this gave direction in conducting “artistic pool” competitions through a valid scoring process.

The competitive mode was patterned after “artistic billiards”, which is presented on the “carom” table. This had been for many years and is today a popular cue sport activity in Europe and other continental venues. A multitude of “artistic” cueing wizards on the “non pocket” table have long been a fascination to thousands of cue sport fans. The main focus of the infant “artistic pool” concept was on the “beauty” of the art form, as opposed to presenting only the hardest shots possible that could be attempted on a pool table. The modern day pioneering foundation for the new cueing attraction called “artistic pool” had begun.

**1992 / 1993** – “Artistic pool” event proposals were sent to industry contacts in the fall of 1992 and competitions were started by Dr. Cue Promotions for amateur players in 1993 at the BCA North American Championships, plus 3 youthful divisions of the BCA Junior Nationals. Player entry response and audience enjoyment was evident from the very beginning. BCA/BEF (Billiard Education Foundation) artistic pool involvement continues to present day for juniors...now with 4 divisions of “artistic” challenge. BCA amateur links continue today under the BCAPL umbrella system. (Venue sites / details at: [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) -- “past, present, future” menu tab)

**1994** – Canadian Open “Artistic Pool” Championship held at Festival De Billiard (Nick Nikolaidis – Champion)

**1995** – Amateur players at the annual VNEA International event joined the competitive process in their inaugural “artistic pool” event...with continued “artistic” play to date. (Venue sites / details at: [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) -- “past, present, future” menu tab)

**1996** – Junior players for the VNEA began their competitive “artistic pool” journey with 3 age divisions of challenge and repeat renewal each year. (Venue sites / details at: [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) -- “past, present, future” menu tab)

**1997** – North American Trick and Fancy Shots Championship promoted by TASA (Trick & “Artistic” Shooter's Association – Larry Grindinger, Founder and Sport Pioneer) of Atlanta, GA and sanctioned by the Billiard Congress of America. George Middleditch and Tom Rossman were Co – Champions. Note: Larry also conducted other select state and local events to promote “artistic pool” during this decade timeframe.

**1998** – World TASA “Trick Shot” Championship promoted by Trick & “Artistic” Shooter's Association Note: Larry Grindinger served as the dedicated promoter and director for his event productions.

**1999** – Jorgen Sandman, President of the WCBS (World Confederation of Billiard Sports) held a meeting in July with Mike Massey, Paul Gerni, Tom Rossman, Belinda Campos, Tom Overbeck (WPA board member), Dick Montgomery, and John Lewis, Secretary / Treasurer of the WPA (World Pool Billiard Association). This meeting berthed a democratically run committee process for developing credible and sanctioned World and Continental Championships for professional “artistic pool”.

The WPA “Artistic Pool” General Committee was formed to develop format structure, shot programs, tournament venue preparations, and sponsor attachments. The initial committee members included Tom Rossman (Chairman), Paul Gerni, Robert Byrne, Michael Shamos, Tom Overbeck, Dick Montgomery, and John Lewis. The “General Committee” evolved into the WPA Artistic Pool Division (WPA APD) in 2002 with official sport discipline recognition by the WPA/WCBS. It enlisted the help of international members Jim Sommer from Denmark, Arkadiy Loshakov from Russia, and Dimitri Yushkovskij from Ukraine. A host of other sport crusaders from around the world have served the WPA Artistic Pool Division in various capacities and during different time periods since 2002...with heartfelt contributions of time, talent, and money to help grow “artistic pool” in the worldwide billiard arena.

Steve Lillis served as Chairman of the “General Committee” (2001 / 2002) and Chairman of the WPA Artistic Pool Division (2002 – 2004). Tom Rossman served as “General Committee” Consultant (2001 and 2002), and WPA Artistic Pool Division President (2002 – 2005). Nate Bryant became President of the WPA Artistic Pool Division on January 1, 2006...assuring emphasis on long term growth for artistic pool within the international billiard community and fulfillment of the primary responsibilities applicable to his position with specific focus on the recognition, promotion, and development of “artistic pool” worldwide. Tom Rossman resigned from the WPA APD after devoting 6+ years of pioneering service to the political side of “artistic pool”...to pursue private promoter interests with his wife Marty, all the while sharing the sport “beauty, promise, and vision” with others.

The WPA Shot Selection Committee was established to take international player input for shots and / or challenges, and then vote on a final program for Continental Championships and the World Finals. This committee was unbiased in shot selection, in that the members on it could not play in future competitions. Those agreeing to this requirement were Chairman Michael Shamos, Robert Byrne, “Fast Eddie” Parker, Willie Jopling (Bill Marshall), and Belinda Campos.

This special committee began their work in earnest, completing their task on December 20, 1999. The final 40 shot program was indeed difficult to develop, as over 325 shots/challenges were player contributed to the initial collection base from throughout the world. Eight disciplines were defined and arranged in priority sequence for orderly player challenge and audience appeal, with “degree of difficulty” assignment to most of the challenges and a “special scoring” process as required in some such as Wing Shots.

Note: In 2001 Fredric Fechter assumed Chairman duties when Michael Shamos became WPA Shot Selection Committee Consultant. “Fast Eddie” Parker passed away the same year...after contributing valuable input and effort to the committee work...in pursuit of a personal dream to see “artistic pool” become an Olympic sport.

The initial championships were BCA/WPA endorsed and sanctioned, producing a hope for worldwide recognition. Each event on the initial “artistic pool” competitive scene and the special events that followed have helped maintain a verifiable and credible accent to “artistic pool” history. The term – “World Title” became a resounding success for the entire sport movement with the WPA as the organizational structure that has Olympic connection, all the while establishing a pocket billiard niche for future events in the international arena of cue sport. Pioneering and blended efforts from the WPA Artistic Pool Division, continental player groups, and a growing base of private promoters would help to assure long-term growth, promotional effort, and player harmony vital to any sport development.

**2002 – “Artistic Pool” became an official sport discipline as recognized by the WPA, under the WCBS in the international arena of worldwide sport structure established for billiards.** A three-fold player message of professional image, professional demeanor, and professional skills became focused amenities for the sport at the pro level with a special bonding to the positive amateur / junior movement, as it garnered new player interest day by day.

Special Note: The sport definition for “artistic pool” and the 8 discipline names with respective definitions under this umbrella word were ratified via a special guidelines document developed exclusively for our sport by the WPA. This gave credibility to the overall “artistic pool” champion and the 8 discipline champions that would be determined at each event held. Similar to gymnastics in its structure, “artistic pool” offered multi-faceted opportunities for receiving championship recognition 9 different ways; thereby creating greater interest in player participation and promotional appeal.

**2000 to 2004** – BCA North American “Artistic Pool” Championship events (Venue sites / details at: [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) -- “past, present, future” menu tab)

**2002 to 2004** – EPBF European “Artistic Pool” Championship events (Venue sites / details at: [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) -- “past, present, future” menu tab)

**2000 to present** – WPA World “Artistic Pool” Championship events (Venue sites / details at: [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) -- “past, present, future” menu tab)

Note: The trio efforts of junior, amateur, and professional level “artistic pool” challenges enhanced this special “crusade” to give everyone, at any age and any skill level, an opportunity to express skills magnetic to the viewing public.

**2003** – Sport support from the newly created International Artistic Poolplayers Association, with its IAPA acronym and “artistic” logo. This was the first player’s group committee to help acquire, direct, and promote future artistic pool events.

Note: In August of 2003 an international request went out to all players for any and all shots of their choice by appropriate text and graphic format. A subsequent vote within the player member database established “fine tuned” challenge selections (56 total) and a “new” program printing by the fall of 2004...for player practice and general market purchase. Annual reviews of this expanded program would be done by the player member database. This would assure a “hands on” approach within the “artistic pool” player structure to update issues of “degree of difficulty” assignment, text/graphic modifications, and selecting appropriate replacement shots, when necessary. A “master book of program shots/challenges” was also planned for the 2005 tour season to increase event shot selection, player challenge, and fan appreciation in consideration of replacement shots. This latter project was completed and placed online according to schedule.

**2004** – Sport training / player incentive programs at all skill levels to spur sport interest and reward past participation were created by Dr. Cue Promotions. New competitive concepts and enhanced recognition of all artistic skills, using the gifts / talents of an expanding player/fan base became a main focus of many promoters.

**2005** – APTSA (Artistic Pool and Trick Shot Association) acronym replaced the IAPA name as a US based player group. ACS and APA amateur “artistic pool” competitions start in 2005 & 2007 respectively and continue yearly.

**2006** – 1st ever-Lithuanian “Artistic Pool” Championship held and establishment of special training for Lithuanian players interested in “artistic pool” (Conducted by Mark Dimick and Tom Rossman)

**2007 Recap (Since 2000)** – The sport of “artistic pool” continues to be magnetic at all skill levels and is growing at a fever pace worldwide with internet shot creations, online forum topics, and significant new player interest and contributions around the globe. Notable events contributing to the overall promotional effort follow:

- The 8th Annual WPA World Artistic Pool Championship in St. Petersburg, Russia celebrates the largest international player / country representation ever for this prestigious event
- The various professional events in our short sport history have included the Comet Classic, the Northeastern Artistic Pool Open, the Las Vegas Artistic Pool Open, the Masters Artistic Pool Championship, and the US Open Artistic Pool Championship (Player promotion linked via the IAPA committee originally and later the APTSA “board”).
- ESPN enjoys 8 years of the exciting Trick Shot Magic match play challenge and presents its second year of the World Cup of Trick Shots – a special multi-player format of Team USA vs. Team Europe with 4 players representing each. Billiards International promotes both.
- Barry Hearn continues his ever-popular Snooker Trick Shot Challenge in Europe using a special audience review of invited player presentations.
- Select private promoters produce “trick shot” challenges around the world...keeping the public aware of the magnetic appeal of “trick shots and so much more”.
- Production and promotion of Dr. Cue Classic Artistic Pool Tour with 4 league foundational tour stops and a grand finale Dr. Cue Classic “Artistic” Cup event. Development of new player / fan entertainment “sport and show” entity entitled Artistic Pool Playing Artists (APPA).
- New 7 member APTSA “board” starts their term in November with Stacy Mendrick (nicknamed the “1<sup>st</sup> lady of trick shots”) joining the player led organization

**2008 / 2009 / 2010 / 2011 / 2012 / 2013 / 2014 / 2015 / 2016 / 2017** – The crusade of “artistic pool” marches on with the foundational events of the past, along with new and exciting events / updates in its overall sport journey as follows:

- The Dr. Cue Classic Artistic Cup events continue to showcase the “sport and show” of artistic pool: (Cup I – 1/08 – KY; Cup II – 11/08 – CT; Cup III – 11/09 – MD; Cup IV – 12/10 – MO; Cup V – 12/11 – IL; Cup VI – 11/12 – IN; Cup VII – 12/13 – FL; Partners Cup I – 8/14 – NJ). Players include a stellar base of professional “Artistic Pool Playing Artists” from around the globe. A novel “reunion style” atmosphere is enjoyed by all in attendance!! (Venue sites / details at: [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) -- “past, present, future” menu tab)
- The Extreme Pool Challenge highlights the “trick shots and so much more” trail as an innovative “invited only” competition of talented “artistic pool playing artists” from around the world...held at the APA National Team League Championships in Las Vegas, NV – Renamed Ultimate Challenge in 2009 and continuing in 2012.
- Masters Artistic Pool Championship celebrates 7 years of excitement with Nick Nikolaidis winning 2010 event
- Dr. Cue Promotions releases expanded 58 shot/challenge Master Challenge Program for Cup events (2010)
- The Ultimate Trick Shot Tour continues (2011 – 2016) with creative “artistic freestyle” challenges at regional / national events under special private promoter titles / formats and non-federation attached venues.
- ESPN World Cup of Trick Shots (2006 – 2013); Trick Shot Magic (2000 – 2010), plus (2013 – 2016).
- The WPA World Artistic Pool Championship embraces its 11<sup>th</sup> event as the credible sport foundation with its largest field ever (36 players) – Hopkins Super Expo in Oaks, PA (03/2012) + 12<sup>th</sup> – 2013 (Las Vegas, NV) + 13<sup>th</sup> – 2014 (Las Vegas, NV) + 14<sup>th</sup> – 2015 (Kennesaw / Atlanta, GA) + 15<sup>th</sup> – 2016 (Oklahoma City, OK) + 16<sup>th</sup> – 2017 (Xingcheng, China – largest payouts to date)
- Mark Dimick becomes new President of the WPA Artistic Pool Division in October of 2009 as Nate Bryant fulfills 3+ years of dedicated presidential service to the international Artistic Pool movement under the WPA.
- APTSA forms a new 13 player board led by Tom Kinzel as Chairman – New ideas / direction accent sport
- APTSA releases a new, expanded 120-shot/challenge program in 2010 for player challenge and special fan enjoyment and tweaks it in 2011 for their new tour initiatives program of Artistic Pool Majors. Artistic Pool Shootouts and Artistic Pool Room Cups are included in new APTSA National Ranking System for all events.
- In Search Of Cue-Dean-“E” International Talent Search for “table trotters” of pool (2009/2010/2011/2012)
- First Artistic Pool event held in China (World Class Artistic Pool Masters Cup – special invite) promoted by Henry Chen / WPPA (July, 2012) – Results at [www.drcuepromotions.com](http://www.drcuepromotions.com) (“past, present, future menu tab”)
- Dr. Cue National Artistic Pool Lag Challenge provides exciting option for fans and players alike (2010 - 2017)
- First Artistic Pool event in Argentina (USA vs. Rest of The World): 3-player team competition developed and promoted by Sebastian and Angela Giumelli (October, 2013) – Team Champion (Rest of the World)
- WPA Artistic Pool Division with valued player input continues to monitor / fine tune the new WPA recognized World-Ranking System for professional Artistic Pool in 2013 and beyond.
- WPA Artistic Pool Division approves creation of a “sport education document” for Artistic Pool in 2014 to create a better “foundation” understanding for event developments within the international WPA federation structure, player entity groups, & private promoter interests; thereby, encouraging a coordinated and “open” disclosure” effort among all parties to take Artistic Pool to the next level and beyond!
- WPA Artistic Pool Division approves new guidelines in 2014 for world ranked events to increase opportunities for players, federations, promoters, and other interested parties to develop three types of competitive events (A / B / C) in consideration of player travel expenses and sport expansion around the world.
- WPA Artistic Pool Division expands board to 11 members in late 2014, continues social network connection at [www.facebook.com/artisticpoolworldwide](http://www.facebook.com/artisticpoolworldwide), introduces new website in early 2015 at [www.wpa-apd.org](http://www.wpa-apd.org), and releases an updated 2015 Master Shot / Challenge Program on April 30, 2015 (subject to annual reviews).
- WPA Artistic Pool Division approves guidelines for Artistic Pool “Freestyle” world ranking events (5/31/15).
- Masters Artistic Pool Championship renewed in 2015 – William DeYonker wins in record-breaking fashion!!
- William DeYonker sets “new” WPA World Artistic Pool record with 296 points as 2016 WPA WC Champion!
- Special “freestyle & fixed program” events continue under select private “trick shot” promoter labels!
- Social network explosion of videos, tutorials, and special groups for “trick shots and so much more”!!
- Sebastian “The Matador” Giumelli from Argentina conquers one of the toughest fields in Artistic Pool history, winning the 2017 WPA WC in China – amazing first-time victory after playing in 13 out of 16 WC’s to date!!

**THE FUTURE –**

**BEAUTY...**

**PROMISE...**

**VISION...**

**...For The “Sport Gift” Of Artistic Pool**

**...Stay Tuned!!**

Document compiled / updated by Tom “Dr. Cue” Rossman (Artistic Pool Foundation Historian) December 31, 2017

**Note: All of the contents in this document are verified by historical records on file for the specific political, player, private promoter, event, and select individual affiliations referenced.**