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WORLD POOL CHAMPIONSHIP

06-10 APRIL 2022

◆ MARSHALL ARENA, MILTON KEYNES ◆
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WORLD POOL CHAMPIONSHIP
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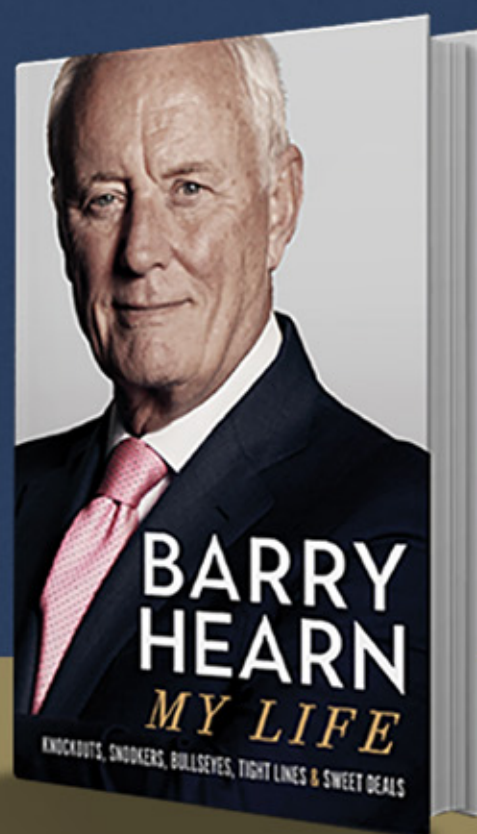


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A WELCOME FROM EMILY FRAZER

HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE MARSHALL ARENA FOR THE 2022 WORLD POOL CHAMPIONSHIP. WE HAVE BEEN ON SOME JOURNEY SINCE THE EVENT LAST YEAR. THIS YEAR, WE OPEN THE ARENA DOORS FROM DAY ONE OF THIS EXCITING EVENT, WELCOMING FANS IN WHO WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY THE ACTION ALL WEEK WITH US; A MAJOR FACTOR THAT WE MISSED LAST YEAR.

Albin Ouschan's win was special in 2021 in so many ways. It was our first World Pool Championship under the new Matchroom Pool ownership as well as being the first tournament we'd hosted with fans in the UK since 2019, all be it only on the final day.

Fast forwards little under 12 months and we're in our strongest ever position with a top field once again coming to Milton Keynes to take the title of World Champion, and Nineball World No. 1. This year, we're making it bigger, better, and more transparent than ever before.

Firstly, we're making big improvements to our selection process which I am sure you will read about in the programme. We've seeded our Top 64 players off the newly launched Nineball World Rankings alongside the WPA Ranking list. We've made a

huge commitment to prize money as we see the total pot increase to \$325,000 with the winner now taking home a hefty \$60,000, elevating its status to be a Nineball Blue Ribbon event.

We want the viewer and player experience to be the best it can be and that's why we've replaced last year's group format for the first round with a simple to track double elimination that will take us down to 64 players.

We will be starting with 17 Diamond tables will have 17 this year, allowing the action to flow freely on the back tables with less waiting around for players and even more action for you to soak in and watch.

Table 2 was a roaring success last year live on our YouTube and we've invested further into this

with graphics now a part of the coverage on the Matchroom Pool YouTube and Matchroom.Live.

Everything we're doing right now is to enhance both player and fan experience in the Nineball arena or from the comfort of their own home or on the move on your phone.

I would like to take the time to thank all of you here this week and supporting us throughout the last 12 months. I'd also like to thank our partners Sky Sports, Diamond Billiards, Aramith, Iwan Simonis, Kamui, IFX Payments, the WPA, and the Marshall Arena for their continued support.

We hope you enjoy the show!

Emily Frazer
Matchroom Multi Sport
Managing Director

aramith® Tournament



Patent pending

Aramith has created the new Tournament BLACK set to combine the very best of pool ball quality with an innovative, trendy and groundbreaking "black" design.

Anticipating the need to better discern the balls on TV but also on small screen devices, we have teamed up with Matchroom Multisport to develop new colours.

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FORMAT / RULES

6TH APRIL	SESSION	DOUBLE ELIMINATION	PLAYERS	MATCHES	RACE TO 10
Day 1	1100 - 1530	First Round	128 Players	64	9
Day 1	1730 - 2200	Winner's Qualification	64 Players	32	9
7TH APRIL	SESSION	DOUBLE ELIMINATION	PLAYERS	MATCHES	RACE TO 10
Day 2	1100 - 1530	First Round Losers	64 Players	32	9
Day 2	1730 - 2200	Losers' Qualification	64 Players	32	9
8TH APRIL	SESSION	SINGLE ELIMINATION	PLAYERS	MATCHES	RACE TO 10
Day 3	1100 - 1530	Last 64	64 Players	32	11
Day 3	1730 - 2200	Last 32	32 Players	16	11
9TH APRIL	SESSION	SINGLE ELIMINATION	PLAYERS	MATCHES	RACE TO 10
Day 4	1100 - 1530	Last 16	16 Players	8	11
Day 4	1730 - 2200	Quarter Finals	8 Players	4	11
10TH APRIL	SESSION	SINGLE ELIMINATION	PLAYERS	MATCHES	RACE TO 10
Day 5	1100 - 1530	Semi Finals	4 Players	2	11
Day 5	1730 - 2030	Final	2 Players	1	13

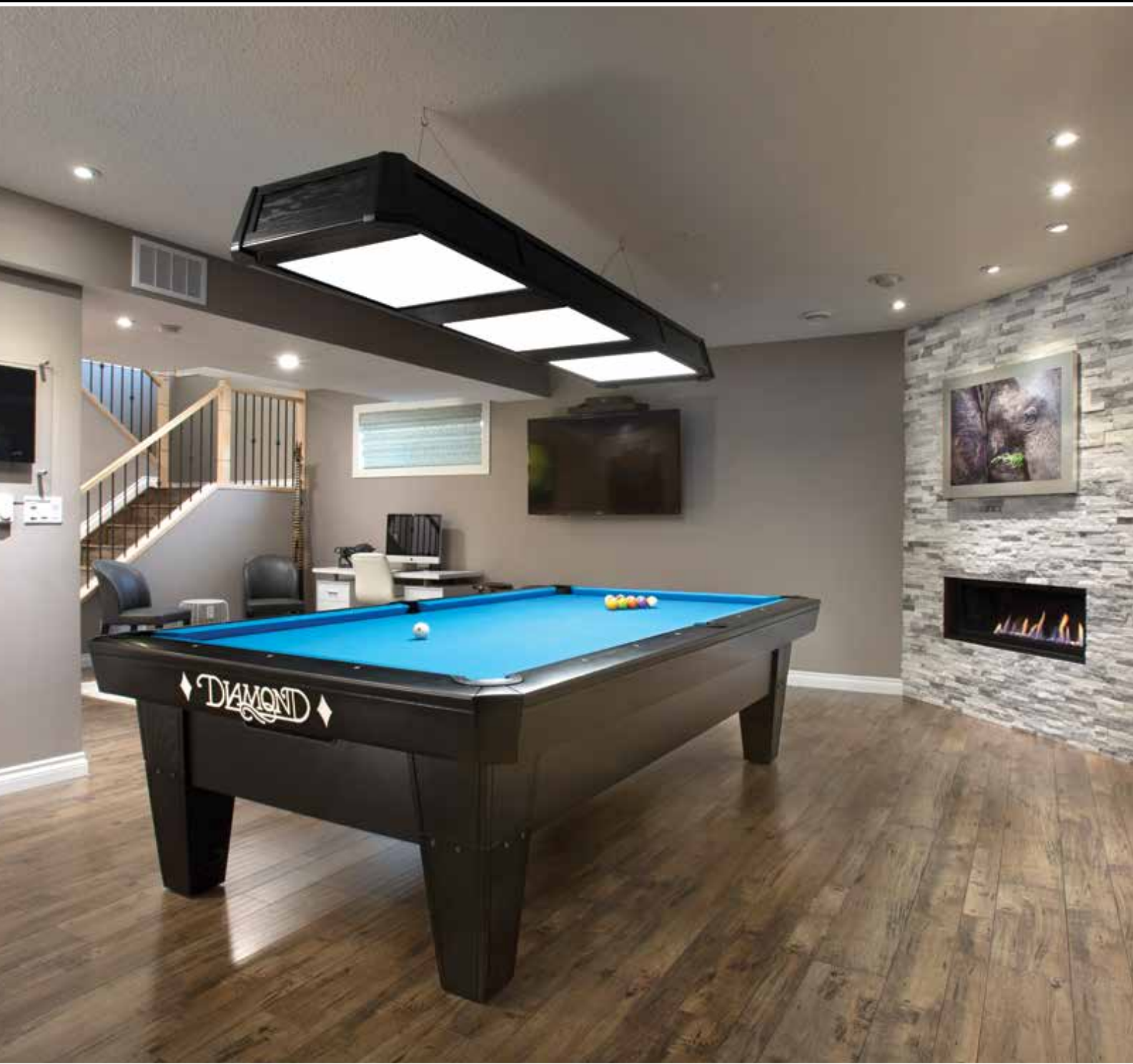
THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS ON THE BREAK SHOT WILL APPLY IN ALL MATCHES AT THE EVENT FROM THE DOUBLE ELIMINATION STAGE THROUGH TO THE LAST 32:

1. The balls will be racked with the 1 ball resting on the spot.
2. A magic rack will be used to rack the balls by the appointed score controller, not any Player.
3. Players will not be permitted to rack the balls, inspect the rack, and cannot ask for the balls to be re-racked, re-positioned or moved.
4. All matches will be winner breaks.

THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS ON THE BREAK SHOT WILL APPLY IN ALL MATCHES AT THE EVENT FROM THE LAST 16 THROUGH TO THE FINAL:

1. The balls will be racked with the 1 ball resting on the spot.
2. The 4 tables in play will be recovered with new cloth (except for the cushions) and balls will be hand racked by the referee into a plastic rack. Depending on circumstances, there may be scope to subsequently tap some balls.
3. Players will not be permitted to inspect the rack and cannot ask for the balls to be re-racked, re-positioned or moved.
4. All matches will be winner breaks.

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PRIZE MONEY



\$325,000

ROUND	TOTAL PAYOUT	PLAYERS	PAYOUT
Losers Round	\$0	32	\$0
Losers Qualification	\$500	32	\$16,000
Last 64	\$1,500	32	\$48,000
Last 32	\$3,000	16	\$48,000
Last 16	\$6,000	8	\$48,000
Quarters	\$10,000	4	\$40,000
Semis	\$17,500	2	\$35,000
Runner-up	\$30,000	1	\$30,000
Winner	\$60,000	1	\$60,000



DEFENDING CHAMPION

ASK ANYBODY IN POOL ABOUT ALBIN OUSCHAN'S LAST YEAR AND MANY WOULD RUN OUT OF SUPERLATIVES TO SUM UP JUST HOW GOOD IT WAS FOR THE AUSTRIAN.

Ouschan heads into this week looking to become only the second player ever to defend his world title with Earl Strickland the only ever player to do it but he insists that's not something on his agenda just yet: "I think there's nothing you really think about. You just want to survive the first match, it's tough as the World No.1 you get pressure on your shoulders. That's such a huge goal, I am not setting it, many others ask about it and the money, no those are the things you do not think about. You are in a flow and in a tunnel. You do not want to think about anything other than your next match and the opponent you are facing."

This year will see the return of some of the world's top talents

after several missing out due to the COVID-19 pandemic last year. The return of the likes of the Ko Brothers amongst others mean it will be a tall order for Ouschan to make it two in a row: "It will be tough. It will be different. We have the Chinese Taipei players back. It will be a totally different tournament. I am looking forward to it. It's not like I really want to defend the title. My first goal is maybe the Top 16 and from then on, anything can happen. I would say that's my motive."

The Nineball World Number One started 2021 with victory in gruelling fashion at the inaugural Championship League Pool where he played over 50 matches over the course of the week. It's

something that still sits firmly in Ouschan's mind when reflecting on the making of his World Pool Championship final victory over Omar Al-Shaheen last June.

"It was a crazy year last year. It started off with the craziest tournament I played in Championship League Pool. Following up with the World Pool Championship was unique to win it for a second time. It was very important for me. Back when I won in 2017, you want to win it a second time to prove you're one of the best players in the world. That is what I did. It really was the most consistent performances I've ever showed."

Ouschan had it tough at last year's World Pool Championship in a run

that also included finding himself on the losers' side after defeat to Roberto Gomez but from then on it seemed the 2019 World Cup of Pool winner was invincible: "Against Roberto, he played a great match with seven runouts. After that, I was so focussed on my game. I had a tough draw. Every match was quite close with Sanjin

Pehlivanovic, Mieszko Fortunski and I managed to win every match. I played great. Many players came to me and said they'd never seen me so consistent."

Some did try to discredit Ouschan's win last year claiming the strength of the field made it easier but it's something he firmly disagrees

with: "I saw many people and comments after winning last year's World Pool Championship that with all the Asian players missing, it wasn't a real World Championship, even last year, you still have to win it. It doesn't matter to me what the people say. To win it again or come close, with such a top field, it would be special. It's

"IT'S EVEN SWEETER WHEN YOU WIN WITH ALL THE GREATS IN THE TOURNAMENT."

even sweeter when you win with all the greats in the tournament."

Ouschan will start the defence of his crown in the opening match against Toh Lian Han and faces the prospect of either Daniel Maciol of Poland or Spain's

Jose Alberto Delgado if he can overcome the man from Hong Kong: "In pool, it is crazy. I believe the World Championships with the one on the spot, there are 30 players who have a chance of winning the tournament. Even if I play No.65 in the ranking, it

doesn't mean he is five times the weaker player than me. It is tough, the opponent can leave you frozen in the chair. You get no rhythm sometimes; I am looking forward to it. It's about getting a good start and hoping for the best."





INTRODUCING YOUR MOSCONI CAPTAINS

JEREMY JONES AND ALEX LELY WILL RETURN AS CAPTAINS FOR TEAM USA AND TEAM EUROPE RESPECTIVELY AT THE 2022 MOSCONI CUP, BALLY'S LAS VEGAS FROM NOVEMBER 30-3 DECEMBER WITH ONLY LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR FANS TO SOAK IN THE ACTION AT POOL'S BIGGEST EVENT.

Jones returns to lead the United States for the first time on home soil after leading the side for the last two years in Europe as he guns to return the trophy to American hands for the first time since 2019 in Las Vegas.

Europe's two-time winning captain Lely will return for a third stint as chief as he looks to seal a three-peat and a first victory in the USA since 2017 when Europe ran out 11-4 victors.

The USA put up a spirited display last year with Jones having to step up to playing captain after losing Earl Strickland just 24 hours before the action got underway and will be seeking to take inspiration from their showing last year in Las Vegas this time around.

Jones is fired up more than ever to deliver success for the home fans: "I am grateful. I wanted this opportunity again to put the last two years to bed and show what the USA is all about. I can't freakin' wait to get revenge on Europe in front of a home crowd. I want to give them something to cheer about."

"Fans, be prepared. We're red, white, and blue all the way through and we will deliver a year to remember for USA and most importantly Lely. This will be the best Mosconi Cup ever."

Lely led his side to a dramatic turnaround after a slow opening two days in 2021 to seal an 11-6 win at Alexandra Palace with Jayson Shaw starring as MVP for the second year in a row. The Dutchman is aware this year will be a much sterner challenge though: "It feels great. I am honoured and I am looking forward to going to the USA. I am happy I get the chance to defend the cup in Las Vegas. I will fight for it more than ever before. The atmosphere will be intimidating, and my players must react to it. In 2019, it was the first time the fans got into the European players faces."

"I know how much the USA want to take the Mosconi Cup trophy back. I'm not willing to let them get their hands on it. We have so much more to give, and we will silence the USA crowd."

After record sales, there are only limited seats now available to watch the teams compete live. The new theatre-style arena will be created at Bally's Las Vegas to accommodate the biggest seating capacity staged for a Pool event in the USA, catering for 2,000 supporters travelling from far and wide to catch a glimpse of the action. **Remaining tickets start from \$69.**

News on both sides Vice-Captains will come soon.

SELECTION PROCESS

For the first time, the Live Nineball World Rankings will come into play, with three players from each side who will qualify on order of merit from the Nineball World Rankings. The Live (2023) Nineball World Rankings are updated after every event recognised by the Nineball World Rankings Schedule this year and still poised to grow further. The final two players from each side will be wild cards.

THE CUTOFF

The top two players from each team off the Live (2023) Nineball World Rankings will be selected after the conclusion of the 2022 US Open Pool Championship at Harrah's Resort, Atlantic City October 10-15.

The final three players from each team will be picked after the conclusion of the European Open Pool Championship from November 15-20 with one further player from each side joining from the Live (2023) Nineball World Rankings followed up by two wild card picks.

THE 2022 MOSCONI CUP RETURNS STATESIDE FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 2019 WHEN THE USA SECURED A FAMOUS 11-8 VICTORY OVER THEIR EUROPEAN COUNTERPARTS, AND THEY WILL BE LOOKING FOR A SIMILAR SCORELINE COME THIS FALL AT BALLY'S AFTER BACK-TO-BACK DEFEATS IN 2020 AND 2021

QR CODE FOR BUYING TICKETS:



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NINEBALL WORLD NO.3

David Alcaide goes into this year's World Pool Championship buoyed by a stellar 2021 that ended with victory in the Mosconi Cup in his third appearance.

El Matador carries heavy clout coming into the tournament as the number two seed as he meets the UK's Benji Buckley in the opening round.

He had a run to the semi-finals of the World Pool Championship eventually losing out to champion Albin Ouschan and credits his

good form to the hard yards put in during the gap without pool due to the COVID-19 pandemic: "After the pandemic, I played so good at Championship League Pool and got to the final against Albin. At the World Pool Masters, I played well but lost early on. Then I headed to the World Championship where I played well and at the US Open where I've been consistent. I feel in a good place after the Premier League Pool earlier in the year, I cannot wait to get going in Milton Keynes again.

DAVID ALCAIDE

Age: **43**

From: **Malaga, Spain**

Nickname: **El Matador**

Instagram: **david.alcaidebermudez**

Notable Results:

2019 World Pool Masters Champion

2021 WPC Result:

Semi-finals loss to Albin Ouschan 11-4

NINEBALL WORLD NO.4

The World Pool Championship is one title that has evaded Shane Van Boening, but the two-time runner-up is determined to finally snap off the world title.

Van Boening's last Nineball title came on British shores back in 2015 at the World Pool Masters in Manchester and knows winning a world crown would be the cherry on the top of the cake.

The South Dakota kid put in a

strong showing at the Premier League Pool back in February with the American going deep before eventually falling short in the semi-finals against eventual winner Albin Ouschan.

That semi-final though showed a test of Van Boening's character when from 6-3 down he forced a decider against the Austrian. It wasn't to be for Van Boening but it indicated just how well he is playing this year so far.

SHANE VAN BOENING

Age: **38**

From: **South Dakota, USA**

Nickname: **The South Dakota Kid**

Instagram: **@shanevanboening**

Notable Results:

5-time US Open Champion

2021 WPC Result:

Last 16 - defeat to Oliver Szolnoki 11-5



NINEBALL WORLD RANKINGS

NUMBER	NAME
1	Albin Ouschan (AUT)
2	Carlo Biado (PHI)
3	David Alcaide (ESP)
4	Shane Van Boening (USA)
5	Max Lechner (AUT)
6	Aloysius Yapp (SGP)
7	Naoyuki Oi (JPN)
8	Ko Ping Chung (TPE)
9	Wu Jiaqing (CHN)
10	Joshua Filler (GER)
11	Eklent Kaçi (ALB)
12	Alexander Kazakis (GRE)
13	Chang Jung-Lin (TPE)
14	Liu Haitao (CHN)
15	Omar Al-Shaheen (KUW)
16	Ko Pin-Yi (TPE)
17	Jayson Shaw (GBR)
18	Oliver Szolnoki (HUN)
19	Skyler Woodward (USA)
20	Francisco Sanchez-Ruiz (ESP)

NUMBER	NAME
21	Denis Grabe (EST)
22	Chang Yu-Lung (TPE)
23	Mieszko Fortunski (POL)
24	Dennis Orcollo (PHI)
25	Niels Feijen (NED)
26	Fedor Gorst (ROC)
27	Mario He (AUT)
28	Alex Pagulayan (CAN)
29	Marc Bijsterbosch (NED)
30	John Morra (CAN)
31	Konrad Juszczyszyn (POL)
32	Ralf Souquet (GER)
33	Sanjin Pehlivanovic (BOS)
34	Mika Immonen (FIN)
35	Wiktor Zielinski (POL)
36	Thorsten Hohmann (GER)
37	Tomasz Kaplan (POL)
38	Ruslan Chinakhov (ROC)
39	Tyler Styer (USA)
40	Kelly Fisher (GBR)

NINEBALL WORLD NO.5

Max Lechner had a brutal introduction to Matchroom events at last year's World Pool Championship. The Austrian found himself in the quarter-finals against David Alcaide after wins over Mohammad Ali Berjawi, Mickey Krause, Veronika Ivanovskaia, Elliott Sanderson and Marc Bijsterbosch but fouling by dropping his chalk on the table soon put Lechner off kilter.

Premier League Pool didn't treat

Lechner too kindly either as he found himself rooted to the foot of the table after the opening two days with zero wins. but there was light at the end of the tunnel as he fought back with wins over Jayson Shaw and Naoyuki Oi to name a few.

Lechner comes into the tournament with a point to prove and faces Finland's newly crowned 9-ball champion Jani Uski to start the week.

MAX LECHNER

Age: **31**

From: **Innsbruck, Austria**

Nickname: **Mad Max**

Instagram: **@therealmadmax27**

2021 WPC Result:

Quarter-finals - defeat to David Alcaide 11-4

NINEBALL WORLD NO.6

Aloysius Yapp had something of a breakout year in 2021, it's fair to say. The former Junior World 9-ball Champion heads into the World Pool Championship as the 2021 US Open runner-up and with a burgeoning reputation in the game.

When growing up, Yapp became fixated with cue sports first picking up a cue at the age of eight before getting his first table at 14. The journey has been far from plain sailing for Yapp though, who made the decision to drop out of school to focus full-time on pool and

since then, that decision has been vindicated with the young star climbing the rankings.

As a kid, he was nicknamed as South-East Asia's answer to Wu Jiaqing and a world title in Milton Keynes would go some way to living up to such a stellar nickname.

Yapp heads to Milton Keynes just a few months after his last visit which resulted in an early exit at Premier League Pool by only one point and starts his quest for glory against Switzerland's Dimitri Jungo.

ALOYSIUS YAPP

Age: **25**

From: **Innsbruck, Austria**

Pronounced: **Aloo-ishus Yapp**

Instagram: **@alloysiusyapp**

Notable Result:

2021 US Open runner-up

2021 WPC Result:

Last 32 - defeat to Roberto Gomez 11-7



NAOYUKI OI

Age: **39**

From: **Tokyo, Japan**

Nickname: **Shot Gun Nao**

Instagram: **@naoyukioi**

Notable Result:

2021 US Open 3rd place

2021 WPC Result:

Last 16 - defeat to Francisco Sanchez Ruiz 11-7

NINEBALL WORLD NO.7

Naoyuki Oi has a reputation in the world of pool and beyond as a bit of a joker who doesn't take life too seriously and that would be correct until you see the Japanese star on a pool table.

The Shot Gun Nao is a serious player behind the persona given off on camera, usually with his head down at the practice table or learning from others, Oi is a force to be reckoned with and should be considered one of the favourites for glory this week.

Oi had a positive 2021, despite being knocked out to Francisco Sanchez Ruiz in the Last 16 last year here in Milton Keynes and then defeat to eventual US Open winner Carlo Biado in the semi-finals in Atlantic City in September.

He heads to the World Pool Championship amongst a strong contingent from his native Japan with previous World Champion Yukio Akagariyama and Masato Yoshioka.



KO PING CHUNG

Age: **26**

From: **Chinese Taipei**

Instagram: **@kopingchung.pool**

Notable Result:

2013 - Junior World 9-Ball Champion

2021 WPC Result:

Didn't play

NINEBALL WORLD NO.8

Ko Ping Chung, younger brother of Ko Pin Yi returns to the international fold for the first time since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and he will be keen to make up for lost time in his quest to replicate his 2013 Junior World 9-Ball win with one at the elite level of the professional ranks.

Since turning professional 12 years ago, Ping Chung was last seen at a Nineball event in 2019 at the World Cup of Pool alongside Pin Yi. Despite the recent restrictions,

Ping Chung will head to Milton Keynes in good shape, over the last few years, alongside other brother Ko Pin Han, the three have grown a substantial online following where often videos go viral reaching millions globally. See more of what the brothers get up to on @Ko_brothers_billiards

Ping Chung will be hoping to replicate his brothers achievement of winning the title in 2015 when he starts out against Germany's Tobias Bongers.



NINEBALL WORLD NO.10

Back in 2018, Joshua Filler snapped off his first world title as a youngster and will head to Milton Keynes looking to join legend of the game and compatriot Thorsten Hohmann as a two-time champion of the world.

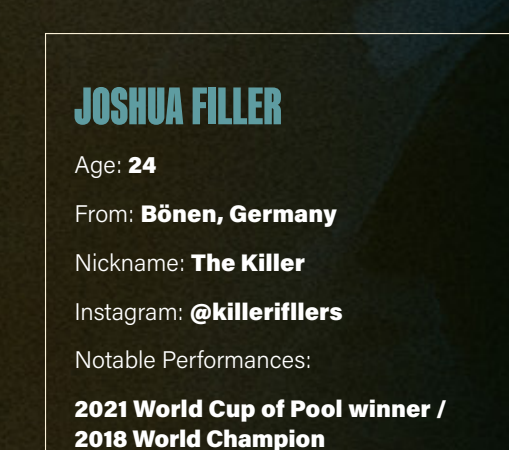
Last year was a mixed bag for the German who crashed out of the World Pool Championship at the last 32. He did claim the World Cup of Pool and sunk the winning 9 ball at the Mosconi Cup back in December.

Filler carried the form of his Mosconi Cup exploits into the start of 2022 as he reached the final of the inaugural Premier League Pool in Milton Keynes back in February.

Filler's route to the Premier League Pool final was far from routine despite several moments of brilliance. Grit was at the core of what he did best finishing on top in the league phase before cruising past Mosconi Cup teammate Jayson Shaw 7-3 in the semi-finals. It will be interesting to see Filler's response to his final defeat to Albin Ouschan though, after leading his good friend 4-0 early on, it was Ouschan who cantered to a 7-5 win.

The Killer is admired in the game as somebody who can move through games playing only his B or C game but he is aware of the brutal nature of the World Pool Championship

means only his A game will suffice if he wants to take home the \$60,000 first place prize.



JOSHUA FILLER

Age: **24**

From: **Bönen, Germany**

Nickname: **The Killer**

Instagram: **@killerifillers**

Notable Performances:

2021 World Cup of Pool winner / 2018 World Champion

2021 WPC Result:

Last 32 - 11-7 defeat to Naoyuki Oi



NINEBALL WORLD NO.11

Eklent Kaçi had a stop start 2021 in Matchroom events and he will be the first to admit that with the Golden Eagle of Albania missing out on last year's World Pool Championship due to VISA issues but this year he comes knowing he has a point to prove.

After Alex Lely gave Kaçi the vote of confidence by selecting him for the 2021 Mosconi Cup for a fourth time, he didn't let Europe down and it seemed a key moment in the development of the youngster.

Since then, though, the Nineball World No. 11 lost momentum at Premier League Pool as he crashed out after the opening stage. Kaçi cut a frustrated figure at times, but it was clear there's so much appetite to deliver a maiden Matchroom title.

The 23-year-old's best performance to date in a Matchroom event game by reaching the semi-finals of the World Pool Masters last year in Gibraltar falling to eventual champion Alexander Kazakis.



EKLENT KAÇI

Age: **23**

From: **Albania**

Nickname: **Golden Eagle of Albania**

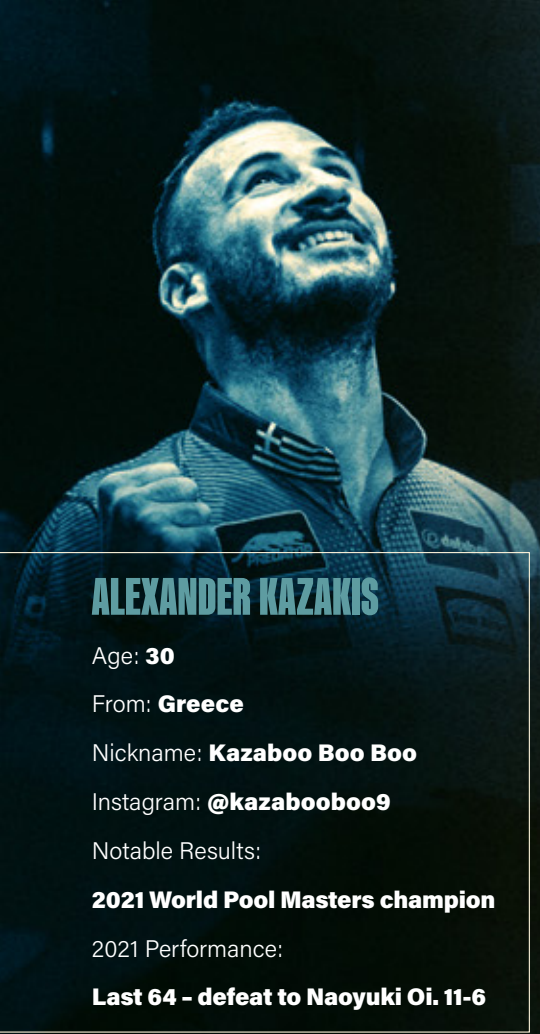
Instagram: **@eklent.kaci**

Notable Results:

Two-time Mosconi Cup winner

2021 Performance:

Didn't play



ALEXANDER KAZAKIS

Age: **30**

From: **Greece**

Nickname: **Kazaboo Boo Boo**

Instagram: **@kazabooboo9**

Notable Results:

2021 World Pool Masters champion

2021 Performance:

Last 64 – defeat to Naoyuki Oi. 11-6

NINEBALL WORLD NO.12

Alexander Kazakis' 2021 was the case of forever getting better with the Greek initially struggling in both the Championship League Pool and World Pool Championship. Kazaboo Boo Boo was knocked out last year by Naoyuki Oi in the last 64 but responded in the best possible fashion to claim his first Nineball title in Gibraltar in May.

Kazakis was faced with an uphill task of Shane Van Boening if he

was to get over the voodoo of his 2019 final defeat to David Alcaide and he duly did with an emphatic whitewash win to secure a piece of his own history.

Since then, Kazakis could consider himself unfortunate to not make the 2021 Mosconi Cup team but he knows a strong performance to start out in 2022 will put him right on Europe captain Alex Lely's radar.



CHANG YUNG LIN

Age: **36**

From: **Chinese Taipei**

Notable Results:

2018 International 9-Ball Open

2021 Performance:

Didn't play

NINEBALL WORLD NO.13

Chang Yung Lin returns to the fold after missing last year's World Pool Championship due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the now somewhat veteran is gunning for his first world title.

The Chinese Taipei star did return to the Nineball arena back at the US Open Pool Championship at Harrah's Resort, Atlantic City but found himself on the end of an

11-1 defeat to Albin Ouschan at the final Losers Round.

Yung Lin is in good company this week with the likes of the Ko Brothers, Wu Kun Lin, and Hsieh Chia Chen all making the trip to Milton Keynes. As one of the finest cueists in the sport and former world 8-ball champion, he knows what it will take to add another jewel to his crown.

NINEBALL WORLD NO.15

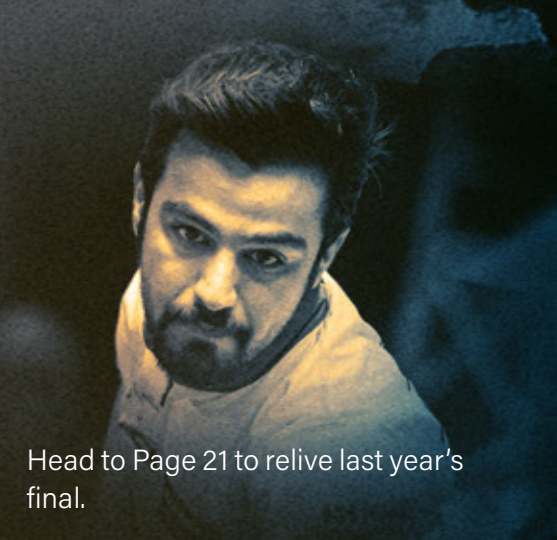
Omar Al-Shaheen has a burgeoning and justified reputation in the game with the Kuwaiti coming so close to glory last year missing out in an epic final 13-9 loss to Albin Ouschan.

Al-Shaheen has rocketed to stardom at home thanks to that performance and has since then become one of the most feared competitors in the sport.

The Kuwaiti Tiger comes to Milton Keynes with a point to prove, was it just one special week or is he

here to stick it at the top? Early on last year, he found himself on the losers side thanks to a defeat to US Open runner-up Aloysius Yapp but he bounced back in emphatic fashion.

The 29-year-old beat Daniel Maciol and Chris Melling in back-to-back hill hill finishes before beating Nick Ekonomopoulos and Tomasz Kaplan to set up a semi-final with Oliver Szolnoki. It was another close affair with Szolnoki but Al-Shaheen did enough to set up his final with Ouschan.



Head to Page 21 to relive last year's final.

OMAR AL-SHAHEEN

Age: **29**

From: **Kuwait**

Nickname: **Kuwaiti Tiger**

Instagram: **alshaheentiger**

Notable Results:

2021 World Pool Championship runner-up

2021 Performance: **Runner-up**

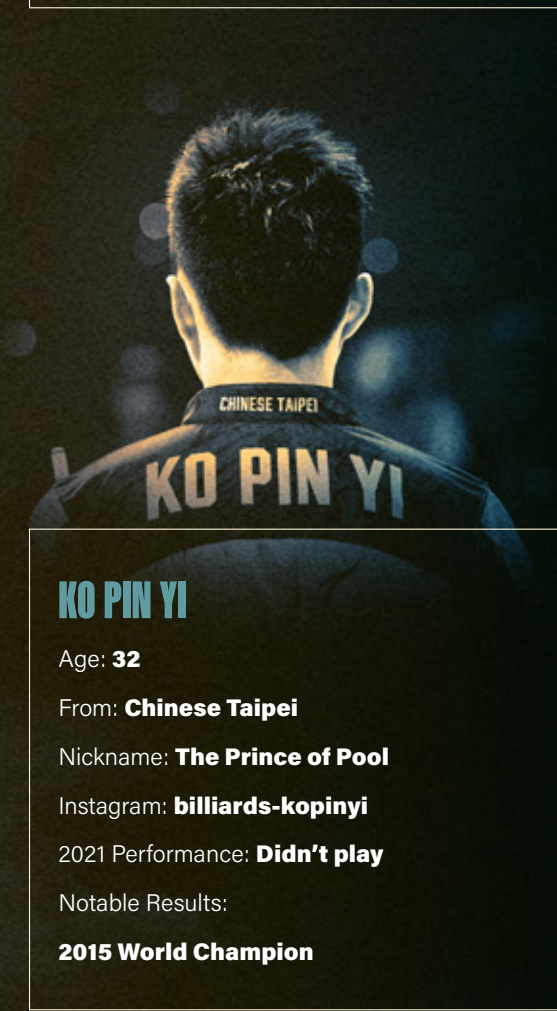
NINEBALL WORLD NO.16

Ko Pin Yi is already a world champion and a return to the winners circle this week in Milton Keynes is not hard to imagine. Back in 2015, Pin Yi had to overcome Shane Van Boening in the final 13-9, but he's aware this year will be even tougher to snap off the title.

Pin Yi is one of three brothers and with his other two also travelling to the tournament, it is the first time we will have seen any of

them since the 2019 World Cup of Pool where it was Pin Yi and Ping Chung who battled away for their country.

This week sees a tricky opening encounter to start against Jakub Koniar who made his Nineball debut last year at the World Cup of Pool where he reached the semi-finals with Slovakian counterpart Jaroslav Polach. It by all means will not be an easy start.



KO PIN YI

Age: **32**

From: **Chinese Taipei**

Nickname: **The Prince of Pool**

Instagram: **billiards-kopinyi**

2021 Performance: **Didn't play**

Notable Results:

2015 World Champion

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RELIVE OUSCHAN'S 2021 WIN

ALBIN OUSCHAN BECAME THE 2021 WORLD POOL CHAMPION AFTER BEATING OMAR AL SHAHEEN 13-9 IN A HIGH-QUALITY FINAL IN MILTON KEYNES, ENGLAND TO CLAIM THE TITLE FOR A SECOND TIME.

The Austrian's win inevitably pushed him to be Nineball World No.1 having collected his second title of the year; he won Championship League Pool in March 2021.

"When you say two-time World Champion, it sounds amazing, and it is really," said Ouschan, who took home \$50,000 as well as the newly commissioned World Championship trophy, which also has his name engraved from 2016.

"In the last rack, you just want to be as easy as possible on every shot so I was very happy that he went for the 1-ball after I called push out. He left me a tricky shot but after I made it everything was open and I was ready to take it home."

Ouschan won the lag and ran the first three racks before Al Shaheen won three in a row himself to tie

the final at 3-3. The next six racks were also shared as the match went back and forth. Al Sheehen had a chance to extend to a two-rack lead at 7-6 ahead but missed his chance and Ouschan was able to level again.

Al Shaheen pulled ahead again but from 9-7 down, Ouschan found his very best game and after levelling at 9-9 his momentum carried him to the hill three racks ahead.

Breaking for the title at 12-9 up, the 2016 Champion made three balls but didn't have a shot at the 1. He played a push out and Al Shaheen took it on but missed the shot with the cue tight to the top rail.

Ouschan made a good cut to make the 1 and after that it was a roadmap. The remaining five balls were removed with the kind of ice-cool composure he is renowned

for, and Albin Ouschan was once again the World Pool Champion.

"I had a very good start to the match and a very good end but the middle section was a little bit rough, but hats off to Omar who played a very good match," he said.

"After the loss against Roberto Gomez I swallowed it down and came strong the next day, and now I am here. I didn't think for one moment about the rankings or the cheque but of course when you are finished you think about it, and it is very nice."

"To play in a final is tough, one missed ball and you can lose," said Al Shaheen. "Albin played great, I made a couple of mistakes, but I am totally proud and I know all over the Middle East they are so happy, and I am excited and proud about that."



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GET TO KNOW ALBIN OUSCHAN



WHAT DO YOU DO TO SWITCH OFF? I REALLY LIKE TO GO FOR A RUN. AT TOURNAMENTS, I GO TO THE GYM OR A RUN OUTSIDE TO CLEAR MY HEAD.

Where in the world would you love to play Nineball? At the Philippines. Where we had the World Cup of Pool in Manila at the Mall. It was incredible. They stopped the escalators so people could stand and watch from it. It was incredible. (Picture)

What's your takeaway of choice? In Milton Keynes? Wagamamas.

What sport would you play if not a cuesport? Tennis. But I would be John McEnroe probably!

Who is the funniest player on tour? I would say Jayson Shaw. He is an interesting and funny guy. I always enjoy having a

chat and a drink with him in the evening or maybe Darren Appleton.

Worst fashion sense on tour? Wiktor Zielinski. Because Zielinski is still wearing the shirts when he used to weigh 100kg! Corey Deuel or Earl Strickland. Earl wears three sweaters. I don't know what Earl is wearing sometimes!

Who would your road trip partner be? I would kill Josh Filler after a week. I think I would go for Max Lechner. He is like me; he is clam, and we travel together already.

Tell us something we do not know about you? You should

never change a winning team. When I am winning, I never change my playing shirt. I think I may have told someone that before. But it's a big thing somebody may not know about me! I do wash them in between though!

Where do you see yourself in five year's time? Hopefully still playing and travelling around. I hope I still have the passion. As long as I do, it's fine with me. I hope to see top prizes above \$100,000. Pool is growing and it's played everywhere all over the world. It's the only sport perhaps already knows. I see myself, hopefully in the top ten in the world still and still on fire and still winning.

HOW THE FIELD IS DECIDED

Focussing on transparency, Matchroom is committed to delivering the most transparent entry system with the structure of invites for the World Pool Championship set out as below

- Total Field: 128
- 50 World Pool-Billiard Association Invites
 - 1-40 ranked players on Nineball World Rankings not otherwise invited by WPA
 - 15 WPA Women Allocations
 - Up to 20 further WPA Allocations
 - Top 16 2021 World Pool Championship
 - Top 16 2021 US Open Pool Championship
 - WPA Ranking below 32
 - Matchroom Invitations

If a player fits into more than one category, the first category they fit into is where the invite will be taken from.

THE FIELD

UNITED STATES

Shane Van Boening
Tyler Styer
Hunter Lombardo
Shane Wolford
Chris Reinhold
Michael Yednak
Skyler Woodward
Mason Koch
Jeff Beckley
Adrian Prasad
Monica Webb
Justin Toye
Oscar Dominguez
Corey Deuel
Nicholas De Leon
Billy Thorpe
Max Eberle

CANADA

Alex Pagulayan
John Morra

GREAT BRITAIN

Jayson Shaw
Kelly Fisher
Benji Buckley
Imran Majid
Adam Smith
Marcel Price
Darren Appleton
Chris Melling
Eliott Sanderson
Craig Osborne
Tom Staveley

MÉXICO

Ruben Bautista

PORTUGAL

Jorge Tinoco

SPAIN

Francisco Sanchez-Ruiz
David Alcaide
Jonas Souto Comino
Jose Alberto Delgado

MOROCCO

Mycherif Zine El Abidine

ALBANIA

Eklent Kaci
Besar Spahiu

GREECE

Alex Kazakis
Nikos Ekonomopoulos
Dimitrios Loukatos

SOUTH AFRICA

Dino Nair
Vincent Halliday
Joseph Faul
Kyle Akaloo

TURKEY

Eylul Kibaroglu

IRAN

So Shaw

KUWAIT

Omar Al Shaheen
Bader AlAwadhi
Abdullah Alyousef

QATAR

Ali Al Obaidli
Waleed Majid K Alars
Bashar Hussain Abdulmajeed

MALDIVES

Hassan Shaaz Mohamed
Mohamed Shareef

JAPAN

Naoyuki Oi
Masato Yoshioka
Yukio Akagariyama

CHINESE TAIPEI

Wu Kun Lin
Chang Jung Lin
Hsieh Chia Chen
Ko Ping Chung
Ko Pin-Yi
Chang Yu-Lung
Ko Pin Hang

SINGAPORE

Aloysius Yapp
Toh Lian Han
Sharik Sayed

HONG KONG

IP Tung Pong
LO Ho Sum
Robbie Capito

VIETNAM

Dang Thanh Kien
Quoc Hoàng Duong

MALAYSIA

Darryl Chia Soo Yew

AUSTRALIA

Ivan Meng Li

NEW ZEALAND

Matthew Edwards

POLAND

Wictor Zelinski
Wojciech Szewczyk
Tomasz Kaplan
Mieszko Fortunski
Sebastian Batkowski
Konrad Juszczyzyn
Daniel Maciol
Mateusz Sniegocki
Radoslaw Babica

GERMANY

Joshua Filler
Ralf Souquet
Thorsten Hohmann
Pia Filler
Moritz Neuhausen
Veronika Ivanovskaia
Tobias Bongers

LITHUANIA

Pijus Labutis

NETHERLANDS

Marc Bijsterbosch
Niels Feijen
Marco Teutscher
Jan Van Lierop
Ivo Aarts

AUSTRIA

Albin Ouschan
Maximilian Lechner
Mario He

ESTONIA

Denis Grabe
Mark Magi

CZECH REPUBLIC

Roman Hybler
Michal Gavenciak

BELGIUM

Kevin Lannoye

SWITZERLAND

Dimitri Jungo
Daniel Schneider
Ronald Regli
Michael Schneider

ITALY

Daniel Corrieri
Francesco Candela
Fabio Petroni

DENMARK

Mickey Krause
Bahram Lotfy

CROATIA

Roberto Bartol

BULGARIA

Kristina Zlateva

FINLAND

Mika Immonen
Casper Matikainen
Petri Makkonen
Jani Uski

NORWAY

Mats Schjetne

SLOVAKIA

Jakub Koniar

SLOVENIA

Ana Gradisnik

BOSNIA

Sanjin Pehlivanovic

HUNGARY

Olivér Szolnoki



ABOUT NINEBALL WORLD RANKINGS

Matchroom launched the **Nineball World Rankings** earlier this year. The rankings are the new cornerstone of the game globally to recognise Nineball as the primary discipline of pool, sanctioned by

the World Pool-Billiard Association.

The establishment of the Nineball World Rankings propels Matchroom's further commitment to the growth of pool globally.

The Matchroom Nineball World Rankings promote clear, fair, and concise rules to develop the professional aspect of the sport across the world and:

- Promote pool as a major professional sport
- Create a clear structure throughout the game
- Form qualification for all Matchroom promoted events
- Feature Nineball events outside of Matchroom events, including established and professional event organisers of Diamond Billiards, Pat Fleming, the EuroTour, and more
- Are open to all ambitious players worldwide whilst establishing a fair platform for women in the sport
- Produce fair seeding from rankings throughout all scheduled events

Matchroom's recent expansion into Open fielded Nineball events is with the aim to increase participation numbers on the professional side of the sport and across the world, with further additions to the roster: US Open, UK Open, and the European Open. Field sizes of 256 players, guaranteed prize money, and now a seeding structure, as well as ranking points earned, strengthens Matchroom's commitment to the sport of Pool.

Matchroom President Barry Hearn said: "We are going to make Pool a major global sport and together we're going to show what can be achieved and what dreams can be created for the players all around the world already playing this wonderful game."

"For the first time, you have a major global company looking after players and making sure the opportunities are second to none. Get involved

either as player or fan. We need everyone to pull in the same direction and under Matchroom's leadership Nineball Pool will shock the world over the next few years."

"The game needs to make that quantum leap into the big time and Matchroom are ready to take it there in 2022. This is going to be electric."

The 2022 Matchroom Nineball World Rankings:

- Feature the primary rankings list of an initial Top 32 ranked players with a top-up of a further 8 players, this list will be used throughout the 2022 events for qualification and seeding to the Matchroom Nineball schedule of events

- Feature the secondary rankings list of live actual ranking points of prize money earned that will come into effect December 2022 as well as contribute towards the Mosconi Cup 2022 team qualification
- Feature 8 Matchroom promoted events
- Have a Rankings Committee who together initiated the official Top 32 of players and will continue to monitor the status of the primary rankings throughout 2022 to ensure they fairly reflect performance

Matchroom Multi Sport Managing Director Emily Frazer explained: "Finally players have a clear and transparent entry system to the biggest staged events in the world. With the support of the WPA, the Nineball world rankings is the perfect opportunity to bring together the whole pool community. It is time we create structure and organisation in this sport."

"This announcement of structure is exactly what the sport of pool has needed to push forwards and commercialise. Now there will be a clear structure on our website, that will be detailing our schedule of events, how you qualify, how you

earn ranking points, and when the cut-off is. Tournament seedings is a key part of the Nineball world Rankings; an advantage and benefit to the players is to be ranked in events on order of merit."

"In the last couple of years, we have gone from three events to eight in 2022. It was vital and integral to the sport of pool for us to bring the pool community together and to work with other event organisers as part of our Nineball World Rankings. Thanks to the likes of Diamond Billiards for the Derby City Classic. Pat Fleming for the International Open. EPBF President Gre Leenders for the EuroTour to create a bigger

ranking system for our players."

"In 2022, we are bringing you a total of \$1.7million of prize money. What a journey we are on and what a journey we are starting. This announcement of the Nineball World Rankings is exactly what pool has needed to turn this into a global recognised sport. This is the motivation that every single person that loves this game just as much as we do to pick up a cue and start playing. This is time for everyone in the community to come together and professionalise this sport."

From December 2022, the Live (2023) Matchroom Nineball World Rankings will:

- Be formed on prize money won at events with ranking status set out as part of the Matchroom Nineball Schedule
- Be based on a 2-year rolling period to ensure a fair sample size
- Be displayed on the Matchroom Pool website throughout 2022 and see how it will impact the 2022 Mosconi Cup

Ranking status will be awarded by prize money and therefore events will be categorised into the below tiers, this will establish a clear Tour for the players to participate in:

Event Status (subject to change and review on a yearly basis)

- **Blue Ribbon > \$300,000 +**
- **Major Events > \$150,000 - \$299,999**
- **Ranking Events > Up to \$149,999**

The Matchroom Nineball World Rankings are open to any tournament recognised by Matchroom and given the approval of Matchroom and sanction of the WPA.

To be a part of the rankings,

tournament organisers must follow the overall standards set out by the Matchroom Nineball World Rankings to raise the profile of the sport. Whilst this will be flexible for 2022, the aim will be to standardise the

professional rules of the game of Nineball producing fairness for players throughout all organised events as well as generating an easy understanding of the game: increasing awareness across the globe.

ROLL OF HONOUR



1990 | EARL STRICKLAND



1991 | EARL STRICKLAND (2)



1992 | JOHNNY ARCHER



1993 | CHAO FONG-PANG



1994 | OKUMURA TAKESHI



1995 | OLIVER ORTMANN



1996 | RALF SOUQUET



1997 | JOHNNY ARCHER (2)



1998 | TAKAHASHI KUNIHICO



1999 (A) | EFREN REYES



1999 (B) | NICK VARNER



2000 | CHAO FONG-PANG (2)



2001 | MIKA IMMONEN



2002 | EARL STRICKLAND (3)



2003 | THORSTEN HOHMANN



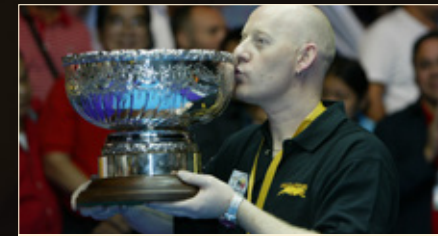
2004 | ALEX PAGULAYAN



2005 | WU JIA-QING



2006 | RONATO ALCANO



2007 | DARYL PEACH



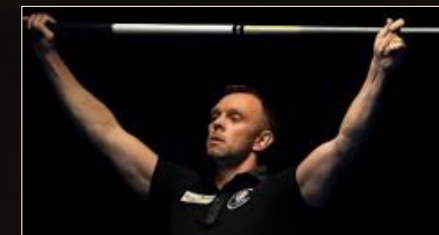
2010 | FRANCISCO BUSTAMANTE



2011 | YUKIO AKAKARIYAMA



2012 | DARREN APPLETON



2013 | THORSTEN HOHMANN (2)



2014 | NIELS FEIJEN



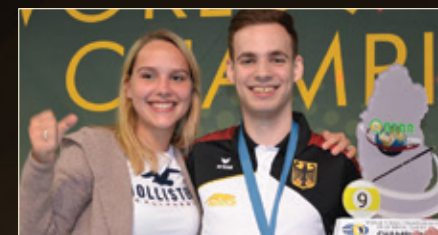
2015 | KO PIN-YI



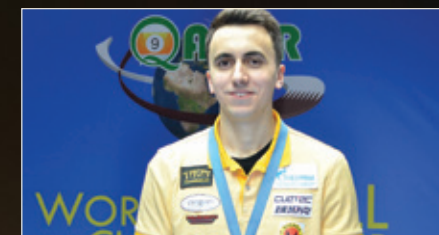
2016 | ALBIN OUSCHAN



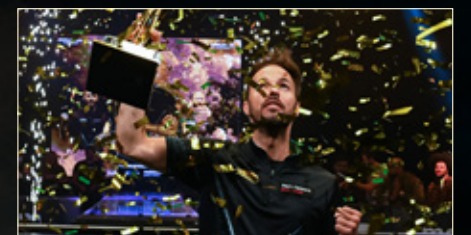
2017 | CARLO BIADO



2018 | JOSHUA FILLER























2019 | FEDOR GORST (ROC)



2021 | ALBIN OUSCHAN (2)

2022 NINEBALL SCHEDULE

	January 26-29, 2022 Derby City Classic 9-Ball Event Kentucky, USA \$75,000	Ranking Event
	February 14-21, 2022 Premier League Pool Stadium MK, Milton Keynes \$100,000	Non-Ranking
	February 26-28, 2022 EuroTour Lasko Open Laško, Slovenia	Ranking Event
	April 6-10, 2022 World Pool Championship Marshall Arena, Milton Keynes \$325,000, \$500 ENTRY	Blue Ribbon
	April 19-24, 2022 Diamond Open Nineball Professional Players Championship Greater Philadelphia Expo Center Guaranteed \$10,000 first place	Ranking Event
	April 29-May 2, 2022 EuroTour Treviso Open Treviso, Italy	Ranking Event
	May 5-8, 2022 World Pool Masters Europa Sports Complex, Gibraltar \$100,000	Non-Ranking
	May 13-15, 2022 Bucharest Open IDB Club, Bucharest, Romania	Ranking Event
	May 17-22, 2022 UK Open Pool TBC \$200,000, \$250 ENTRY	Major Event
	June 3-5, 2022 Sandcastle 9-Ball Open New Jersey	Ranking Event
	June 14-19, 2022 World Cup of Pool Brentwood Centre \$250,000	Non-Ranking
	EuroTour St Johann im Pongau Open June 24-27, 2022 Salzburg, Austria	Ranking Event
	EuroTour Petrich Open August 6-8, 2022 Petrich, Bulgaria	Ranking Event
	Slovenia Open October 1-3, 2022 Slovenia	Ranking Event
	Sandcastle 9-Ball Open October 6-8, 2022 New Jersey, USA	Ranking Event
	US Open Pool Championship October 10-15, 2022 Harrahs Resort, Atlantic City \$300,000, \$750 ENTRY	Blue Ribbon
	International Open October 30-November 5, 2022 Virginia, USA	Ranking Event
	European Open Pool November 15-20, 2022 TBC, Germany \$200,000, \$250 ENTRY	Major Event
	EuroTour Treviso Open November 25-27, 2022 Treviso, Italy	Ranking Event
	Mosconi Cup November 30-December 3, 2022 Ballys Casino, Las Vegas \$225,000	Non-Ranking



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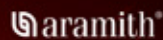
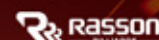
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