

SPRING SESSION MEETING NOTES

1. **Welcome** – Welcome and thank you for attending our **Spring Session Meeting**! As usual, I would REALLY appreciate you all giving me your full attention. Please show respect during this meeting by keeping the chit chat down to a minimum. Remember that, you are here representing certain teams so it's your responsibility to relay any important info and changes to your team members.

It's really good getting to see all of you who came today. This is actually our first real Session Meeting since our 2019 Fall Session Meeting. We streamed our 2020 Spring Session Meeting then skipped the one for our 2020 Fall Session because of all the capacity and social distancing restrictions due to COVID-19. Speaking of the Rona, Joyce and I have already had our two vaccination shots so were good. How many of you have had yours? Hopefully, those who haven't will get theirs soon.

2. **Meeting & Tournament Location Info** – For those of you who do not know, this is a non-smoking facility so please wait until the meeting is over to go outside and light up. **Host Location Staff** are here to make sure that you have a fun and enjoyable experience today so please don't forget to pay your tab and take care of them before you leave today. Speaking of tabs, let's draw for a couple of them.

3. **Prize Drawing (2 Winners) – (TWO Bar Tabs)**

4. **Team Captains & Co-Captains** – Last year turned out to be really crazy. It was a very stressful and chaotic time to try and run a pool League. We tried to do the best we could under the unusual circumstances that we had to deal with. With so many players catching the Rona or staying at home scared to come out, it was also extremely difficult to even run a team. Our Team Captains and Co-Captains had their hands full trying to compete with what they had.

I would like to take this time to give them recognition so, please stand if you are a Team Captain or Co-Captain. Please give them the props they deserve! (Start Applause) We appreciate you all. If any Team Captains and Co-Captains have never gotten a Captain or Co-Captain Patch, please see Joyce after this meeting to get one.

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5. **I Beat The League Operator Patch** – There are so many times while I'm out and about that players call me out to try and win our ***I Beat The League Operator Patch***. Even those who have tried several times and always get beat down keep challenging me. (cough, cough...like Jeff Schroeder...😁) Our APA League has grown so much that I barely have time to get out to see everyone during the session let alone stop and play for a patch. However, I always tell everyone to come to our Session Meetings because that's the best time to play for one. We have a sign-up list up here for those who are feeling froggy. If you haven't already got on the list, you can sign up after the meeting because it won't matter where you're at on the list. After the meeting, we will draw out a "rack" of 9 lucky players to play for an IBLO patch. The first player and the last player will get to play both Joyce and me for the patch. It will be an APA race with Joyce, as a SL 2, playing 9-Ball and I, as a SL 6, playing 8-Ball. The other 7 players will get to choose who they think they can beat to get the patch. I don't know about Joyce but all I ask for is to shoot one practice game to knock the cobwebs off before my first match. Neither of us have played in quite some time but we are both excited to get to play. Neither of us plan on letting anyone win the patch easily so you better BRING IT!
6. **Putt Putt Pool Tourney** – After we draw out to see which "suckers" (I mean lucky players) get to play for the patch, we will then start getting ready for our new crazy fun ***Putt Putt Pool Tourney***. We had already sent out an email and posted links to the rules for this new tourney. We also gave out copies of the rules to those who have signed up this morning. Since we didn't do a pre-registration for this tourney, we weren't sure how many we would have wanting to play. We may not have printed out enough rules for everyone so please share them with each other. I will give you a quick overview on how this Putt Putt Pool Tourney will take place.
- This will be a Doubles tourney with your teammate being determined by a modified blind draw of specific skill levels. SL 6-7s will be mixed up in our Group A box. We will draw out one player from Group A then draw out their partner from our Group B box which will be made up of SL 2-4s. Once one of those two groups are empty, we will

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draw any remaining players from our Group C box which will be made up of SL 5s. Once there are only players left in Group C (SL5s), we will draw the remaining teams from the remaining SL 5 players.

Once all the teams are drawn, we will draw out Tee Time groups of 3 teams each. Each team will be responsible with keeping the other teams honest and no cheating. Anyone caught cheating will disqualify their entire Tee Time Group. We will use 9 pool tables for our Putt Putt Pool Course. There will be 2 “Holes” at each of the 9 tables that must be completed by each Tee Time Group. As in regular Putt Putt and Golf, the teams with the lowest stroke scores, minus their handicap, will be our winners. How the team handicaps are determined and how ties are broken are in your Putt Putt Pool rules. I feel that this tourney will be finished fairly quickly, and everyone should have a LOT of fun. Monies will be paid out to the top finishing teams. How much money and how many teams will be determined by the number of entries. This tourney looks like it will be so much fun that I almost decided to not to play for IBLO patches just so I could have time to play. Maybe someone will take me and Joyce on in Putt Putt Pool once we get through shooting hard against this meeting’s “Lucky 9” players.

- 7. Prize Drawing (2 Winners) – (TWO APA Ball Caps or Long Sleeve T-Shirts)**
- 8. APA vs COVID-19** – Our APA League is one of the few organizations that can survive through most anything LIFE can throw at us. It doesn’t matter if the economy is down, and unemployment is up. It doesn’t matter if the Stock Market is crashing. It doesn’t even matter who the current US President is. Our business is selling FUN and we are usually the escape from the everyday stress that all this other stuff brings to everyone in today’s world. We are a SOCIAL League that brings us all together as a family. What could ever break up the fun and fellowship that we provide all over the United States including Canada, Hawaii, and Japan? Who would have thought that our World would go through such a scary Pandemic that we would all be quarantined for months? It’s hard to have fellowship and be social when you’re not allowed to go anywhere or do anything, right?

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Our national APA membership is obviously down due to all of this. There are some APA Leagues who haven't been back up running since the Quarantine started. Some of the ones, who have started back, have only 50% to 70% of their total team count. Think of what that has done for their local economy. Think of how it affected their local Host Locations who many of them depend on the APA Leagues as their main customer base and source of revenue. There has been many APA Leagues who had to sell and many Host Locations who have had to close. It's really a shame and a tragedy for all of those that COVID-19 affected.

As a business, our Birmingham APA League has weathered the Rona storm fairly well. In January of 2020, we had 475 teams and were anticipating hitting our 500 team goal and being able to send 6 teams in each format to Las Vegas. Then COVID-19 and the following quarantine interfered with our plans. From the start of the Quarantine and through the end of the 202 year, we LOST over 100 teams. Think about that. Over 100 teams! That's more than some APA Leagues have in their entire area. However, we are incredibly happy to announce that we currently have 466 teams in this Spring Session! This means that we are only down NINE TEAMS from what we had this time last year and our current projections have us making those teams up and more for this upcoming Summer Session. We also only lost ONE Host Location during all of this chaos as well. Compared to most other areas, Joyce and I feel truly blessed to be part of such an amazing family of pool players. We are excited about what the future will bring, and we hope you all are as well. Even though we are excited, we are also aware that we lost way too many of our Birmingham APA family to COVID, Cancer, and other natural life causes. I would like to take this time for a moment of silence to honor all those APA players who couldn't be with us this year.

9. **Masks In Our APA League** – COVID-19 not only quarantined us and caused everyone tremendous stress and concern, but it also made us follow a bunch of government guidelines which included the dreaded wearing of masks. This past week, Governor Ivey has released the mandate on wearing masks in Alabama. However, I believe that the City of Birmingham is still requiring you to wear masks in their city limits. Our

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official stance on masks in our local APA League is as follows. We PREFER that you wear them until everyone has been vaccinated and the COVID-19 threat is minimized as much as possible. However, we are NOT going to mandate anyone to wear them during League or our events unless in one of these two cases. FIRST, if the Host Location where you are playing League at requires you to wear a mask, you MUST follow their guidelines. If you don't want to, then go home. SECOND, if you are put up to play against someone in a League match (no matter where your match is being played at) and your opponent feels concern for their safety and requests you wear a mask during your match, you MUST wear a mask. Please respect their concerns even if you don't feel the same way. These players have some underlying health issues or psychological phobias regarding COVID-19 that no one else knows about. There will be no bullying, or complaining, or arguing regarding wearing a mask if it so requested. You wear the mask or have someone else play the match instead of yourself. If I get a call regarding anyone not respecting their opponent's wishes regarding wearing a mask and the team won't put up anyone else, that team will probably end up forfeiting their entire team match for that night. These requirements will not be forever, but they will be enforced until further notice. Does anyone have any questions regarding this?

10. Prize Drawing (2 Winners) – (TWO APA Power Banks)

11. 2021 APA World Qualifiers – This year's 2021 APA World Qualifiers (WQs) are planned to be held back at the ***Pelham Civic Complex*** again. Although we felt and even heard from many players that Iron City Billiards did a great job hosting our APA WQs last year, we want our largest event of the year to be at a special neutral facility. However, since the Pelham Civic Complex is a city facility, we don't know what restrictions or guidelines that we will all have to follow during our events. Any specific guidelines will be provided in our 2021 APA WQ Info Sheet. However, here are a few things that we do know:

- a. We won't have as many teams as we usually have due to only having two sessions in this current pool year. These were our 2020 Fall Session and our

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current 2021 Spring Session, Our current projections show that we will have around 85 8-Ball teams and around 80 9-Ball teams.

- b. We will still be sending 5 teams in both formats to the October 2021 APA World Championships in Las Vegas. As we started in our last APA WQs, each qualified player will receive \$1,200.00 for travel expenses.
- c. I am currently a member of the APA Southeast Challenge Committee. We are planning on having these SE Challenges again this year for our APA WQ Runner-Ups teams. Runner-Up teams will receive their entry fee paid and \$300.00 in travel assistance for each qualified player. It is currently planned to be the first couple of weekends in November and will be hosted at **Mr. Cues II** in Atlanta. This pool hall has now become a non-smoking facility. However, if these SE Challenge plans fall through for any reason, we will be providing a payout to our Runner-Ups teams like we did at our last APA WQs.
- d. Most of the ten 2020 Vegas qualified teams from our last APA WQs will NOT be competing in this year's 2021 APA WQs. If their team kept OVER four common players from their last year's qualified roster, they would not compete in this year's APA WQs, but they do have an opportunity to earn extra travel assistance monies depending on how they finish in their current Spring Division Standings. Last year's Vegas teams that split up and only kept FOUR players from their last year's qualified team will be able to compete.
- e. At each of our APA WQs, we plan on only having two rounds per day because we feel that this schedule helped make this event a better experience for our teams. This means that we plan on splitting our 2021 APA WQs into three weekends. 8-Ball will be June 4-6. 9-Ball will be June 11-13. Our Semi-Finals and Finals of 8-Ball will be June 19 and 9-Ball will be June 20.
- f. Last year, we held a WQ Meeting at the beginning of each of the first 3 rounds in the tournament. We will no longer be holding multiple WQ meetings at each of our APA WQs. We will be holding ONE WQ MEETING for each of our

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APA WQs which will take place the Friday of each of the first two weekends. Each team will need to have at least TWO representatives at this meeting. We prefer it to be the Team Captain and Co-Captain, but it can one of those Team Leaders and another team representative. The 8-Ball WQ Meeting will be on Friday, June 4 and the 9-Ball WQ Meeting will be on Friday, June 11. The exact times will be announced closer to this event. **If your team is already qualified or intends to get qualified this session, please PLAN FOR THIS MEETING NOW because there will be NO EXCUSES.** If your team does not have the proper representation at the meeting, your team WILL NOT BE PLAYING in this year's event. Of course, our WQ tables will be available to practice on that night before and after the meeting. We will also plan something special for the meeting attendees.

- g. The Semi-Finals and Finals will NOT be held at the Pelham Civic Complex. Renting the Diamond tables and facilities for three weekends in a row will not be feasible for this pool year however, we may do so in upcoming years. Between *Bumpers Billiards*, *Iron City Billiards*, and *Poppa G's Billiards*, we have three really good pool halls in which to choose from for our WQ Semi-Finals and Finals. Our WQ location for our third and final weekend hasn't been determined yet but will be soon.

12. Future Of Local Showdown Divisions – Recently, I've had various players ask if we would ever start back our other Showdown Divisions again. These divisions include 8-Ball Doubles, 9-Ball Doubles, and Masters. For those of you who didn't know, in the past years we had started and ran these divisions to help our Birmingham APA League receive guaranteed slots to the Vegas Championships in those formats. APA Leagues who run Showdown Divisions with at least 10 teams get slots before any other APA League. We felt that this would be a great opportunity for our players to get a chance to play in other formats and also be able to guarantee teams the opportunity to compete in Vegas in these formats. These divisions were only scheduled once a month on a Saturday. These divisions rotated each month between Bumpers and

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Poppa's. We did this for about 3 years. At this time, we only have ONE Showdown Division running which is our once-a-month Ladies 8-Ball Division.

We quit running these divisions due to not having at least 10 teams who wanted to fully commit to these formats. Again, we started these divisions as a way to get issued a guaranteed Vegas Slot. From the start, we seemed to always have problems with teams wanting to reschedule their matches to play earlier or later than the scheduled date. This was unfair to Bumpers and Poppa's because they were opening early on those scheduled dates and then not having very many players there to play their scheduled match. EVERY Saturday these divisions were scheduled to play, I was getting calls from teams and players bitching about not having anyone there to play. These continuous make-ups and early scheduling took the fun out of these formats and caused many teams to quit altogether. This loss of teams caused a continuous struggle in finding enough teams to make the minimum number of 10 teams to get us the guaranteed Vegas Spots. Due to this lack of commitment and disregard in sticking to our published schedule, we decided these divisions weren't worth the trouble, so we discontinued running them.

Although there seems to be some interest in starting Masters and possibly a Double Division back up again, I'm not convinced that there is enough interest and commitment there. Our experience with these formats has proven that it's extremely easy for certain players to say they're committed but then they don't follow through. However, I'm willing to try it again if we have enough teams who are willing to commit. In the next couple of months, I will be posting a poll to see who would be interested in playing. We will also be keeping track of who answers this poll and who says they are committed. If we have enough players to make at least 10 fully committed teams, we will start one or more of these Showdown Divisions back. However, please know now that the rules will change some. One of the main changes will be to and rescheduling or playing matches early. **There will be NO MAKE-UPS or EARLY MATCHES.** A schedule will be posted at the beginning of your Showdown Session. If you can't commit to ONE SATURDAY out of the month, then DON'T answer

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the poll that you are interested in playing in that Showdown Division. If your team can't show up and complete their matches on the scheduled date, they will just forfeit their points with their team fees due for the forfeits. There will be no excuses unless something happens to close both of the Host Locations, bad weather closes down all the roads, or we are hit with another Pandemic that quarantines everyone. If you really want to compete in a Master or Doubles Division, then step up and make sure you have the players who are committed to showing up as scheduled. With this said, how many today would be interested in playing in a once-a-month 8-Ball Doubles Division? A once-a-month 9-Ball Doubles Division? A once-a-month Masters Division I guess we will have to wait and see who answers the Polls that I put out to see if we really have enough players willing to make the commitment.

13. Q & A – Everything we covered today, including any attachments given out, will be available in PDF format on our *Birmingham APA* website in the left menu under “Captains Corner/Session Meetings”. Does anyone have any final questions about anything discussed today in this meeting or any other APA subject?

14. Meeting Ends – We have one more drawing to do for two \$50.00 Bills. Afterwards, we will be drawing out for players to compete for the most coveted ***I Beat The League Operator Patch***. If you're feeling froggy, make sure you get signed up. Just don't get your feelings hurt if it's harder to win then you thought.

After that drawing and before we play for the patch, we will need to get teams drawn for our Putt Pool Tourney. If you want to have some fun trying out your pool skills on our course, get signed up. The entry fee is \$20 per person with an optional \$10 Mulligan that you can purchase as well. A Mulligan can be used once to give your team a Par score if you ended up having a bad hole. Birmingham APA will also be adding another \$10 per each entry.

Please be patient with us while we get everything organized and ready to start. Once this tourney gets started, it will go very quickly. In the meantime, spend your time doing what you love to do...practicing, eating, and drinking. Also, BEFORE YOU LEAVE, please don't forget to pay any tab you started and take care of Poppa's staff.

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With all that we have been through this past year, please know that Joyce and I appreciate each and every one of you. Good luck in your Division Playoffs and we hope everyone has a great APA Spring Break. We look forward to seeing you all in our Summer Session which starts on **May 2**. Thank you all for coming today and for being part of our *Birmingham APA League*!

15. Prize Drawing (2 Winners) – (TWO \$50.00 Bills)