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Proper Pool Cue Balance

By Bob Meucci

There has been over the years a lot of conversation about the balance of cue sticks, both in the U.S. and overseas, so let us look at all the aspects so you might be an informed buyer when making a purchase.

How should a cue be balanced? ## The late Willie Mosconi stated in his books to hold the cue in your right hand 5–6 inches behind the balance point. On his particular cue and with his shorter arms taken into consideration, and the fact that he played 14–1 predominately, he could get by with that statement — but can you?

The point of balance of most 58 inch custom cues today (which has become the standard) is between 15 1/2 and 20 inches from the bottom of the butt plate. Taking into account that most pros, including the top snooker players in England will say that to properly position your hands you must; extend 10–13 inches from the point that the cue rests on your bridge hand to the point of contact on the cue ball with your left hand (if your right-handed) and your right hand gripping the cue, so that you create an 88 to 90 degree angle with your right elbow. Be sure to be in shooting position with the tip extended to the point of impact with the cue ball.

The reason for this is, to diminish the error in your stroke by bringing only one joint into play (your elbow joint) while following through. This also gives you the maximum amount of power at the moment of impact, this means the shoulder joint will not be employed which would double your error.

Further, this will allow you to automatically strike the cue ball at it's intended point of impact, because your stroke is at it's levellest, when your at an 88 to 90 degree angle at your elbow. With this in mind, and taking note that most players with an average height of 5 foot 10 inches, when extending 11 inches of the shaft, they will find that they are gripping the cue with their right hand 5 inches or closer to the bottom of the cue.

It should be clear then, that the further back the balance can be, the better the chance that the average player has of getting closer to the balance point without diminishing cue control.

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Why do you want your grip hand closer to the balance point? ## The obvious answer is to keep from having so much of the weight of the cue resting on your bridge hand, thereby obtaining a much lighter touch with the bridge hand. It appears that snooker players, those who must shoot the most accurately of all table games, heartily agree with this scenario. They will be quick to tell you, that they like the balance to be fifteen inches from the butt of the cue.

Another very important reason for gripping the back of the cue, is to control the amount of side sway by diminishing the overall angle of change in the cue, by as nearly as possible controlling both ends.

Here is a simple test to understand this concept. Lay your cue on the table, holding the tip and ferrule of your cue stable in one hand and grasp the joint with your other hand moving the joint a quarter of an inch from side to side. You will note that the butt of the cue moves one half of an inch side to side. Obviously, if you were to move the back of the cue a quarter of an inch side to side, you just reduced the error by half.

With the tapers of cues built today, taking grip size and types of joints into account, it is nearly impossible to get a cue balanced as far back as fifteen inches from the butt, without the cue weighing 21 ounces or more. Therefore, at Meucci Originals, we strive for an obtainable sixteen and one half inches from the butt, plus or minus a half inch, depending on the overall weight of the cue.

There has been some uneducated individuals who have made the statement that a proper balance evenly distributes the weight of the cue between both hands. This would mean that the balance would then fall at twenty-six inches from the butt, or three inches below the joint of the cue, putting nine or ten ounces of weight on your bridge hand. This is obviously a ludicrous statement.

In conclusion, a well balanced cue will have a tendency to cause a player to grip the cue further back, thereby allowing less room for side sway, while automatically positioning the elbow at the proper angle for a level follow through.

Bob Meucci is the owner and founder of Meucci Originals, a billiard manufacturer (

<http://www.meuccicues.com/>

). View some of his Meucci Cues at Budget Billiards (

<http://www.budgetcues.com/meucci.htm>

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Why A Meucci Power Piston?

By Bob Meucci

For those of you that understand the term "Power Piston" to mean a specific design in the Meucci line

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of cues, you already know what I am referring to. For those of you that do not know, a Power Piston refers to a combination of the Black Dot Bullseye shaft, but more importantly, a specific technology built into the butt section. The Power Piston butt is recognizable by the fact that the forearm (the area just below the joint and just above the wrap) is either going to be an ivory color or solid black. This area of the cue is a thin sleeve of high-impact plastic material over a maple dowel.

What this sleeve does for the player is to enhance the performance in two ways:

1) More power with less effort. This power being demonstrated by either more forward motion velocity, English velocity when using side, or a combination of the two.

2) The second thing that the power piston does for you the player is that it reduces the deflection of the cue ball (not to be confused with shaft deflection) even more than all other Meucci cues by 7–10%. This may not seem like a very large number to an amateur player, however, when you consider in the game of nine ball, one ball being 11% of the balls that need to be pocketed, it clarifies just how important that advantage can be.

What exactly happens when the cue ball is struck with a Black Dot Bullseye shaft with a Power Piston butt? Simply put, more compression of the pool cue at impact. The human arm, when swinging its arch to strike a ball, is only capable of a limited amount of speed and power. Therefore the cue design, in order to gain any advantage, must be balanced to that speed when the cue ball is struck. In other words, when the cue ball is struck, the cue then begins to compress (foreshorten) the overall length of the cue, loading the cue with additional power that will be added to the stroke that you've put on the ball when the loaded cue releases. All of this happens in a mere .140 inches (one hundred and forty thousandths of an inch!). That .140 of the inch that I've referred to is the total distance that the cue ball travels from the first impact of the tip until the cue ball leaves the tip. So the job of the cue maker is obviously one that has to be measured precisely to achieve this amazing advantage, and he must also take into consideration the weight of the cue ball.

This article has become fairly technical, and I hope that it is sufficiently understandable to those of you who care to know just what the advantage of having a Meucci Power Piston is.

Robert J Meucci is the CEO of Meucci Originals, Inc. Meucci Originals is well-known in the billiard industry for manufacturing (

<http://www.meuccicues.com/>

)pool and billiard cue products. If you're

interested in viewing or buying a power piston head on over to:

<http://www.budgetcues.com/meucci.htm>

– Meucci Power Pistons at 20% off.



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