

## Captains Log, November 5th, 2017

Sportsmanship is part of the game of pool. It's always been known as a gentlemen's game. My apologies to all of the ladies playing pool out there for the male reference. The purpose of that phrase is that win or lose, each person should be able to walk away from the pool table with the satisfaction that it was an enjoyable experience. Now, as a league full of people who like to partake in a beverage that can alter your mind capacity, we do understand that occasional head butting can take place. However, it should never overwhelm the evening for everyone involved. We have taken a bit of a soft stance on complaints, and we are sorry to say we have looked away on repeat offenders more often than we should have, which makes the league office part of the problem.

During the Spring Session, the League Office issued lengthy suspensions to a few of those repeat offenders. Amazingly, very few people, including their own teammates, have contacted us about allowing them to return. Since they have been removed, we don't get complaints about them anymore. We tried having sit down talks with them, but time and again they went right back to doing unsportsmanlike things that has worn down our membership. We never like to remove someone from the league, as the hope is always that they realize their behavior is wrong and correct it so that it doesn't happen again. We now know that not only have we subjected our membership to this poor behavior way too many times, all it has done is make some of these really nice people stop playing. So not only have we continued allowing poor sports to keep playing, but they've chased away many of the people who brought joy to our league rather than disruption. That ends now.

Before I was a League Operator, I was a player. We played against teams with poor sports. We knew who they were. We just never engaged them. If they wished to be a nuisance to everyone, we never allowed it to change our attitude and if anything, it increased our focus to beat them. But, in all of my years playing pool in a team setting or otherwise, I've never ONCE felt the need to show any aggression towards my opponent regardless of the situation. And it never should happen. When you engage the opponent in any negative fashion, you are now taking matters into your own hands, which is not part of your responsibility as a player or captain, and typically only exacerbates the situation. It is the League Office's job to resolve disputes. While we do close our office at 7:30pm each night of league, it's time to reconsider our availability during league matches if poor sportsmanship is the reason.

Some of the reasons that teams or players are getting frustrated on league night are legitimate in nature, but still doesn't allow you to take matters into your own hands. Slow play and late nights are probably the biggest problems, and in the coming months, we plan on finding ways to improve these problems, which includes the potential removal of problem players. When something is affecting your ability to enjoy your league night, we need to address it immediately so that there will not be this problem next week.

Poor sportsmanship doesn't just affect the players involved in the dispute. It affects everyone around the situation, including potential new members who happened by your league night. Fun breeds more fun. People want to be around fun. Our host locations allow us to have teams so that we can have fun and expand their team counts and their revenue to keep their place open by spreading the fun. Poor sportsmanship kills the fun. Our host locations aren't going to continue allowing teams to show up and be hostile with one another, thereby scaring off their regular customers along with future customers. The time is now for all of us to take a step back and recognize what we can all do to improve our behavior on league nights. Captains are asked to help us improve this behavior by removing those people who refuse to be a part of the solution rather than the problem.

APA created an amazing billiard product. It's the biggest pool league in the world for a reason. But, it does require that all rules be followed, which includes good sportsmanship towards your teammates, your opponent, the bar you are playing at, and with the league office. We have heard the complaints and we will be taking measures to improve this part of our league. There are so many outstanding people in our league that deserve to be treated with way more dignity than has been happening. And considering how effective it was to suspend a couple of those repeat offenders, we will be issuing more suspensions going forward if necessary.

While our office hours do end each day at 7:30 (mostly because this is our attempt to have a life outside of pool, just as anyone does with their jobs), we will now take after office hours sportsmanship complaint TEXTS ONLY to 619-925-2051. Plug this number into your phone for this purpose only. Help us put a stop to poor sportsmanship!

Shoot Pool Good! Brian, Jill and Lindsay 619-303-0183 [sandiego.apaleagues.com](http://sandiego.apaleagues.com) [league.poolplayers.com](http://league.poolplayers.com)  
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