TIPS ON POOL CUE MAINTENANCE *by* McDermott Cues

PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT
The most important part of any pool cue stick is the tip. Your major concern should be how well it maintains its shape and holds chalk. The tip should never be smooth but kept coarse. This enables the tip to better receive and hold chalk. To keep the tip coarse, choose from a wide variety of scuffers on the market. McDermott recommends using the lightweight and long lasting McScuffer. Begin shaping at the edge of the tip, gradually working your way to the center. This will enable the tip to maintain its rounded shape. Remember you are not actually sanding down the tip but simply roughing it up. While different players prefer different shapes, a general rule of thumb is to keep the tip close to the shape of the crown of a nickel. This shape is preferred by many professionals and can be checked for consistency by simply holding a nickel against the side of the tip. It is also a good practice to have the outside edge of the tip flush with the ferrule. To help prevent the tip from mushrooming, the outside edge should be slightly dampened and the vigorously rubbed with a piece of leather until it shines. Warping can be a problem, especially if you own a one-piece cue. The best way to prevent warping is to rest the cue flat on the table when not in use. Some people store cues in a rack, which is normally attached to a wall. Warping can occur because the temperature on outside walls is colder/hotter than room temperature and causes the wood to expand on one side and not the other. At no time should a cue be leaned up against a wall, table or any other object. This practice invites warpage and many other problems.

A two-piece cue should always be broken down and stored in a good case when not in use. This is done mainly to protect the cue from heat-moisture-breakage. Never leave your cue in the trunk of your car, even if stored in a case. Sunrays will heat up the trunk causing the wood to eventually dry out. Cold weather is equally as bad. Moisture can form on the cue. When exposed to warmer air the moisture ends up being absorbed in the cue. This will cause warpage.

To clean and polish a dirty or roughened cue shaft, we recommend using our shaft conditioning system, McMagic (with grit equivalents from 1,000 to 7,500 grit). Made from a precision space-age material, McMagic not only polishes away superficial roughness and removes light dirt, but it will also make your shaft feel smooth as glass without removing the excess wood that sandpaper can. See your McDermott dealer to purchase a McMagic shaft conditioning set, and follow the instructions on the package. By no means ever apply oils such as silicone or lanolin waxes to the shaft of the cue. This will soften the wood and make it limber.

A small nick or scratch in the shaft can be removed by applying a drop of water, this swells the nick area expanding the wood and the dent will rise. Then stroke the shaft as recommended above, restoring the smooth surface. If the shaft of your cue begins to screw on the joint pin a little loose, you can tighten the fit by putting a drop or two of liquid car wax in the threaded shaft hole. Never use any kind of oils; it will make the wood soften. Occasionally, you may wish to clean up the appearance of your ferrule. Use Pearl Drops Tooth Polish with a dampened cotton rag. Twist the ferrule back and forth in the rag between your fingers. DO NOT APPLY WATER AT ALL TO THE FIBRE FERRULE.

The bumper or hard piece of rubber at the butt end of the cue should always be maintained and in place. The bumper acts as a shock absorber to help prevent damage to the cue.

Most cue owners should never attempt to replace tips, refinish butt sections or rewrap the grip sections. Expert cue repair craftsmen and reliable cue manufacturers best handle these types of repairs. In the long run these expert craftsmen will do these types of repairs much better and save you time, aggravation and expensive damage.

These helpful tips and advice are provided by McDermott Pool Cues