



**MEET MIKE
COLLIER**



**ROMIL AZEMAT
ARIZONA SNOOKER
ACADEMY**



**WOMEN'S AND
JUNIORS'
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

PABSA Newsletter

March 2021

Meet Mike Collier

My name is Michael (Mike) Collier and I live in Sacramento, California. I am from the U.K. and I moved to the United States in 2018 to live with my husband, who is currently finishing his PhD in Cultural Studies at the University of California, Davis. I was born in London but grew up in the city of Brighton and Hove in Sussex in the south of England, and this is when I first started playing snooker.

I first picked up a cue in 1998 when I joined the Frank Sandell Coaching School in Worthing, West Sussex, where I was mentored and coached by Frank Sandell. Frank had many years of experience coaching younger players in the Sussex area. At the coaching school we played once a week in a mini league, and every month there would be a bigger tournament where I competed against older, better players. Frank introduced me to the basics of how to play snooker, the etiquette of the game and also the mental side of the game. I grew up fast and became a stronger player by working my way up through the coaching school with Frank's guidance. I owe a lot to Frank for his support and his guidance over the years, and we have now become good friends. Frank is also the best in the business at re-tipping cues!

As my game grew stronger and I became more confident, I started playing in some local leagues in the towns of Worthing, Horsham and the City of Brighton and Hove. This was a step up for me from playing other junior players to playing experienced adult players, but this helped my game a lot and I gained a lot of experience. As I always say, you learn more from your losses than your victories. The standard of play in the Brighton and Hove league was particularly high, with around fifty players capable of making a century break. I also started to play in some regional and county competitions. At the age of 15 I won the West Sussex County Handicap Championships and, in doing so, became the youngest player to win a West Sussex county event. During this same period I managed to make my first century break and was going from strength to strength.

As I got older I started to play in national events in England hosted and run by the EASB (English Association of Snooker and Billiards). I competed in the English Amateur Championships and the Q School, and my best result was reaching the last 32 of the English Amateur Championships on one occasion. I also regularly played at the Pontins Festival of Snooker in Prestatyn, Wales, where there was an abundance of players from all areas of the U.K. It was a tough competition due to the high standard of play. During my times entering into the snooker festivals I was lucky enough to play many current and former professional players, including Nigel Bond, Andrew Norman, Gary Wilson, Kuldesh Johal, David Grace, Sean O'Sullivan and Jamie Cope. I unfortunately didn't beat any of them, but my closest results were 4-3 to Andrew Norman, 3-2 to Nigel Bond, 2-1 to David Grace and 2-1 to Gary Wilson. My best result at the festivals was when I reached the semifinals of the plate competition in 2008. Many other players called me "granite" as I had developed a mentality that I was a hard player to beat.

A few years further on in my life I started a new career as a flight attendant, which meant I wasn't able to practice as much as I wanted and my game wasn't as sharp as it had been. I still played regularly in local competitions, but I no longer had the time to play in national events in England. I was lucky enough to play Jimmy Robertson in the last 16 of the East Sussex Open, where I lost 3-2 after Jimmy made a century break in the deciding frame to win. I managed to win the Brighton and Hove Da Costa Open in 2017, one of my best achievements considering the standard of players in this league.

My life changed drastically when in 2018 I decided to move to the United States to live with my husband. After I moved to the United States I managed to find a snooker club locally in the city of San Jose, which is south of the San Francisco Bay. This club is called California Snooker and has become my home club. Here I met many local players and players of many different backgrounds. I met Ajeya Prabhakar who introduced me to the United States Snooker Association and the tournaments available for players in the USA. He also informed me of a new association which had been created called the Pan American Billiards and Snooker Association (PABSA), which would hold an inaugural Championships in 2019 in Houston, Texas. I entered the championships unsure of what to expect, but I went in with full enthusiasm. I was pleased with my efforts in reaching the quarter finals, where I lost 4-2 to John White of Canada. I played well and met many skilled players at the event from other areas of the Pan American region which was exciting. The following year I was keen to get involved with PABSA and was offered the role of Chief Media Officer, which is a very exciting role to have. I am pleased and honored to be able to help the games of snooker and billiards grow in both the United States and the Pan American region, now and in the future.



Romil Azemat Arizona Snooker Academy

My name is Romil Azemat and I am the owner of the Arizona Snooker Academy in Phoenix, Arizona.

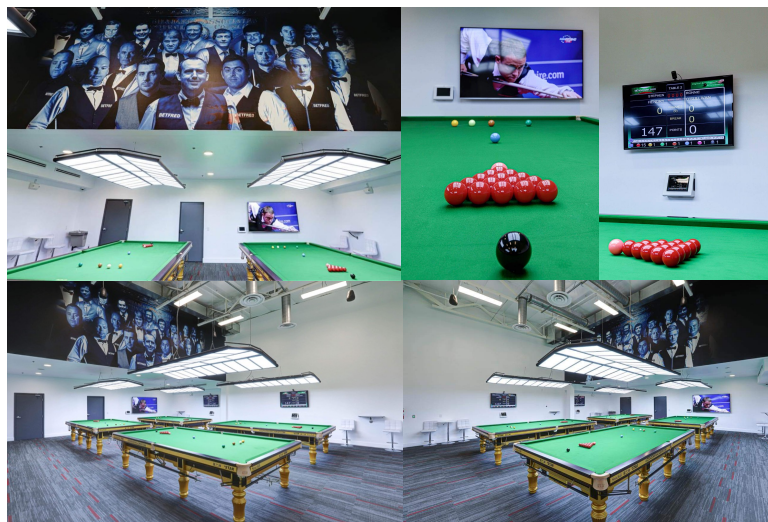
I used to have my own Riley Aristocrat table at home, and when myself and my wife bought our new home we decided not to put the table in the new house. After a couple of years I started to have health issues, so I saw my doctor who told me that I need to keep myself occupied with things that make me happy, like going to the gym and other activities. I tried everything and my health did not improve. My wife told me to rebuild the snooker table because she knew it would improve my health. So, I decided to sell my office in Scottsdale, Arizona, and buy a warehouse by my home. I started to design the layout and came to the conclusion that I would put a snooker table in my showroom. I told a few people about my plan, and, over the next few weeks, I had calls coming in from people who asked me if they could come and play once I had the table set up.

One night while sitting on the porch with my brother-in-law, who works in IT, I asked him if it was possible to turn my showroom into a snooker room with four tables and whether the running of the tables could be automated, everything controlled by an app. We came up with ideas about how it could work, and the next day I was talking to app developers and signing a contract to start the process. We designed the app so you can schedule your table time. When you arrive, the table light will turn on as soon as you start the session on the app. When you are finished, the light will turn off and you can pay your table time via checkout. The entrance is biometric. While the improvements on the building started, I took a trip to Beijing to meet with Xingpai STAR to become their exclusive United States distributor, and also to purchase the tables for my new venue. I bought four of the tournament TV tables as seen on the World Snooker Tour. We had our grand opening on May 15, 2019, and today we have 72 members. I named the venue the Arizona Snooker Academy.

Since the club has been open, I have been contacted by many snooker enthusiasts to buy snooker tables for their personal use. I have also sold a few tables to people who have started their own clubs. I have sold lot of Xingpai tables across the United States, and that makes me really happy because I can see that snooker is growing across the country. Before I became a distributor, no one was selling snooker tables in the United States and all tables were imported from the U.K., which made the purchase very difficult. I also started my relationship with Simon Barker of Barker Billiards, who took a trip to the United States every six months to install the tables I sold. Simon is one of the top table fitters in the world and fits most of the 32 top ranked players' tables, Ronnie O'Sullivan among them. Unfortunately COVID-19 has hit us hard, so I had problems getting Simon over during this period. As soon as borders become more open he is ready to take the trip over again.

Since we have been open my health has improved, and snooker has really helped me and others play the game we really love. Pool players are coming and learning the snooker etiquette, and they are amazed by how beautiful the game is.

With Daren Taylor—who is the son of David Taylor (the Silver Fox)—I started a local tournament at Arizona Snooker Academy with a heavy handicap for the better players, to give a chance to other players to compete and to make the games more even. I am hoping to host the United States National Championships for the first time and to host big prize-money tournaments with international players taking part, of course with the help and approval of the United States Snooker Association. I did not open this academy as a business because there is no money to be made when you do not serve food or drinks. This is purely a passion of mine, and my next step is to invite children of different ages from nearby schools to play here for free. My overall goal is to grow the sport in the United States. I am sure that bigger snooker tournaments are coming to the United States soon.



Mike Collier Player Stats



Name - Mike Collier

Nickname - The Force

Lives - Sacramento,
California, United States

From - Brighton and Hove,
United Kingdom

Age - 33

Highest break - 136

Achievements

2019 Pan American
Championships quarter
finalist

Advertise here!

Contact
media@pabsa.org

Follow PABSA

Please follow us on our social media platforms for the latest news and updates.



@PABSAofficial



@PABSAofficial



@PABSAofficial



@PABSA



@PABSAofficial

Support PABSA



PABSA needs your help to continue to grow snooker and billiards in the Pan American region. To support our association and donate please follow the link below. Thank you for your continued support.

Donate here!

Women's and Juniors' Championships

The Pan American Billiards and Snooker Association is looking for players who would like to register their interest in playing in a PABSA Women's Championships and a PABSA Under-21 Juniors' Championships. PABSA is looking to hold both events in Costa Rica in the winter of 2021.

If you are interested in taking part in these events then please contact your national association, PABSA at media@pabsa.org or Chief Coordinator for Latin America, Junior Umana Alvarado at juniору@pabsa.org



Partners of The Pan American
Billiards and Snooker Association

