

一击而中

STROKE OF GENIUS

新西兰台球冠军Rocky Lane放下球杆26年后
卷土重来，即创下以14.16秒打进15球的跳
球世界记录，表现堪称空前绝后

New Zealand-born pool champ Rocky Lane
took a 26-year sabbatical from the game
before re-emerging stronger than ever – with
a jump-shot and table clearance world record
of 14.16 seconds that may never be topped



*Text by Venice Lau
Photography by Gary Mak*



重点在于保持世界记录，
而真正有热忱的台球手必
定会坐言起行

最初打斯诺克台球的ROCKY LANE绰号为「THE TECHNICIAN」和「机关枪」，1970年代初才转战花式台球。他是在其岳父，即新西兰1972年斯诺克冠军 Norm Stockmann 的薰陶下朝此运动发展。1976年赢得新西兰8球锦标赛冠军，1979年又在新西兰B级斯诺克大赛称冠。之后，他就高挂球杆转投警界，并到奥克兰大学修读法律系，最后成为检察官。

然而他从未放弃对台球梦想。在香港一家跨国公司总部担任首席法律顾问的他，2002年退休旋即参加一场业余赛事，并在香港外国记者会8球锦标赛获得亚军。之后又参加多场业余赛事，并于2005年一场电视直播赛事中，创下以14.16秒打进15球的跳球世界记录。2006年转为职业球手。

Lane同意受访时，提议到澳门氹仔 Bar 171 见面，他是该酒吧的专业台球手，经常挑对手，通宵达旦对打练习。「他们日间多事务繁忙，很难找到愿意和我打球至凌晨4时的业余球手。」Lane每星期练习三晚以保持最佳状态，对手都是能力相当的台球发烧友。「我的经理人Len Kerr密切留意我的表现，并为我做一份球技表现记录表。我每个月约打250至300局。」他笑了笑说：「不过我不把输局计算在内。表现得心应手时，一晚打37局，我可以赢35局。」

相隔多年重拾球杆绝非易事。相较于1970年代，当今职业花式台球比赛竞争更为激烈，规模也更大。「1976年我拿下冠军的那场全国赛中，只有32位球手参加。现在的竞逐球手有大约128人。」

Lane重回球坛即创下世界记录，不仅再次确立他在花式台球界的地位，在一次民意投票活动 >>

NICKNAMED "THE TECHNICIAN" AND TAGGED AROUND POOL HALLS AS "MACHINE GUN ROCK", Rocky Lane began his career as a snooker player before turning to billiards in the early '70s. He was inspired to take up snooker by his former father-in-law, the late Norm Stockman, the 1972 New Zealand snooker champion. Lane soon gave the country a glimpse of his own winning ways by becoming National New Zealand 8-Ball Champion in 1976. He then put his cue stick aside and followed a different path for nearly three decades, working as a police officer before attending law school and becoming a prosecutor.

Yet, his billiards dreams persisted and in 2002 he ended his quarter-century hiatus from the game by entering a tournament at the Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents' Club and finishing as the first runner-up. After retiring from his legal career three years later, competing in a series of amateur tournaments and setting a world record by jump-shooting and clearing the table in just 14.16 seconds on a live TV broadcast in October 2005, he turned pro and joined the World Circuit in 2006.

Upon agreeing to an interview, Lane suggests meeting at Bar 171 in Taipa, Macau, where he handpicks his practice

partners for games that typically last into the wee hours. "Amateur players typically have to hold down day jobs, too," he says. "Thus, it's hard to find amateur players to train with me till 4am." Lane stays sharp by racking 'em up about three nights a week against "serious" players capable of putting up a challenge. "My agent and manager Len Kerr closely monitors my performance and prepares a practice diary for me to follow. I do around 250 to 300 racks (games) a month." He adds with a grin: "But those are only the racks that I win. Usually on a good night, I play 37 racks and win around 35."

Lane's world-record performance not only re-established him as a force to be reckoned with in billiards circles, it earned him the title of New Zealand's most popular sportsman of the year in a public poll taken in early 2007. "It's not about setting a world record, it's more about keeping it," Lane says. "There was a player who attempted to break it but failed to gain recognition from the World Record Academy. He did 15 low-hurdle jump shots in less than 11 seconds but I did 15 higher-hurdle jump shots in under 15 seconds. The higher-hurdle record was recognised, but the lower one was not because jump shots must clear the height of a pool ball." >>

中，他更击败了首位登上珠穆朗玛峰的探险家希拉里爵士 (Edmund Hillary) 等体坛名人，获选为2007年度新西兰最受欢迎运动员。

「重点不在于缔造世界记录，而在于保持世界记录，」Lane说。「有一位球手尝试打破我的记录，但他的成绩不获世界记录学院承认。他在11秒内打出15个低杆跳球，我在15秒内打出15个高杆跳球。高杆跳球获得承认，低杆则不获承认，因为跳球高度必须能越过其他球体。」

但Lane指出，无论是职业或业余球手的最强劲敌，其实是时间。「时间永远不会停息，只会默默地流逝。岁月最不饶人。当今世上，杰出球手不少，但不是每位都以速度取胜。」他说道。

话虽如此，Lane依然展现宝刀未老的名将本色。现年62岁的他，比起参加巡回赛的一些年轻职业球手亦不遑多让。「年纪不是问题。台球有别于其他的运动，即使70岁也可以继续打台球，」他说道。

「『老虎』伍兹说过，一分耕耘，一分收获。虽然会更辛苦，但是我喜欢向难度挑战。」

近年，Lane周游列国，征战各项巡回赛，包括印尼之2010NTT9球锦标赛、大阪之2010及2011全日本9球锦标赛、在德国举行的欧洲10球公开赛及在美国上演的2011塞米诺尔巡回赛等。与此同时，他亦积极栽培优秀年轻球员。「对那些只想饮酒作乐和玩一两手的年轻人，我视之为热身对象，然后打发他走，」Lane说。「若有人要求我分享一些台球技术，我就会问他们是否愿意每星期来三天，每个月打足300局。一百个前来拜师学艺的年轻人当中，大概只有三位会接受我的要求。」

Lane对前来拜师学艺的年轻人要求甚高，对自己亦有同等要求。「所谓少说多做，对台球真正充满热忱的球手，必定会坐言起行，」他说。「最重要的是，必须具有无比的恒心和毅力，记取挫败失误的教训，尽管输多赢少，最终必定有望夺标称冠。」

Lane的冠军风范，风靡全球各地台球观众。当他移居澳门时，澳门航空公司立即与他达成合作协议，赞助他巡回比赛时所需之航班机位及物流支援。「不论赛事是否获得电视转播，我都非常乐意穿上绣有澳门航空标记的战衣，」他说。「合作造就我与澳门航空的双赢，同时亦对宣扬澳门方面，带来莫大裨益。每当接受电视访问时，我都爱说：『澳门航空，起飞。』」

Of course, as Lane is quick to point out, the world's greatest opponent is the clock. "Time never stops and things just keep ageing all around it," he says. "It never complains or calls foul and it's most unforgiving. There are excellent players out there, but not many can do it at speed." Be that as it may, time doesn't seem to be taking much of a toll on Lane. Even at age 62, he can still hold his own against much younger pros. "Age is not an obstacle to me because cue sportsmen, unlike other sportsmen, can play beyond their 70s."

Lane's globe-trotting lifestyle has seen him compete worldwide. Even so, he still finds time to nurture the next generation of elite players. Lane sets the bar high for those wishing to follow in his footsteps, though he holds himself to the same rigid standards. "Less talking and more chalking," is his motto. "A passionate player's actions speak for themselves," Lane says. "One must be willing to suffer many losses before the winning begins."

Lane's championship performances attract billiards fans worldwide, and upon moving to Macau, he promptly joined forces with Air Macau, which now provides transportation and logistical support when Lane tours the world. "Air Macau's logo is one that I'll proudly wear when competing

台球对对碰 SNOOKER VS POOL

斯诺克台球有15个红球、六个彩球（非红球）和一个白色母球。比赛规则是轮流交替将红球和彩球击入袋。红球入袋后不会放回球台，彩球则会放回球台上，直至球台上完全没有红球为止。最后将所有彩球依照顺序击入袋。

花式台球最流行8球、9球和10球打法。8球的比赛规则是首先击入所有属于己方的七个球（条纹球或全色球），然后才击入第8号球。9球打法则是使用1至9号球，球手不需依照球的号码顺序击入袋，但是每次出杆必须先击入球台上的最小号码球。首先击入9号球者获胜。10球打法与9球打法一样，不同的是加进了第10个球，令开球一击更难击球入袋，因而提高了比赛难度。

Snooker features 15 red balls, six (non-red) coloured balls and a cue ball. The object is to alternately sink red balls and, thereafter, coloured balls. Red balls stay in the pockets while coloured balls are returned to the table until all the reds are gone. The game finishes with the competitors trying to sink the colours in the correct order, the final ball being the black.

The most common pool games are 8-ball, 9-ball and 10-Ball. In 8-ball, a player must pocket all seven balls of his type (stripes or solids) before sinking the eight ball. The game of 9-ball uses the balls numbered one through to nine. The balls can be sunk in any order but the first ball struck every time must be the lowest-numbered ball on the table. The first player to sink the 9-ball, via a canon from his lowest numbered ball, even if other balls remain on the table, wins. The addition of an extra ball in 10-ball is thought to make the game more challenging than 9-ball, as it's harder to pocket balls on the break (opening) shot.

on and off TV," he says. "I see this as a win-win scenario as I benefit from it, Air Macau benefits and it also does a lot for Macau itself. As I keep saying in TV interviews, 'Call the shot now, Air Macau!'"



"LESS TALKING
AND MORE
CHALKING" IS
ROCKY'S MOTTO



Lane认为，与澳门航空达成协议，造就了双方和澳门的三赢

Of his sponsorship by Air Macau, Lane says it's a win-win scenario for him, the airline and Macau itself