

# 13 *Masses*



Willie Mosconi, who executed masse shots in all of his exhibitions, was a master of these shots. Mosconi performed one in the movie *The Hustler*, which is in this chapter. Viewers, of course, are supposed to believe that Fast Eddie played it. I had the honor of doing a few exhibitions with Mosconi before he passed away, and I also recreated the shots on a DVD for *The Hustler*.

I get many requests for masse shots, which are among the most beautiful and feared shots in pool. Masses are executed with the cue in a vertical or near vertical position. A sharp downward blow on the cue ball can produce feats of sheer magic. On a typical masse, the cue ball will start down the table away from the object ball, and then reverse course all by itself and return to knock in a pocket hanger.

Poolroom owners fear masse shots because there is always the chance that novices will rip the cloth when practicing them, and rightly so. Since the cue ball will be long gone before the tip hits the table, it might save some wear and tear (literally) if you place a small piece of cloth where the tip will be striking the cloth. When you have mastered the masse stroke,