Pankaj Advani wins his 29th world title – the WBL World Billiards Championship in England

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News

Bengaluru cueist Pankaj Advani (41) beat England's Robert Hall 1906–1206 in the final of the WBL World Billiards Championship (22 Oct 2026) at Landywood Snooker Club, Great Wyrley, near Birmingham, England. Trailing by more than 300 points in the five-hour final, he came back with a 587 break – the highest of the championship. It is his 29th world title (21 billiards + 8 snooker) and his first win in this event since 2014. He beat Sourav Kothari in the quarter-final and David Causier in the semi-final. India's Shruthi L retained the women's title.

Key facts

Event	WBL (World Billiards Ltd) World Billiards Championship 2026 – Landywood Snooker Club, Great Wyrley (near Birmingham), England
Final	22 Oct 2026 – beat Robert Hall (England) 1906–1206; top break 587
Tally	29 world titles = 21 billiards + 8 snooker
WBL	International body for English billiards, founded 2011; a subsidiary of WPBSA
Awards	Arjuna (2004), Khel Ratna (2006), Padma Shri (2009), Padma Bhushan (2018)

Next	IBSF World Snooker Championship, Indore, November – bid for 30th title

Background

- Pankaj Advani: born in Pune in 1985 and raised in Bengaluru (Karnataka). His first world title was the 2003 IBSF World Snooker Championship. In Nov 2024 at Doha (Qatar) he also beat Robert Hall in the IBSF World Billiards (150-up format) final.
- Bodies: IBSF (International Billiards & Snooker Federation) runs amateur world events; WPBSA governs the professional game, with WBL under it for English billiards. In India the national body is BSFI (Billiards and Snooker Federation of India).
- Billiards vs snooker: English billiards uses only three balls (two cue balls + one red). Snooker uses 22 balls – 15 reds (1 point each), 6 colours (yellow 2, green 3, brown 4, blue 5, pink 6, black 7) and one white cue ball.
- Indian history: Wilson Jones won the World Amateur Billiards title at Kolkata in 1958, becoming the first Indian world champion in any sport. Michael Ferreira and Geet Sethi are other world billiards champions.

Tamil Nadu link: Snooker grew among British Army officers in India in the 1870s (Jabalpur); Neville Chamberlain, who devised and popularised it, finalised its first set of rules at Ootacamund (Ooty), Nilgiris district, in 1882 – so Ooty is celebrated as the place where snooker's rules were born.

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