# MASSISLAND CORNHOLE ASSOCIATION

**OFFICIAL GAMEPLAY RULES & EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS**

## 1. LEAGUE OVERVIEW & SPIRIT OF THE GAME

**Mission Statement:** To foster community, sportsmanship, and healthy competition across all official MCAsanctioned events.

- **The events director will uphold the rules as they see fit.** This goes for behaivor, foul ruling, and bag specifications (if required).
- **Code of Conduct:** MCA strictly bans aggressive behavior, excessive heckling, and intentional distractions (such as shouting or taunting during an opponent's pitch).
- **Player Eligibility:** All players must satisfy division age requirements, residency rules governing the MCA state competition model, and official tournament roster lock dates.

## 2. COURT & EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

To ensure total fairness and uniform standards across all regional host sites, playing environments are standardized as follows:

- **Board Dimensions:** Official 2x4 foot boards with a 6-inch diameter hole centered 9 inches from the top edge. Boards are constructed from CNC-milled Baltic Birch with a smooth, UV-cured protective finish.
- **Pitching Distance:** Exactly **27 feet** measured from the front edge of one board to the front edge of the opposing board. Junior and Senior divisions compete at a reduced distance of **21 feet (if requested)**.
- **Bag Specifications:** Bags must be constructed from high-durability fabric filled with plastic resin pellets, weighing between **14.0 and 16.0 ounces**, and measuring **6x6 inches**. Players must use league-provided bags as specified per event.
- **Board & Bag Maintenance Rules:** Players are strictly forbidden from applying foreign substances (such as baby powder, resin, or silicon sprays) directly to boards. Bags may be wiped clean with a dry towel between innings, but no external liquids or substances may be applied at any time during match play.

## 3. GAMEPLAY & SCORING MECHANICS

- **Match Format:** Matches are conducted as single games, best-of-three series, or time-capped games depending on the specific event framework designated by the Tournament Director.
- **Value of Points:**
  - **3 Points (Cornhole):** Awarded for any bag pitched through the board hole.
  - **1 Point (Woody):** Awarded for any bag coming to rest entirely on the surface of the board.
- **Cancellation Scoring:** Standard net cancellation scoring applies per inning. For example, if Team A scores 5 total points and Team B scores 3 total points in an inning, Team A is awarded 2 net points toward their match total.
- **Winning Threshold:** The first player/team to reach or exceed **21 points** at the conclusion of an inning wins the match. MCA does not enforce a "bust" rule (going over 21 points does not reset the score). Skunk rules (e.g., 7-0 or 11-0) may be enforced where specified.

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## 4. PITCHING RULES & FOOT FAULTS

- **The Pitcher's Box:** A designated 3x4 foot rectangular area located directly adjacent to either side of the board. Pitchers must remain completely inside this box while delivering a bag.
- **Foot Faults:** A player's foot must not step past or contact the front lead edge of the board or cross the boundaries of the pitcher's box prior to releasing the bag.
- **Delivery Penalty:** Any bag released during a foot fault is deemed a foul bag. It must be immediately removed from the board before play continues and scores **0 points** for that inning.
- **Pitching Order:** The team or player that scored net points in the previous inning earns the honors and pitches first in the subsequent inning. If no points were scored, the pitching order remains unchanged.

## 5. FOUL BAGS & DISRUPTIONS

- **Ground Bags:** Any bag that makes contact with the ground or floor prior to coming to rest on the board is a foul bag and must be removed from the court prior to the next pitch.
- **Sweepers:** If a ground bag contacts or displaces a live, scoring bag on the board, the displaced live bag is returned as close as possible to its original position prior to the collision.
- **Accidental Touch Protocol:** If a player accidentally touches, kicks, or distorts bags resting on the board before both parties officially agree on the scoring count, the non-offending team receives the full benefit of any disputed points.

## 6. TOURNAMENT & SUBSTITUTION POLICIES

- **Late Arrivals:** A strict 10-minute grace period from the scheduled match call time is granted before a match is declared an official forfeit.
- **Substitutions:** Registered substitute players are permitted provided they are officially submitted on the league roster prior to game time and meet all classification limits.
- **Tie-Breakers:** Bracket seeding tie-breakers are determined sequentially by: (1) Head-to-Head Record, (2) Total Points Differential, and (3) Fewest Total Points Allowed.

## 7. PROFESSIONAL MATCH PLAY & OFFICIATING

- **The 20-Second Pitch Clock:** Once a player takes clear possession of the board or an opponent's bag comes to a complete rest, the player has 20 seconds to pitch. The first infraction results in an official warning; subsequent infractions result in bag forfeiture (0 points).
- **Warm-Up Restrictions:** Prior to match start, players are allowed exactly 1 warm-up round (4 bags down, 4 bags back). Extended practice on active tournament courts is strictly prohibited once events commence.
- **Consecutive Play:** In doubles competition, partners must remain at their designated lane end for the entirety of the game and cannot switch sides mid-game.
- **Proximity Calls (The "Hanger" Rule):** If a bag is suspended over the hole edge or board border, players must wait 5 seconds after it stops moving before touching the board. If it falls in naturally within 5 seconds, it scores 3 points; otherwise, it is visually verified and scored as it rests.
- **Camera & Official Review Protocol:** When bag placement or ground touch status ("dirty bag") is disputed, players must halt play and call a Certified Court Official (director). Moving any bags prior to the official ruling results in an immediate forfeiture of that inning.
- **Statistical Tracking:** Standard competitive metrics, including Points Per Round (PPR) and Differential Per Round (DPR), are officially recorded to feed player season rankings and division standing calculations.