

RINGER: THE RULES OF THE TOURNAMENT

I. THE EQUIPMENT

A. MARBLES - Marbles are the playing pieces. There are two distinct types of marbles.

1. THE SHOOTER - Each player has his or her own shooter, which should be distinctively different from all other marbles in the game.

a. MATERIAL - The shooter can be either manufactured out of glass or ground out of stone, e.g. agate, flint. They cannot be made out of any metal.

b. SIZE - The shooter shall be not more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter and not less than $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter. All contestants' shooters should be checked for size prior to the beginning of the tournament.

c. CHANGING SHOOTERS - The players may change shooters only at the beginning of a game. The shooter used during the lag (see II.C) must be the same shooter used during the rest of the game. The penalty for changing the shooter during the game will be forfeiture of all the marbles knocked out in that turn.

2. TARGET MARBLES - These 13 standard marbles are all identical to each other

a. MATERIAL - Target marbles shall be manufactured out of glass.

b. SIZE - The target marbles used shall be standard $\frac{5}{8}$ " marbles.

3. BROKEN MARBLES - What to do when a marble breaks during the game:

a. SHOOTERS - The player may exchange one shooter for another when it breaks. If the largest broken piece lands inside the ring the player may continue by replacing that piece with a new shooter. If the largest piece lands outside the ring then, at the beginning of his next turn, the player may use a new shooter. The player is credited with all points received during that turn but may not continue the turn.

b. TARGET MARBLES - If the target marble breaks, the largest piece will determine where the target marble actually stopped. (see II.D.9)

B. THE RING - This is the playing board.

1. MATERIAL - The Ring shall be made of concrete with a wood border.

2. SIZE - The Ring shall be 12 foot square with a border extending above the playing surface approximately one to two inches. Centered on the square surface will be painted a ten foot diameter circle. There will be a mark to indicate the center of the circle. The pitch and lag lines will be marked on this surface (see I.C.1)

II. THE GAME

A. SWEEPING THE RING -At the beginning of any game the players may request the referee to sweep the ring free of debris. The players may also ask the referee to clear any debris from their line of shot during the game.

B. SETUP - The 13 target marbles are placed in the middle of the ring and in the shape of an 'X', one target marble in the middle with three on each leg spaced three inches apart. A template called a RACK will be used to keep the pattern uniform. The player who shoots first may place the marbles at the angle of his or her choice.

C. LAGGING - A lag is when the players toss their shooters: whoever is closer to the lag line is the winner. This process is used to determine who shoots first for a particular game or set of games and may be used to determine a winner in the case of a tie. There may be a practice lag if either player wishes.

1. THE LAG LINE - Two lines will be painted on opposite sides of the ring, tangent to the circle and parallel with a border.

2. TARGET MARBLES - The target marbles shall be in their starting position inside the rack (see II.B).

3. STANCE - The players may either stand or kneel on the ring at the edge of the circle furthest from the lag line and he or she must have at least one foot touching the wood border.

4. PROJECTING THE MARBLE - The players release their shooters towards the lag line at the same time. They may do this by either shooting, lobbing underhand, or rolling their shooter. If there is a noticeable difference in the release time between the two shooters, the referee may disqualify the second player since that player may have waited to see how the first player's shooter fared.

5. DISQUALIFICATION - In addition to not following the above rules, a player is disqualified if his or her shooter hits the rack or the wood border or if the shooter is cupped during the lag. If both players are disqualified they will perform the lag again.

D. SHOOTING - Shooting is when a player releases his or her shooter at a target marble.

1. POSITION OF PLAYERS - There are two players in the game, the shooting player (the player whose turn it is) and the non-shooting player. At no time may either player leave the shooting area nor may he or she walk through the ring except the shooting player who may walk into the ring to retrieve the shooter. The players may not leave the ring except to get into position for a shot or to retrieve a marble. Penalty will be forfeiture of one point. Neither player may walk through the ring to retrieve his or her shooter or that of the opponent or for any other reason. The shooting player may enter the ring only for a continuation of his turn (see II.D.10). The first offense will be a warning; the second offense and all others will be the forfeiture of one point.

a. THE SHOOTING PLAYER - This player must stay outside the ring in a crouched or kneeling position (exception – see II.D.10) to begin his or her turn. The player may be kneeling on one or both knees.

b. THE NON-SHOOTING PLAYER - This player must stay out of the way. He or she may not walk around or in any way distract the shooting player while the shooting player is preparing to shoot. If the shooting player feels that the non-shooting player is being a distraction he or she may inform the referee who will then ask the non-shooting player to stop.

2. POSITION OF HANDS - The player's shooting hand must stay outside the ring with a minimum of one knuckle touching the playing surface. A knuckle is either or both of the first two joints on any number of the fingers on the player's shooting hand. The player's non-shooting hand may be within the circle. If, at the time of release, the referee determines that the shooting hand was not correct the player will forfeit his or her shot.

3. POSITION OF MARBLE - The shooter must be positioned in the hand between the thumb and

one or more fingers in such a way that, at the moment of releasing the shooter, it is not above or inside the circle. If, at the time of release, the referee determines that the position of the marble was not correct the player will forfeit his shot.

4. PRACTICE SHOTS - The shooting player may make up to two practice shots during the initial shot of each inning. These shots must be performed completely outside of the ring. If at any time his or her shooter enters the ring it will be considered a shot.

5. DROPPING THE MARBLE (SLIPS) - If the shooter slips from the player's fingers after the shooting hand has touched the ring, and the shooter has traveled more than ten inches the player's turn is then over. If his or her hand is not touching the ring or the shooter has not moved more than ten inches then the player may attempt another shot. The shooting player may not pick up the shooter to stop it from moving ten inches. If he or she does so it will be considered to have moved more than ten inches and the shot will be forfeit.

6. HUNCHING - Hunching is when, during the release of the shooter, the player's hand moves in a forward position to help propel his or her shooter. The penalty is forfeiture of the shot.

7. MARBLES HITTING THE PLAYER - If, after taking a shot, the shooter hits the player whose turn it is, then that player's turn has ended. The player may keep any target marbles knocked out during that shot but the turn passes on to the other player. If a target marble hits the shooting player then that target marble is placed back where it was before being hit. Any other target marbles knocked out of the ring on this shot will be credited to the player but the turn is ended.

8. WRONG SHOOTER - If the shooting player shoots with another shooter, an opponent's shooter, a target marble, or anything other than what he or she started the game with, the turn is then forfeited. Any target marbles that were knocked out that turn must be returned to their previous places before he shot them. If that spot cannot be found to the satisfaction of the referee then they are returned to the center of the ring.

9. SCORING A POINT - After the player has released the shooter it may hit one or more target marbles. If any of these marbles at any point travels outside the circle then the player will be awarded one point per marble that has left the circle.

10. CONTINUING A TURN - If the player has knocked out any target marbles and on the same shot his or her shooter has not left the circle then the player may continue the turn. If the player's shooter rolls outside the circle then points are awarded in accordance to II.D.9 but the turn ends. Before continuing, all marbles (target marbles and shooter) must come to a complete stop. When taking the shot the player must be in or above the spot where it came to rest. If the player picks up a moving or spinning shooter that player forfeits the remainder of his or her turn.

11. MISSING A TARGET MARBLE - If the player fails to knock at least one target marble out of the circle then that player's turn is over and the next player's turn begins.

12. ON THE LINE - If a marble has stopped on the circle line then a decision must be made as to whether it is outside or inside the circle. The referee will decide this by observing the position of the marble in question. If it is more than half is out of the circle it will be declared out; if more than half of the marble is in then it will be declared in. If it is resting directly on the line so that no determination can be made then it shall be considered in the favor of the shooting player, i.e. if it is a target marble it is out, and if it is the shooter it will be considered in.

13. A STICK - If the shooting player knocks out seven or more marbles in the first inning then he or she is determined the winner. This is called a 'stick'.

14. WIND RULE - If, during a shot and before all marbles come to a complete stop, any marble is set in motion by the player's shot can be blown about the ring by the wind. Target marbles blown

out of the ring are credited to that player. Any marbles not set in motion by the shot but moved by the wind must be returned to the original spot. If the original spot is not known the marble should be returned to the center of the ring.

15. CUPPING RULE - Cupping is when a player protect his or her shooter from being moved about by the wind. Placing hands or kneepads around the marble can protect the shooter. The shooter may not touch the hands (or kneepads) or the turn is over. To verify that the marble has not touched, an opening must be maintained at all times for the referee to view the shooter. Target marbles may never be cupped. Penalty for cupping a target marble is that the target marble must returned to the center of the ring and the forfeiture of the continuation of the shooting players turn. The shooter may never be cupped during the lag.

16. HELPING THE PLAYERS - No player may receive help during the game. Coaches are asked to meet with their players before and/or after each game to offer advice. Coaching a player while a game is in progress is not permitted. People should remain silent during the game except for words of encouragement. The penalty for breaking this rule is: first offense – warning, second offense - expulsion of the person giving advice from the playing area.

17. RETRIEVING MARBLES - After completing their turns, players must pick up their shooters and may pick up any target marbles knocked out of the ring. To avoid accidentally kicking marbles, players must walk around the ring and not through it. The penalty for breaking this rule is: first offense – warning. If after a warning the player walks through again and kicks a marble the referee may impose a penalty of a forfeiture of one point.

18. FORFEITURE OF POINTS - Whenever there is a forfeiture of points one marble per point must be returned to the ring. Whenever marbles are returned to the ring it is placed in the center spot of the ring. If this spot already has a marble in it then the referee must place the marble as close to the center as possible. If there is a forfeiture of points and the offending player does not have any points scored then that player must forfeit his or her next turn.

E. INNINGS - An inning is when both players have shot once from the edge of the ring.

1. HOW MANY - There are six innings in a game. If in the seventh inning there is a tie score the game will continue for up to two more innings. The tie-breaking inning must be completed. If there is still a tie score then both players must lag and the winner of the lag will determine the winner of the game (see II.C).

2.FINALS -There is no limit to the number of innings per game during the finals. Each game is over when a player knocks out seven target marbles.

3.SPEED UP RULES - Due to the large number of participants the National Marbles Committee may decide to shorten the number of innings per game to cut down the length of time the tournament lasts.

F. WINNING - A player wins the game by shooting out the most marbles before the last inning is over. The player may also shoot out a total of seven marbles throughout the game and be determined the winner.

III. MISCELLANEOUS

A. ELIGIBILITY - Players are considered eligible if they win first place in a marble tournament that is recognized by the National Marbles Tournament Committee. A player must be no younger than 7 and have not reached their fifteenth birthday by June 10th of the year of the tournament.

B. CONDUCT - Each player is a champion and represents his or her city, county, or state. Good sportsmanship should be maintained throughout the tournament. Penalties will include, but are

not limited to, reprimand, forfeiture of points, forfeiture of game, or expulsion from the tournament. These rules will be enforced by the referees and the National Marbles Tournament Executive Committee.

C. THE REFEREE - The referee's decision is final on all rules during the game.

D. RULE CHANGES AND INTERPRETATIONS - The National Marbles Tournament Committee is the final arbiter on the interpretation of all rules and may change or amend these rules at its discretion.