



Official Cornhole Rules

Special Olympics
Tennessee



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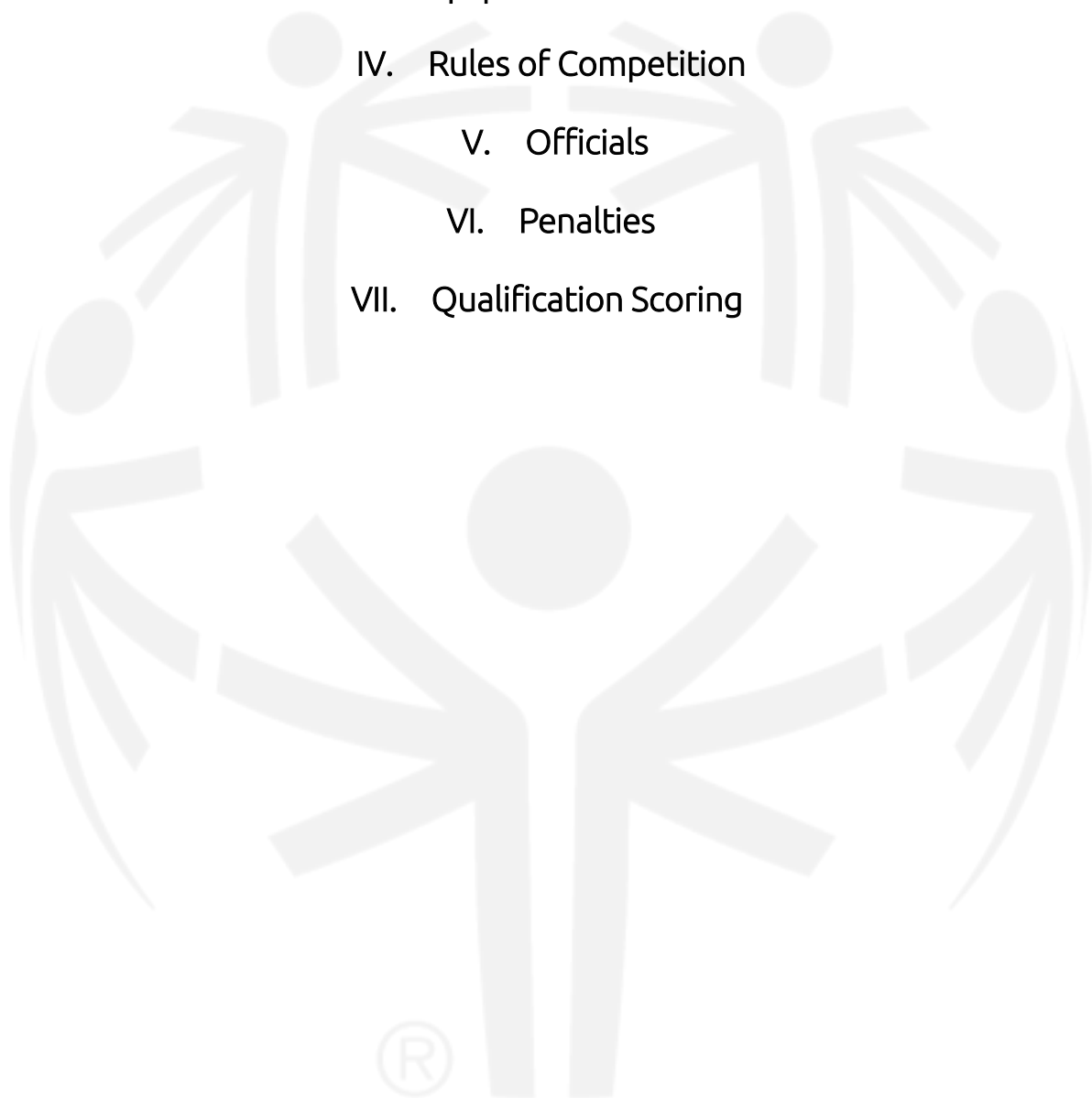
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I. Official Events

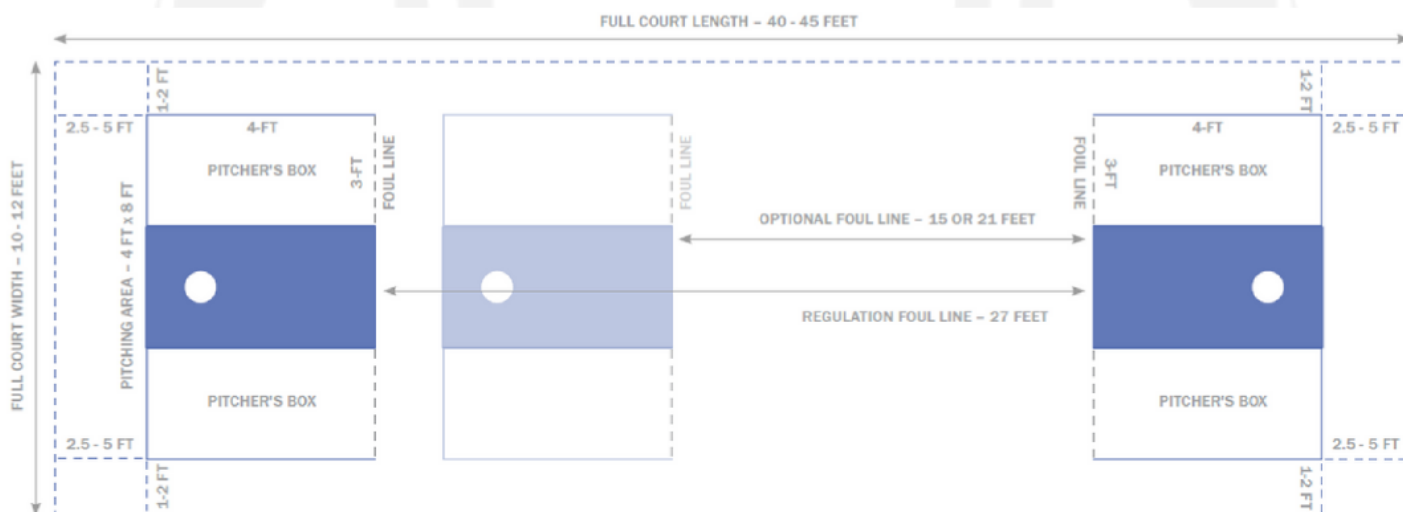
A. Special Olympics Tennessee Cornhole is offered in the following formats:

- a. Level 1 Doubles
 - i. 21-foot court
 - ii. Traditional and Unified
- b. Level 2 Doubles
 - i. 27-foot court
 - ii. Traditional and Unified

II. The Court

A. The Court

- a. A cornhole court shall be a level rectangular area 10-12 feet wide and a minimum of 40-45 feet long.
- b. The court consists of two cornhole boards, designated pitcher's boxes, and foul lines. A vertical clearance of 12 feet is strongly recommended.
 - i. The pitcher's box is a rectangle 4 feet by 3 feet at each end of the court, parallel with, and on both sides of the boards. Each player must remain in the pitcher's box while pitching the cornhole bag.
 - ii. The foul lines are imaginary lines parallel to the front of each cornhole board.
- c. There should be at least 5 feet between cornhole courts.



III. Equipment & Uniforms

A. Cornhole Boards

- a. Each cornhole board shall be 47½-48 inches in length and 23½-24 inches wide, made of smooth plywood that measures at least ½ inch in thickness.
- b. The hole in the board shall be 6 inches in diameter. Its center shall be 9 inches from the top and 12 inches from each side of the board edges.
- c. The front of the board shall be 3-4 inches from bottom to top.
- d. The back of the board shall be approximately 12 inches from the ground to the highest point of the deck.
- e. The board finish shall be sanded to a smooth texture, and there shall not be any blemishes on the wood surface that might disrupt or distort play.
- f. Application of any non-permanent substances onto boards is strictly prohibited.

B. Cornhole Bags

- a. The cornhole bags shall be made from two fabric squares 6¼ by 6¼ inches with a ¼ inch stitched seam on all four sides. When finished, the bags should be roughly 6 inches square.
- b. Bags should be made from durable fabric.
- c. The thickness of the bag when lying flat should be approximately 1 inch thick.
- d. Each bag shall be filled with plastic pellets or corn feed and finished bags should weigh 14-16.25 ounces.
- e. All bags in a set of four shall be identical in color, design, or pattern.
- f. A player may not switch bags during gameplay unless a bag is damaged or broken during a game.
 - i. In the case of a broken bag, an identical or equivalent set of 4 bags may be substituted.

C. Uniforms

- a. Uniform tops must match for all team members.
- b. All players must be in athletic shorts/pants. No jeans allowed.
- c. Players must wear flat gym, court, or tennis shoes. Bare feet, boots, open-toed shoes, spiked shoes, or soft top shoes are not permitted.
- d. No advertising or sponsorship is allowed to be worn on competition uniforms or warmup jerseys.

IV. Rules of Competition

A. Pre-Game Coin Toss

- a. Prior to the start of the game, a coin toss determines playing lanes and sequence of play.
 - i. The court official will conduct the coin toss.
- b. The team that wins chooses either their throwing lane or the throwing order.
 - i. The team that did not win the toss chooses the remaining option.

B. Doubles Cornhole Play

- a. Players line up directly across from their playing partner, in the same lane.
 - i. In Unified format, partners and athletes should be aligned at opposite boards. In this setup, partners toss against partners and athletes toss against athletes.
- b. Each team stays in their designated lane for the whole game.
- c. Players, from the pitcher's box, alternate pitching cornhole bags until each player has pitched their four bags.
- d. An inning is complete when both players, pitching from one board, pitch all 8 bags (4 each).
- e. Officials take note of each inning score, and the players at the other cornhole board resume pitching back to the other board.

- f. All players who are not pitching bags should be behind the board, outside of the pitcher's box.

C. Scoring

- a. In cancellation scoring, the points of one player cancel out the points of their opponent. Using this method, only one team can score in each inning.
- b. Bag-In-The-Count (Woody): Any bag which comes to rest anywhere on top of the board. Each is worth one (1) point.
- c. Bag-In-The-Hole (Cornhole): Any bag which is thrown through the hole or knocked through the hole. Each is worth three (3) points.
- d. Foul Bags: Refers to any bag that was designated a foul bag because of a rule violation. Each is worth zero (0) points.
- e. The game shall be played to 21 points. The first team to reach, or exceed, that amount at the conclusion of an inning is the winner.

D. Pitching

- a. The team who scored in the preceding inning pitches first in the next inning. If neither team scores, the team who pitched first in the preceding inning shall retain first pitch in the next inning.
- b. A player must pitch all 4 bags from their designated pitcher's box.
- c. Players must pitch the bag with an underhand release.
- d. A player may not step over or contact the foul line during their pitching or release of a cornhole bag.
- e. A player must wait until the previous bag has come to a complete stop for at least 2 seconds before pitching the next bag.
- f. Players may not jump, blow, kick, or otherwise do anything that may affect the cornhole board or position of the cornhole bags during an inning.
- g. Touching, adjusting, or aligning the cornhole board during an inning is prohibited. Court officials may align the cornhole board between innings at the request of a player.

E. Game Clock

- a. The event committee/tournament director shall determine the game length; traditionally 30-minute games.
- b. When it's their turn, each player has a 20-second time limit to pitch their bag.

F. Overtime

- a. If neither team has reached 21 points before time expires, they must finish the inning they are currently playing.
- b. If the score is tied at the end of that inning, a Sudden Death bag is played.
 - i. In Sudden Death, the last inning winner pitches a single bag. The opponent then pitches one bag, attempting to match or beat the first player's pitch.
 - ii. Whichever player scored more points from the Sudden Death bag is considered the winner of the game (one (1) point is added to their score).
 - iii. If after the first Sudden Death round the score is still tied, the players on the other board now toss Sudden Death bags per the process above.
 - iv. Sudden Death bags continue until a team wins.

G. Forfeiture

- a. Teams with less than the prescribed number of players before the game begins must forfeit the game.
- b. Teams not at their assigned court by gametime are given a 5-minute grace period before an automatic forfeit.
- c. The score of a forfeited game shall be 21-0.

H. Timeouts

- a. Each team is permitted one (1) two-minute timeout per game. It must be the team calling timeouts turn to pitch. The game clock stops during timeouts.

I. Coaches Expectations

- a. Discussion with any athlete and/or partner by a coach or spectator is prohibited once the athlete or partner steps onto the court at the start of the game, except during a timeout.
- b. Coaches must remain outside of the cornhole court boundaries during gameplay, except during a timeout.
- c. If an official determines a coach is strategically communicating with a player, they may sanction the individual or the team they coach. Sanctions may include a verbal warning, citation of unsportsmanlike conduct, or expulsion from the game.
- d. Coaches are expected to adhere to Special Olympics rules and philosophies, coach's guidelines, and codes of conduct at all times.
- e. Coaches are given one conduct warning before dismissal from competition. Dismissal results in suspension from the remainder of the Games, and a review by Special Olympics Tennessee for further disciplinary action.

V. Officials

- A. Each court should have one assigned court official. Officials should be clearly distinguishable from players.
- B. No member of a team, or coach, will be allowed to assist in the officiating of a game in which their team is playing.
- C. Officials are the official scorekeepers of the competition; scores reported by them are final and not subject to review.

VI. Penalties

- A. **The following fouls result in a dead bag, and any combination of three of these fouls per team ends the game immediately in favor of the non-offending team (a dead bag is worth zero points and should be removed from the board immediately):**
 - a. Any bag pitched when a player has made contact with or crossed over the foul line.
 - b. Any bag pitched when a player has stepped outside of the pitcher's box before the bag is released.
 - c. Any bag not delivered within the 20-second time limit.
 - d. Any bag pitched from a different pitcher's box than the first bag.
 - e. Any bag not pitched with an underhand release.
- B. **The following fouls result in a dead bag and no foul count (a dead bag is worth zero points and should be removed from the board immediately):**
 - a. Any bag that contacted the ground before coming to rest on the board.
 - b. Any bag that is dropped during the swing of the bag delivery.
 - c. Any touching, adjusting, or aligning the cornhole board during an inning.
- C. **The following foul results in the non-offending team receiving three (3) points per offense:**
 - a. A player touching, altering, or moving bags on the board before the scoring has been agreed upon for the inning.

VII. Qualification Scoring

- A. **Qualification scores must be turned in for State level competitions.**
 - a. Each player gets eight (8) pitches, four from the left pitcher's box and four from the right pitcher's box.
 - b. The scoring is as follows:
 - i. 0 points: Bag does not come into contact with the cornhole board.
 - ii. 0.5 points: Bag hits the board but does not stay on the board.
 - iii. 1 point: Bag lands and stays on the board.
 - iv. 3 points: Bag goes into the hole.
 - c. A team/doubles qualification score is the average of all team member scores.