

# Losing Your Marbles?

## Or Playing for Keepsies?

by Jeff Loder

**T**oys! Regardless of how old we are, toys always capture our interest. Often, it is the simplest of toys that amuse us the most. There's nothing simpler than a marble. The 4<sup>th</sup> Orleans Dragon Troop re-discovered marbles in a weekly meeting centered on this toy that has been around for over a millennium. If meeting planning has you losing your marbles, try this JUMPSTART style meeting already planned out for you.

This meeting is best conducted outdoors, preferably in a playground with open dirt or hard sand. If that is unattainable, a hard floor works just fine, but be prepared to chase marbles. If the meeting is run indoors, provide a pie plate with packed sand for the Patrol Pyramid Challenge. It's impossible on a smooth floor.

A quick trip to a Dollar Store provided two bags of marbles per patrol. This was plenty to run the meeting with the Scouts sharing.

The biggest challenge for the Scouts was the use of chopsticks in the first game. The few Scouts who were capable had little difficulty with the game, while those not used to them had marbles rolling everywhere, but none between the chopsticks!

Like many other games and toys of the past, marbles have seen many resurgences in popularity. By trying them out at a meeting, you may just be responsible for starting another.

### GATHERING ACTIVITY (15 mins.)

#### Lagging

Lagging is used to decide who goes first when playing a game of marbles. Draw a line in the sand. Then stand back about three metres and throw a marble underhand. The Scout whose marble is closest to the line without going past, goes first. The remaining order is determined by the next closest and so on.

### OPENING CEREMONY (10 mins.)

In accordance with the Scout Leaders Handbook.

### GAME (15 mins)

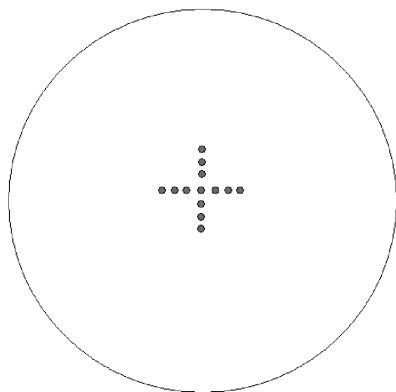
#### Chopstick Marble Relay

*Equipment:* two bowls, two chopsticks or pencils and marbles for each patrol. Put the marbles in one of the two bowls.

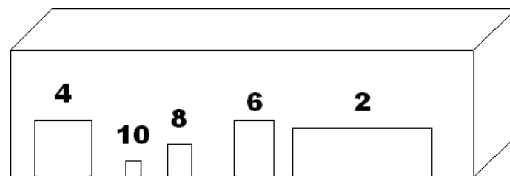
#### Method:

Patrols run up one at a time and using the chopsticks, transfer one marble from one bowl to another. For a greater challenge, have them carry the marble up and drop it into the bowl using only chopsticks.

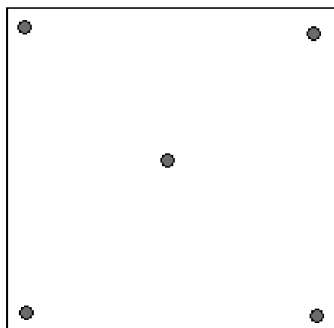
### Ringer



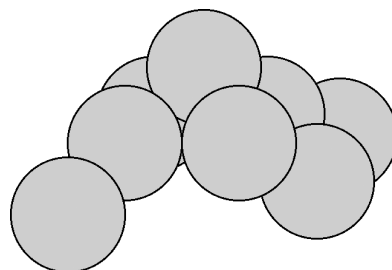
### Marble Arch



### Old Bowler



### Pyramid Building



## SKILLS (15 mins.)

### How to Shoot a Marble

See the following link: [http://akronmarbles.com/players/how\\_to\\_shoot\\_a\\_marble.htm](http://akronmarbles.com/players/how_to_shoot_a_marble.htm)

## GAMES (60 mins. round robin style — 15 mins. each)

### Ringer

**Equipment:** a circle 3.5 metres across with thirteen marbles placed in a cross 7.6 cm (three inches) apart as shown in the diagram.

#### Method:

Each Scout shoots from anywhere outside the circle, trying to hit a marble out of the ring (in tournaments you must knuckle down). If the Scout misses or doesn't knock another marble out of the circle, then the turn is over and he picks up his shooter. If he hits one out of the circle and the shooter rolls out too, then he picks up the marble knocked out and the shooter. If a marble is knocked out of the circle but the shooter stays in, the Scout goes again but he has to shoot from where the shooter stopped. When starting their turn, Scouts can start from anywhere outside the circle. The Scout with the most marbles wins.

Photo: Jeff Loder



### Dropsies

**Equipment:** a one metre square and five marbles per Scout.

#### Method:

Each Scout puts five marbles in the square. With both feet behind one sideline, Scouts take turns dropping their shooters into the square trying to knock a marble out of the square. If a Scout hits a marble out and the shooter rolls out too then he goes again. If the shooter stays in the square he picks up any marbles knocked out and the shooter and his turn is over. When there are no marbles left in the square, the Scout with the most marbles wins.

### Old Bowler

**Equipment:** a one metre square and five marbles.

#### Method:

Draw the square. Place a marble in each corner and in the centre as shown by the diagram. The marble in the centre is known as the Old Bowler. Draw a taw line (shooting line) outside the square at any given distance (try 2m). All shots are taken from the taw line.

Scouts take turns standing behind the taw line and shooting the marbles out of the corners, trying to hit them out of the square. All four corner marbles must be hit out before the Scouts can shoot at the Old Bowler. During a turn, Scouts continue shooting until they miss hitting a marble.

If a Scout hits the Old Bowler before the other four are out of the square, then he is out of the game. If a Scout hits a marble out of the square, he keeps it. If the shooter misses all marbles and the shooter stays inside the square, then the shooter stays there (the Scout gets another) and it becomes another target before the Old

Bowler can be knocked out. The game ends when the Scout knocks the Old Bowler out of the square. The Scout with the most marbles wins.

### Marble Arch

**Equipment:** cut holes in a shoe box as shown. Smaller holes should have a higher score than the larger holes.

#### Method:

Draw a taw line 1 to 2 metres from the Marble Arch. Scouts take turns shooting marbles through one of the holes from the taw line. Marbles are collected after each shot. Keep track and add up the score for each Scout based on the hole's number. The first Scout reaching 50 (or any score you set), wins.

## PATROL CHALLENGE (10 mins.)

### Pyramid Building

Patrols are to pile marbles in as large a pyramid as possible. Scouts take turns piling a marble similar to building a house of cards.

## CLOSING CEREMONY (10 mins.)

In accordance with the Scout Leaders Handbook. X

— Jeff Loder is with the 4<sup>th</sup> Orleans Scout Troop. He has previously written two articles for the Leader Magazine - May 2007 and January 2008. We look forward to many more interesting activities in the future.

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