



# MANCALA TOURNAMENT



A JOURNEY INTO AFRICA : FLORIDA CHAUTAUQUA ASSEMBLY 2009

## INTRODUCTION TO RULES

**Oware** is a Mancala game of strategy and skill that has long been played in Africa, and is popular for tournament play around the world. The rules are simple and most people, even children, can pick them up in five minutes. It is a game for two players. The board has twelve, hollowed-out holes in two rows called 'houses'. The players sit facing each other and each player owns the row of six houses nearest to them. The pieces are all alike and are called 'seeds'. There are 48 seeds. Players place the seeds they capture into the larger oval pits on their right side of the board or into other containers called 'store houses.' The object of the game is to capture as many seeds as possible.

Each round will be about Fifteen Minutes. During that time, players will need to find their assigned opponents, secure a board, and play a scored round and turn in their individual score sheets. After turning in your score sheet, Players may continue to play as boards are available, but results of that extra play will not be taken into consideration for scoring the tournament.

## HOW TO PLAY: SOWING

1. Distribute the 48 seeds evenly in the 12 houses - four to a house — each player should have 24 to begin with.
2. The first-named player plays first. Players take turns in playing and each must make a move on each turn. In the Final Tournament, any player who touches or moves any of the seeds in a playing pit or house on his own side of the board must sow them.
3. To make a move, Pick up all the seeds in a house in your own row and move anti-clockwise around the board dropping the seeds, one at a time, in each house that you pass over until all the seeds are used up. Where 12 or more seeds are sown on a turn, the original house is skipped, and play continues on the next house.
4. A player must sow, if possible, to allow his opponent to continue to play. If he can, but fails to do so, he forfeits all seeds remaining in play. But if the opponent's move has left that side without seeds, and it is not possible for the player to sow into that opponent's side, then the game ends with the player capturing the seeds remaining on his side.

## HOW TO CAPTURE A PIECE

1. You can only capture the seed on your opponent's side. If the last seed you sow lands in one of your opponent's houses with only one or two seeds already in it (making it two or three seeds in total), you can then make a capture and put your opponent's and your capturing seeds in your Store house. If the previous-to-last seed also brought an opponent's house to two or three, these are captured as well, and so on.
2. Capturing is not compulsory but all captured seeds must be removed from play to the store house.
3. If a move is made that would leave the opponent without seeds, no seeds are captured.

## HOW THE GAME ENDS

A game ends when any of the following circumstances have occurred:

1. One player has captured 25 or more seeds and both players agree to stop. Each player takes any remaining seeds in his pits.
2. Both players have captured 24 seeds (draw);
3. A player is unable to continue play, and his opponent is unable to feed him more seed. (See the sowing rule 4 above)
4. An impasse is reached in which neither player can affect another capture, as when two or three pieces are endlessly chasing each other around the board. Both players must agree to stop play, and will split the seeds left evenly, with the player having the most seeds on his side keeping the odd one.

\* At the end of play, the **Score Sheets must be completed.** Please record on each player's Score sheet whether their game was won, drawn, or lost; the number of pieces taken each by the winner and by the loser; and have the sheets initialed by both players. Hand it promptly to the Tournament controller for tabulation of Scores and assignments for the next round.