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INTERNATIONAL MOOTBALL AUTHORITY

# The Laws of Mootball

*Authorised Edition · Version 4.1*

*As ratified by the IMA Grand Council  
Athena's Owl University · Atlas Campus*

*"The game begins."*

— PRESIDENT O. WELLES, AT THE FIRST IMA RATIFICATION CEREMONY


PLATE I

The Mootball — Mark IV · Dodecahedral Argument Engine

### MOOTBALL — MARK IV


#### DODECAHEDRAL ARGUMENT ENGINE

IMA Regulation Object · Law IV Specification  
Active Play Configuration



INTERNATIONAL MOOTBALL AUTHORITY  
RATIFIED UNDER THE GRAND CHARTER

OBJECT CLASS: SPORTING + COGNITIVE DEVICE  
MANUFACTURE: IMA STANDARD WORKS  
REVISION: 4.0.1 — ACTIVE PLAY  
STATUS: AUTHORIZED FOR CONTINUOUS PLAY



Ø 22.0 cm  
FACE TO FACE

Ø 68.0 cm  
CIRCUMFERENCE

24.6 cm  
VERTEX TO VERTEX

MATERIAL SPECIFICATION		
ID	MATERIAL	QTY
A	EXOSHELL PANELS Carbon-Titanium Weave Impact Grade CT-7	12
B	STRUCTURAL RINGS Forged Aluminium-Lithium Anodised	30
C	POWER COILS Copper Litz Multi-strand Polymer Encased	12
D	PROCESSING CORE Silicon Photonic Stack Graphene Heat Matrix	1
E	SENSOR NODES Flex PCB + Haptic Emitters IPX7 Nano-Sealed	60
F	BALLAST LAYER Tungsten Micro-weights Dynamic Balance Control	120
G	FASTENERS Shear-lock Titanium security Grade	180

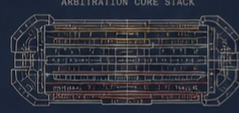
BILL OF MATERIALS (QTY)		
Exoshell Panels	12	
Structural Rings	30	
Power Coils	12	
Processing Core	01	
Sensor Nodes	60	
Ballast Weights	120	
Fasteners	180	
<b>Total Components</b>	<b>415</b>	

#### KEY COMPONENTS

- 01 POWER — KINETIC + INDUCTIVE**  
Self-sustaining in active play. Kinetic harvesting from motion; inductive top-up at rest. No external power required during regulation.
- 02 DATA — GLOBAL ARGUMENT FEED**  
1 PetaFLOP continuous throughput. Global feed latency <0.3 s. Full integration with Crowd Argument Mass and scoring systems.
- 03 ARBITRATION CORE**  
Central node arbitrates disputed argument-states in ≤2.4 s. Amber display during resolution. Play never stops.
- 04 SENSORS — HAPTIC ARRAY**  
360° Impact, pressure, orientation and proximity sensing. Haptic feedback communicates state changes to player.
- 05 ENVIRONMENTAL SHIELD**  
Adaptive micro-climate stabilisation. IPX7 rated. -20 °C to 50 °C operational. Shock absorbent exoshell.

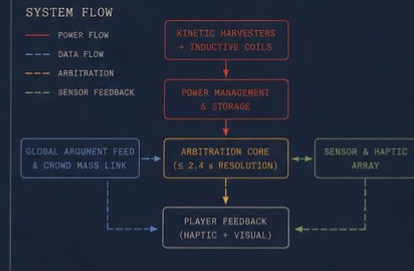
#### SECTION A-A

ARBITRATION CORE STACK



- Arbitration Layer (Argument Arbiter)
- Data Fabric Layer (Global Feed Interface)
- Thermal Management (Graphene Heat Spread)
- Power Distribution (Kinetic + Storage)
- Structural Spine (Load Bearing)


#### SYSTEM FLOW



— POWER FLOW  
- - - DATA FLOW  
- - - ARBITRATION  
- - - SENSOR FEEDBACK

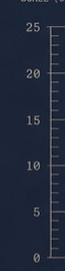
#### PANEL LAYOUT (DODECAHEDRON)


12 PENTAGONAL PANELS




- PRIMARY ORIENTATION PANEL
- IMPACT SENSOR NODES (TYP.)
- HAPTIC OUTPUT NODES (TYP.)

SCALE (CM)







DESIGNED FOR  
**CONTINUOUS PLAY**  
NO PAUSE. NO DEAD TIME.



RATING  
**IPX7**  
WATER & DUST RESISTANT




OPERATING TEMP.  
-20 °C TO 50 °C  
ALL CLIMATES



MASS  
450 g ± 10 g  
MATCH REGULATION

IMA CERTIFIED



APPROVED — TECHNICAL BOARD

THIS OBJECT IS NOT A WEAPON. IT IS A CONSTITUTIONAL ARTEFACT. ITS PURPOSE IS DUAL: SPORT AND DELIBERATION IN EQUAL MEASURE.

REF: IMA-LV-IV-4.0.1-AP | DATE: 19 / 8 / 4

IMA Regulation Object · Law IV Specification · Active Play Configuration · Approved — Technical Board

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## LAW I

# The Nature of the Game

## 1.1 — DEFINITION

Mootball is a team contest of simultaneous physical and intellectual competition, played between two sides of twelve players each, over a fixed duration and in accordance with these Laws. Its purpose is twofold and inseparable: it is a sport, and it is a civic act. Neither purpose may be sacrificed in favour of the other without invalidating the contest.

## 1.2 — THE DUAL MANDATE

A Mootball match is always played around something. That something is the Proposition: a question of genuine consequence, placed before the players and the world simultaneously. The match does not merely produce a winner. It produces a result — a physical and intellectual verdict on the Proposition, rendered by the players and weighted by the Crowd Argument Mass. Both the sporting result and the civic result are binding outcomes of every match.

## 1.3 — THE PRIMACY OF SIMULTANEITY

In Mootball, the physical and the intellectual are not sequential. A player does not first compete physically and then argue, nor argue and then compete. Both occur at once, in the same body, in the same moment. This simultaneity is not incidental to the game; it is the game. Any format, rule or practice that permits the separation of these two capacities into distinct phases shall not be recognised by the IMA as Mootball.

## 1.4 — THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Mootball proceeds from a single founding premise: that the ability to think and the ability to act are not in opposition, and that a society which treats them as such will eventually find it can do neither well. Players are expected to embody this premise at all times. Victory achieved by physical dominance without intellectual coherence is not victory. Victory achieved by intellectual dominance without physical contest is not victory. The game demands both, always, from every player, for the full duration.

## 1.5 — JURISDICTION

These Laws govern all forms of Mootball recognised by the International Mootball Authority, from grassroots and community-level play through to the Grand Moot. Where a specific format — including but not limited to the Grand Bang, the Territorial League, the Scholastic Cup, or the Grand Moot itself — requires modification to these Laws, such modifications are set out in the relevant Format Appendix and take precedence only in those specific circumstances. In all other respects, these Laws are supreme.

## 1.6 — ON LOSING

It is noted, and the IMA considers it worth stating plainly, that in Mootball it is entirely possible to lose the sporting contest while winning the argument, and to win the sporting contest while losing the argument. The IMA does not adjudicate on which of these outcomes is preferable. History will.

### FOUNDING NOTE — ATTRIBUTED TO PRESIDENT O. WELLES, AT THE FIRST IMA RATIFICATION CEREMONY

*"The gladiators died because the crowd was bored. Our players win or lose because the crowd is paying attention. I'll take that trade."*

## LAW II

# The Proposition

## 2.1 — DEFINITION

The Proposition is the question of genuine civic consequence around which every Mootball match is contested. It is not a theme, a topic, or a mood. It is a specific, answerable question — one that a society either must or ought to resolve, and which reasonable people, reasoning in good faith, may answer differently. A Proposition that admits only one defensible answer is not a Proposition. It is propaganda, and its use is prohibited under these Laws.

## 2.2 — THE FOUR CLASSES OF PROPOSITION

All IMA-recognised Propositions are drawn from one of four classes. The class determines the level of play at which the Proposition may be used, the composition of the Proposition Panel that ratifies it, and the weight assigned to the Crowd Argument Mass in the final result. **CLASS I — LOCAL: COMMUNITY MATTERS** Questions of immediate local civic relevance. Grassroots and scholastic play only. CAM weight: advisory. **CLASS II — TERRITORIAL: REGIONAL STAKES** Questions of territorial or regional significance. League and cup play. CAM weight: 15% of final result. **CLASS III — GRAND BANG: CIVILISATIONAL WEIGHT** Questions of Interdependent Stake-wide significance. Grand Bang format only. CAM weight: 25% of final result in tied matches. **CLASS IV — GRAND MOOT: EXISTENTIAL CONSEQUENCE** Questions upon which the future direction of the Interdependent Stake depends. Convened only by the Auntie-In-Chief. CAM weight: determinative in all circumstances. See Law XII.

## 2.3 — SETTING THE PROPOSITION

For Classes I through III, the Proposition is set by the relevant IMA Proposition Panel no fewer than thirty days before the match. Both competing teams receive the Proposition simultaneously and in identical form. Neither team may request its alteration once ratified, though either team may submit a formal Objection of Bias to the IMA within seven days of receipt. A successful Objection results in a revised Proposition, not a cancelled match.

## 2.4 — ASSIGNMENT OF SIDES

Upon receipt of the Proposition, each team is assigned to argue either For or Against by the toss of the Mootball — the same toss that determines initial physical possession. The team winning the toss chooses its preferred side of the argument. This assignment is binding for the duration of the match.

### 2.4.1 — NOTE ON COMPELLED ADVOCACY

A team may find itself assigned to argue a position its members do not personally hold. This is not a flaw in the design of Mootball. It is a feature. The IMA holds that the ability to construct the strongest possible case for a position one does not hold is among the highest intellectual disciplines the game demands, and among the most valuable civic skills it produces.

## 2.5 — THE FIXED PROPOSITION

In all standard IMA-sanctioned play, the Proposition is fixed at the moment of ratification and does not change during the match. The development of the argument — its elaboration, its defence, its assault — occurs entirely within the Mootball itself and through the players' conduct on the field. The Proposition itself remains constant. It is the ground on which the battle is fought, not a combatant.

## 2.6 — THE ITERATIVE PROPOSITION

By mutual written agreement of both Orchestrators, submitted to the IMA no fewer than fourteen days before the match, a contest may be designated an Iterative Proposition match. In this format, the Proposition may be refined, narrowed or extended at the close of each Act by a joint ruling of both Orchestrators and the presiding IMA Referee.

### 2.6.1

Iterative Proposition matches are not permitted at Grand Bang or Grand Moot level. Their use is confined to Classes I and II, and to certain designated experimental formats approved by the IMA Research and Development Council. The IMA notes that the Iterative format, while intellectually stimulating, has on several occasions produced results of such complexity that neither team, the referee, nor the Crowd Argument Mass could agree on what had been decided. The IMA does not consider this an unqualified failure.

## 2.7 — PROHIBITED PROPOSITIONS

The following categories of Proposition are absolutely prohibited at all levels of IMA-sanctioned play, without exception or appeal: any Proposition that requires a team to argue for the inherent inferiority of any person or group on the basis of identity; any Proposition the resolution of which would require the IMA to endorse illegal action under Interdependent Stake law; any Proposition submitted by a party with a material interest in its outcome; and any Proposition judged by the IMA to be a restatement of a previously resolved Grand Moot in disguised form.

## 2.8 — THE GRAND MOOT PROPOSITION

The Proposition for a Grand Moot is set exclusively by the Auntie-In-Chief of the Interdependent Stake, subject to ratification by a two-thirds majority of the IMA Grand Council. It is announced simultaneously to all citizens of the Interdependent Stake and to the competing teams. It may not be appealed, revised or withdrawn once announced. Its resolution — the combined sporting result, argument state of the Mootball, and final Crowd Argument Mass — constitutes a binding civic verdict. See Law XII for full Grand Moot protocol.

### IMA GUIDANCE NOTE — ON THE SELECTION OF PROPOSITIONS

*"A well-chosen Proposition should make both teams uncomfortable. If either side finds its assigned position easy to argue, the Proposition Panel has not done its work. The game is not designed to confirm what we already believe. It is designed to find out whether what we believe survives contact with the best possible version of the opposing case."*

## LAW II · ADDENDUM

## *The Meta-Moot*

### **2.9 — AMENDMENT OF A GRAND MOOT RESULT: THE META-MOOT**

No Grand Moot result may be amended, overturned, suspended or declared void by any executive, legislative or judicial authority of the Interdependent Stake, nor by any ruling of the IMA Grand Council acting alone. A Grand Moot result may only be revisited through the convening of a further Grand Moot — designated a Meta-Moot — whose sole Proposition shall be: whether a new Grand Moot on the original question should be held.

#### **2.9.1 — CONDITIONS FOR PETITION**

A petition to convene a Meta-Moot may be submitted to the IMA Grand Council by any group of no fewer than twelve million citizens of the Interdependent Stake, each submitting individually and in verified form, no sooner than twenty-five years after the conclusion of the original Grand Moot. The twenty-five year minimum reflects the IMA's view that a generation must have lived with a result before it may credibly claim the result requires revision.

#### **2.9.2 — THE META-MOOT IS ITSELF A GRAND MOOT**

A Meta-Moot is convened, conducted and resolved under the full provisions of Law XII. It is subject to all Grand Moot protocols without exception. The Proposition argued is fixed: one team argues that a new Grand Moot should be held; the other argues that it should not. The result of the Meta-Moot is itself binding and subject to these same amendment provisions. There is no expedited process. There is no abbreviated format. The full weight of the game must be brought to bear on the question of whether the full weight of the game should be brought to bear again.

#### **2.9.3 — THE COURAGE REQUIREMENT**

Any team arguing For a new Grand Moot must, as part of its intellectual case, present to the Mootball the strongest available argument that the original Grand Moot result was in error. This requirement is not optional and may not be satisfied by procedural or technical challenge alone. The IMA holds that the right to reopen a question carries with it the obligation to demonstrate, in full public contest, that the question deserves reopening. Moral courage is not assumed. It must be played.

#### **2.9.4 — ON PERMANENT TRUTHS**

The IMA does not recognise the category of permanent, immemorial or self-evident truth as grounds for exempting any Grand Moot result from the provisions of this clause. Truths that are genuinely permanent will survive the Meta-Moot process. Truths that do not survive it were not, the IMA suggests, as permanent as previously supposed. The process is the test. The test is the point.

#### **IMA GUIDANCE NOTE — ON THE PURPOSE OF DIFFICULTY**

*"We were asked, during the drafting of this clause, why we had made the amendment process so arduous. The answer is that we had not. We had made it proportionate. The original Grand Moot changes the lives of every citizen in the Interdependent Stake. It seemed only fair that changing it back should require a commensurate effort. We did not design a barrier. We designed a mirror."*

## LAW III

# The Field of Play

## 3.1 – THE SURFACE

The field of play is a rectangle of natural or synthetic grass, maintained to IMA specification. Its dimensions for all IMA-sanctioned play are 115 metres in length and 75 metres in width. These dimensions are not negotiable at Grand Bang or Grand Moot level. At Class I and II level, variations of no more than 10% in either dimension are permitted, subject to IMA approval. The field must be flat, uniformly surfaced, and free of obstruction. What constitutes an obstruction is defined in IMA Technical Annex 7. The weather is not an obstruction.

## 3.2 – THE ZONES

The field is divided along its length into five zones of unequal depth, each carrying both a physical and an intellectual designation. Moving from one Threshold Line to the other, the zones are: the Threshold Zone (18m, intellectual designation: Conclusion), the Advance Zone (25m each side, intellectual designation: Dialectic), and the Centrist Ground (29m, intellectual designation: Common Ground).

## 3.3 – ZONE DEFINITIONS

### 3.3.1 – THE THRESHOLD ZONES

One at each end of the field. Depth: 18 metres. These are the zones in which a goal may be scored. The intellectual designation of the Threshold Zone is Conclusion: the territory where arguments are either validated and driven home, or broken and turned back.

### 3.3.2 – THE ADVANCE ZONES

One either side of the Centrist Ground. Depth: 25 metres each. The intellectual designation is Dialectic: the territory of proposition, counter-proposition, evidence and rebuttal. The majority of play, physical and intellectual, occurs here.

### 3.3.3 – THE CENTRIST GROUND

The central zone, spanning the full width of the field. Depth: 29 metres. Its intellectual designation is Common Ground. A team that controls the Centrist Ground without advancing from it has demonstrated possession without conviction — admired by commentators, punished by the scoreboard.

## 3.4 – THE THRESHOLD LINE AND THE KEEPER'S GROUND

The Threshold Line runs the full width of the field at the inner edge of each Threshold Zone. It is not a goal in the traditional sense: it has no posts, no crossbar, no net. It is a line, and the Mootball crossing it fully — under the conditions set out in Law IX — constitutes a score. The absence of posts is deliberate. The IMA holds that an argument, when it truly crosses the line, requires no frame to confirm it.

### 3.4.1

The Keeper's Ground is the 8-metre by 30-metre rectangle immediately behind the Threshold Line. Within the Keeper's Ground, the Keeper operates under specific protections and restrictions defined in Law VI.

## 3.5 – THE DODECAGONAL CENTRE

At the exact centre of the field is marked a dodecagon — a twelve-sided figure of 9.15 metres diameter — within which the Mootball is placed at the start of each half, after a goal, and after any ruling that requires play to be restarted from the centre. The IMA acknowledges this is primarily symbolic. It does not consider this a weakness.

## 3.6 – THE FLANKS AND THE WING LINES

The Left Flank is the territory of the team arguing For the Proposition; the Right Flank is the territory of the team arguing Against. This assignment is fixed for the duration of the match and applies regardless of which direction each team is physically attacking.

### 3.7 — THE ORCHESTRATOR'S STATION

Adjacent to the field, level with the Centrist Ground and set back no fewer than 5 metres from the Wing Line, each team maintains an Orchestrator's Station. The Orchestrator may not enter the field of play. The field of play may not come to the Orchestrator. These are the only two absolute positional rules in Mootball, and they apply without exception.

### 3.8 — THE DIRECTIONAL SWITCH

At the interval between the First and Second Acts, both teams exchange ends. The Flank assignments — Left for For, Right for Against — do not change. Only the direction of attack changes. The IMA notes that this means each team will, in the course of a full match, have attacked in both directions whilst maintaining a fixed intellectual position. A position worth holding must be defensible from all angles.

#### 3.8.1

In the Third Act, the direction of attack is determined by which team holds the higher argument-state in the Mootball at the Act's commencement. The team whose argument is more blue attacks left-to-right. If argument states are equal, the direction of the Second Act is maintained. The Third Act is not about ideology. It is about resolution.

#### IMA DESIGN NOTE — ON THE ABSENCE OF GOALPOSTS

*"Several founding members of the IMA argued strenuously for the retention of posts and a crossbar, on the grounds that spectators needed something to cheer towards. They were reminded that spectators had managed to cheer towards arguments for several thousand years without any structural assistance, and that the introduction of woodwork would only give players something else to blame."*

## LAW IV

# The Mootball

## 4.1 — DEFINITION AND FORM

The Mootball is a regular dodecahedron — a twelve-faced solid, each face a regular pentagon — of regulation size and specification. It is not a ball. It does not behave as a ball. It is not intended to. The Mootball is a physical argument: a three-dimensional, continuously updated, externally legible representation of the intellectual state of the contest at any given moment. Its form is fixed. Its content is never the same twice.

## 4.2 — PHYSICAL SPECIFICATION

Form: Regular dodecahedron, 12 pentagonal faces. Diameter: 22 cm face-to-face; 24.6 cm vertex-to-vertex. Base mass: 480g unloaded; 520–680g in active play. Shell material: Graphene-composite, impact-rated to 40 kN. Display surface: Full-face electroluminescent lattice, all 12 faces. Internal power: Kinetic and inductive; self-sustaining in active play. Data throughput: 1 PetaFLOP continuous; global feed latency less than 0.3 seconds.

## 4.3 — THE DRONELETS

At the core of every Mootball sit two dronelets. The first is the Inscriber: a three-dimensional printer which continuously produces physical graphite representations of arguments as they are proven, validated and confirmed. The second is the Eraser: which dissolves and removes inscribed argument-lattice as positions are refuted, voted down, or logically dismissed.

### 4.3.1

The lattice built by the Inscriber and dissolved by the Eraser is visible through the Mootball's translucent shell as a continuously shifting three-dimensional structure. The visual effect — described by one early commentator as "watching an argument think" — is considered by the IMA to be among the most distinctive features of the game.

### 4.3.2 — DRONELET ARBITRATION

In the event of a disputed argument-state, the dronelets enter a brief arbitration state lasting no more than 2.4 seconds, during which the Mootball's display shifts to a neutral amber. Play does not stop. The amber state is itself a signal to all players that the argument is momentarily genuinely undecided, and is treated by experienced teams as an opportunity rather than an obstacle.

## 4.4 — THE THREE ARGUMENT STATES

The Mootball displays one of three primary argument states at all times, visible to all players, officials, spectators and the global Crowd Argument Mass simultaneously. BLUE — FOR 75%+ validated. The Proposition's case dominates. Ball is in possession of the For team. Threshold crossing eligible. PURPLE — CONTESTED 50–74% either side. Argument genuinely undecided. Ball is freely available. Neither team has possession by right. CAM may intervene at designated moments. RED — AGAINST 75%+ refuted. The opposing case dominates. Ball is in possession of the Against team. Threshold crossing eligible in opposite direction.

### 4.4.1 — THE AMBER STATE

A fourth transient state — amber — occurs only during dronelet arbitration. The longest recorded amber state lasted 38 seconds, during the third Act of the Kyiv-Boston Grand Bang of 2041, and is still discussed in academic literature on both Mootball tactics and the philosophy of genuinely undecidable propositions.

## 4.5 — WEIGHT-SHIFT

The Mootball contains a network of fluid-filled chambers. As the argument state shifts, fluid redistributes between chambers in proportion to the argument's balance. An experienced player can read the Mootball's weight distribution through their exo-suit's haptic feedback system without looking at the display. This skill — known informally as feeling the argument — cannot be taught directly. It is learned through ten thousand hours of play.

#### 4.6 — THE ARGUMENT FEED

Every argument-state update within the Mootball is simultaneously broadcast to four audiences: the players via their exo-suit displays; the Orchestrators via their Station feeds; the match officials; and the global Crowd Argument Mass via the ISBC broadcast network. All four feeds are updated at identical latency. No party receives the argument state before any other. Any technical interference with this simultaneity constitutes a forfeit.

#### 4.7 — DAMAGE, REPLACEMENT AND THE ARGUMENT OF RECORD

A Mootball damaged during play is replaced immediately by a reserve Mootball, which inherits the argument state of the damaged ball at the moment of its last reliable reading. The damaged Mootball is retained by the IMA as the Argument of Record for that match. Catastrophic failure has occurred twice in IMA history. Both occasions are described in IMA Historical Record, Volume VII, under the heading Things We Hope Do Not Happen Again.

#### IMA DESIGN NOTE — ON WHY THE MOOTBALL IS NOT A BALL

*"We were asked, repeatedly and with increasing exasperation, why the primary object of play could not simply be a sphere. The answer is that a sphere has no faces, no vertices, no sides, and no corners. It presents the same surface to every observer regardless of orientation. An argument is not like that. An argument has faces. It has edges. It looks different depending on where you are standing. The dodecahedron was the only honest shape available to us."*

## LAW V

# The Players

## 5.1 — COMPOSITION OF A TEAM

Each team in a Mootball match consists of twelve players: eleven who take the field and one Orchestrator who does not. All twelve are players. The distinction between on-field and Orchestrator is a positional one, not a hierarchical one. The Orchestrator is not the team's superior. The Orchestrator is the team's twelfth player, operating in the one position that cannot be occupied on the field. A team that treats its Orchestrator as a manager rather than a player has misunderstood the game at a fundamental level and will, in the IMA's experience, lose accordingly.

## 5.2 — ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to participate in any IMA-sanctioned Mootball match, a player must satisfy all of the following conditions without exception: physical certification; intellectual certification (which cannot be obtained without physical play); exo-suit qualification; Proposition familiarity (assessed no fewer than seven days before the match); and good standing. A player found to have misrepresented their Proposition familiarity forfeits eligibility for that match and the following three. Their team plays short.

## 5.3 — THE EXO-SUIT

All on-field players wear an IMA-approved exo-suit for the duration of the match. The exo-suit is not optional equipment. It is the player's instrument. Its principal functions are: haptic argument feedback; wraparound argument display; earwag integration (one-directional — the suit listens, it does not transmit to the Orchestrator); Springbok locomotion; ablative impact mesh; and team livery. The Presticogetator's suit carries a single additional marking: a gold dodecagon at the sternum.

### 5.3.1 — ON EQUALISATION

The exo-suit is explicitly designed to reduce — though not eliminate — physical disparities between players of different size, strength and body type. A player of 55kg in a correctly calibrated suit can contest possession with a player of 110kg. The suit does not make them equal. It makes the contest possible. The distinction matters.

## 5.4 — THE EARWAG PROTOCOL

Every on-field player receives the Orchestrator's broadcast via their suit's earwag system throughout the match. This broadcast is one-directional. Players communicate with their Orchestrator through their actions on the field. An Orchestrator who cannot read their players' actions does not deserve the broadcast they are sending.

### 5.4.1 — CROWD BROADCAST

The Orchestrator's broadcast is simultaneously transmitted to the attending crowd and the global ISBC audience. Every tactical instruction, every argument-state assessment, every call the Orchestrator makes is public. There are no private channels in Mootball at Grand Bang or Grand Moot level.

### 5.4.2 — PLAYER-TO-PLAYER COMMUNICATION

On-field players may communicate freely with one another by any means available to them during play. Player-to-player communication is not broadcast to the crowd. It is, however, recorded by the IMA for post-match review and may be used in disciplinary proceedings.

## 5.5 — SUBSTITUTIONS

Each team may make no more than three substitutions during a match. The Orchestrator may not be substituted. If the Orchestrator is incapacitated, the team nominates a replacement from its on-field players, who must immediately leave the field to assume the Orchestrator's Station. The team then plays with ten players on the

field. The IMA recommends that teams ensure their Orchestrators are in robust health before Grand Bangs. The IMA also notes this recommendation is routinely ignored.

#### **5.6 — THE REQUIREMENT OF WHOLENESS**

A player in a Mootball match is required to be wholly present: physically on the field, intellectually engaged with the Proposition, and actively contributing to both dimensions of the game at all times. A player observed to be physically present but intellectually absent may be formally cautioned. This caution is known colloquially as a Body Without Mind and carries its own separate sanction structure. It is the only caution in Mootball named after the offence it describes rather than the player who committed it.

#### **IMA DESIGN NOTE — ON THE EXO-SUIT AS EQUALISER**

*"We were challenged by a former professional rugby player of considerable physical distinction who wished to know whether the exo-suit was designed to render his particular advantages irrelevant. We told him it was designed to render them insufficient on their own. He considered this for a moment and said that seemed fair. He later became one of Mootball's finest Centrist midfielders, and one of its most celebrated Orchestrators thereafter."*

## LAW VI

# The Positions

## 6.1 — THE PRINCIPLE OF DUAL ROLE

Every position in Mootball carries two designations of equal weight: a physical role and an intellectual role. These are not separate functions performed in sequence. They are a single function performed simultaneously. A player who performs only one is playing half a game and will be treated by the Laws accordingly.

## 6.2 — STANDARD FORMATION

The IMA recognises no mandatory formation. Teams may deploy their eleven players in any tactical arrangement they choose, subject only to the positional definitions set out in this Law and the zone restrictions set out in Law III. The following eleven positions must be filled by every team at kick-off.

## 6.3 — THE KEEPER

One per team. Physical role: defence of the Keeper's Ground and prevention of a valid Threshold crossing. Intellectual role: preservation of the team's foundational position. The Keeper's role is the most intellectually conservative on the field, and frequently the most psychologically isolated. Great Keepers are defined not by spectacular intervention but by the frequency with which spectacular intervention proves unnecessary.

## 6.4 — THE DEFENDERS

Three per team in standard formation. Physical role: contesting possession in the Advance Zone, preventing opposition players from entering the Threshold Zone uncontested. Intellectual role: Rebuttal — the active dismantling of the opposition's incoming arguments before they can reach the Keeper's Ground. A Defender who can only block physically but cannot refute intellectually is half a Defender and will be exposed accordingly.

### 6.4.1 — THE DEFENDER'S GAMBLE

Defenders are permitted to advance into the Centrist Ground and even the opposition's Advance Zone in possession of the Mootball. This tactical choice — the Defender's Gamble — has decided more Grand Bangs than any other single action in the game's recorded history, in both directions.

## 6.5 — THE WINGERS

Two per team: a Left Winger and a Right Winger. Their flank assignments mirror those of the field — Left Winger on the For flank, Right Winger on the Against flank, regardless of which team they play for. Intellectual role: Flanking Argument — the introduction of supporting evidence, analogical reasoning, and lateral perspectives that outflank the opposition's central defensive position. A Winger who only runs is wasting the flank. A Winger who only argues has forgotten they have legs.

## 6.6 — THE DIALOGISTS

Three per team. Physical role: the contest and retention of the Centrist Ground — the most physically demanding sustained task on the field. Intellectual role: the establishment, defence and exploitation of Common Ground. The Dialogist does not argue For or Against the Proposition in the first instance. They argue for the terms of the argument. They establish what is true before establishing what is right.

### 6.6.1 — WHY THE CENTRIST GROUND IS WON BY DIALOGISTS

The greatest Dialogists in Mootball history are revered in the way great architects are revered: most people cannot immediately explain why the building works, but they know immediately when it falls down.

### 6.6.2 — THE DIALECTIC EXCHANGE

In the Centrist Ground only, a Dialogist from one team may initiate a direct verbal Dialectic Exchange with a Dialogist from the opposing team — the one permitted form of direct cross-team communication during play. A Dialectic Exchange that produces genuine Common Ground results in a Centrist Accord. When they occur, play stops for exactly twelve seconds, and the crowd is silent. It is the only moment in Mootball when the crowd falls silent by convention rather than instruction.

### 6.7 — THE PRESTICOGETATORS

Two per team. The position wears a gold dodecagon at the sternum and earns it. Physical role: operating at the forward edge of the Advance Zone and into the Threshold Zone at full capacity, under maximum contact, for the duration of the match. Intellectual role: Refutation at Speed — the real-time demolition of the opposition's core argument at the moment of its greatest apparent strength, executed not from a position of stillness and deliberation but from full physical motion, under pressure, with the Mootball in hand and the opposition's Defenders closing from multiple directions simultaneously.

#### 6.7.1 — ON THE NATURE OF THE ROLE

The Presticogetator does not have time to think in the way a Dialogist thinks. The intellectual preparation of a Presticogetator happens entirely before the match. On the field, it is execution, not cognition. The greatest Presticogetators describe the experience not as thinking but as knowing without noticing. The IMA believes this is the closest Mootball comes to describing something genuinely new about the human mind.

#### 6.7.2 — THE PRESTICOGETATOR'S BURDEN

Of all eleven on-field positions, the Presticogetator is the most visible, the most celebrated, the most scrutinised, and — statistically — the most frequently substituted due to physical exhaustion by the end of the Second Act. They are not the most important player on the field. But they are the player the crowd comes to watch. The IMA has made its peace with this.

### 6.8 — POSITIONAL FLUIDITY

A player may move between physical positions during play. The intellectual designation of their position, however, follows them. The intellectual role is assigned at kick-off and does not change with physical position. This is the source of the most common beginner's misunderstanding of Mootball, and the source of the most sophisticated tactical possibilities available to experienced Orchestrators.

#### IMA COMMENTARY — ON THE DIALOGIST AND THE PRESTICOGETATOR

*"They are asked to do opposite things and to trust that the other's opposite thing is as important as their own. The Presticogetator must believe that the Dialogist's patient establishment of Common Ground made this moment possible. The Dialogist must believe that the Presticogetator will run fast enough to make the architecture matter. This mutual faith — between the one who thinks slowly and well, and the one who thinks fast and necessarily — is, the IMA suggests, a reasonable description of how a civilisation functions when it is functioning well."*

## LAW VI · ANNEX A

*The Formation Language*

## IMA DESIGN NOTE — ON THE GEOMETRY OF ARGUMENT

*"An argument that requires eleven human beings to temporarily abandon every individual instinct for self-preservation and attack, and to trust instead in the collective geometry they can produce together — an argument that asks this much of the people making it — is not overstating its ambition by borrowing the name Plato gave to everything. If anything, it is being modest."*

## LAW VII

# The Orchestrator

## 7.1 — DEFINITION AND STANDING

The Orchestrator is the twelfth player of a Mootball team. They do not take the field. Their absence from the field is not a limitation imposed upon them — it is the specific condition that makes their role possible. The Orchestrator's position is the only one in Mootball from which the entire field of play is visible simultaneously, from which the argument state of the Mootball can be read without the distortion of physical contest, and from which the team's intellectual architecture can be held whole in a single mind at all times.

## 7.2 — THE ORCHESTRATOR'S STATION

The Station is equipped with six feeds: Mootball argument feed (inbound); player position overlay (inbound); Crowd Argument Mass feed (inbound); opposition Orchestrator broadcast (inbound — full audio, no filter, no delay); team earwag broadcast (outbound — the only outbound channel); and referee channel (bidirectional — for formal challenges only, not a tactical channel).

## 7.3 — THE BROADCAST PRINCIPLE

The Orchestrator's earwag broadcast is transmitted to three audiences simultaneously and without distinction: their own eleven players, the attending crowd, and the global ISBC audience. What the Orchestrator says, everyone hears. An Orchestrator who cannot issue instructions they are willing for the world to hear has not thought their strategy through sufficiently.

### 7.3.1 — THE META-GAME OF BROADCAST

Because both Orchestrators hear each other's broadcasts simultaneously, a sophisticated exchange develops above the level of the physical game. An Orchestrator who goes silent for more than forty-five seconds during active play is either in complete control or in serious trouble. Experienced crowds have learnt to tell the difference.

## 7.4 — WHAT THE ORCHESTRATOR MAY AND MAY NOT DO

The Orchestrator may: broadcast continuously; direct positioning, formation changes and substitutions; monitor and respond to the CAM; lodge formal challenges; and go silent. The Orchestrator may not: enter the field of play; receive information from players via earwag during play; use any communication channel other than the designated earwag and referee channel; be substituted; or conduct any private conversation during the match.

## 7.5 — THE ORCHESTRATOR AND THE CROWD ARGUMENT MASS

Only the Orchestrator has a direct, real-time view of the CAM in its full detail. The on-field players receive a simplified summary. The Orchestrator bears primary responsibility for the team's management of the Crowd Argument Mass. An Orchestrator who ignores the CAM is playing two-thirds of the game. An Orchestrator who attends only to the CAM will shortly have no field left to attend to.

### 7.5.1 — THE UNDECIDED AGENDA

The CAM's Undecided Agenda tells both Orchestrators, in plain language, precisely what questions remain unanswered for the people who have not yet made up their minds. The IMA has published the finding that teams who win Grand Bangs on CAM weighting are statistically those whose Orchestrators read the Undecided Agenda at the start of Act III. The IMA has published this finding four times. It continues to be ignored at approximately the same rate.

## 7.6 — THE ORCHESTRATOR'S SILENCE

The Orchestrator may choose to go silent at any point during the match. Players receive no confirmation that the silence is deliberate. They must continue playing on the basis of their last instruction, their understanding of the team's strategy, and their own individual judgement. An Orchestrator who has prepared their team sufficiently will find that silence, when used deliberately, is among the most powerful tools available to the role.

#### 7.6.1 — RECORDED USES OF DELIBERATE SILENCE

The IMA's historical record documents forty-seven instances of deliberate Orchestrator silence lasting more than two minutes in Grand Bang play. Of these, thirty-one preceded a decisive shift in the Mootball's argument state in the silent team's favour. Nine preceded the concession of a goal. Seven are still debated by analysts who cannot agree on whether they were deliberate or not. The IMA has chosen not to adjudicate on the seven. The ambiguity, it considers, is instructive.

#### 7.7 — WHAT THE ORCHESTRATOR KNOWS THAT THE PLAYERS DO NOT

The Orchestrator holds one piece of information no on-field player receives: the projected argument trajectory — a forward-modelled estimate of where the Mootball's argument state will be in twelve minutes' time if current trends continue unchanged. It is not infallible. It is frequently wrong. The IMA provides it not because it is reliable but because the act of considering it is itself a discipline the role requires.

#### 7.8 — THE ORCHESTRATOR AFTER THE MATCH

Within twenty-four hours, the Orchestrator submits a written account of every broadcast decision made during the match — every instruction given, every silence chosen, every CAM adjustment made — together with their reasoning at the time. This Orchestrator's Record is held by the IMA as part of the permanent match archive. It is used for the education of future Orchestrators. The IMA considers it among the most valuable documents the game produces.

#### IMA NOTE — ON THE LONELINESS OF THE STATION

*"Every Orchestrator, at some point in their career, experiences the same moment: they have said everything they can say, their players are doing everything they can do, and the outcome of the match now rests entirely on eleven people making eleven individual decisions simultaneously, none of which the Orchestrator can control. This moment — which experienced Orchestrators call simply 'the release' — is either the most terrifying or the most exhilarating experience the game offers, depending entirely on how well the Orchestrator has done their job before it arrives. The IMA cannot teach the release. It can only create the conditions under which it becomes bearable. The rest is trust."*

## LAW VIII

# Duration and Structure

## 8.1 — TOTAL DURATION

A standard Mootball match at Grand Bang level has a nominal duration of 120 minutes of active play, divided into three Acts of unequal length and separated by two intervals. This is the nominal duration. The actual duration of any given match is longer, sometimes considerably so, because the clock in Mootball does not run continuously. It stops. In a game where the quality of an argument can stop events in their tracks, it would be philosophically incoherent for the clock to be indifferent to it.

## 8.2 — THE THREE ACTS

### 8.2.1 — ACT I: DEVELOPMENT

Nominal duration: 35 minutes. Intellectual designation: Build. Act I is the phase of construction. It is characteristically the slowest Act in pace, the most strategic in intent, and the most deceptive in appearance. An Act I that appears uneventful has frequently already decided the match — its audiences simply do not know it yet.

### 8.2.2 — ACT II: DIALECTIC

Nominal duration: 50 minutes. Intellectual designation: Contest. Act II is the longest Act and the heart of the match. Substitutions are most commonly made in the final ten minutes of Act II, when physical exhaustion begins to degrade intellectual performance — the two declines being inseparable in Mootball in a way they are not in other sports.

### 8.2.3 — ACT III: RESOLUTION

Nominal duration: 35 minutes. Intellectual designation: Conclude. Act III is the fastest Act in pace, the most physically demanding in sustained intensity, and the most intellectually decisive. A team that enters Act III still building its argument has misunderstood the structure of the game.

## 8.3 — THE INTERVALS

There are two intervals. The interval between Act I and Act II lasts twelve minutes. The interval between Act II and Act III lasts eight minutes. The difference is deliberate. An Orchestrator who needs more than eight minutes to prepare their team for the Resolution has already lost the argument about what the Resolution requires.

### 8.3.1 — WHAT HAPPENS DURING INTERVALS

During both intervals, the Mootball's argument state is frozen at the value recorded at the moment of the whistle. The Crowd Argument Mass, however, continues to run. The interval CAM shift has on eleven recorded occasions exceeded the total CAM shift produced during the Act that preceded it. The IMA does not know what to conclude from this. It includes the data anyway.

## 8.4 — CLOCK STOPPAGE: THE ARGUMENT STOPS TIME

The match clock stops for: a Formal Query (maximum 90 seconds); a Centrist Accord (exactly 12 seconds); Mootball damage (maximum 12 minutes); an Intellectual Foul (duration per Law XI); player injury requiring immediate medical attendance (maximum 4 minutes); and extended amber arbitration beyond 12 seconds. The following do not stop the clock: goals, boundary restarts, physical fouls not involving injury, substitutions, standard amber states, and any emotional response from the crowd of whatever intensity.

### 8.4.1 — ON GOALS AND THE CLOCK

Play continuing through a goal is counterintuitive to spectators accustomed to other sports. The IMA's position is that a goal in Mootball is not an interruption of the game. It is its highest expression. Stopping to celebrate it

would be like stopping mid-sentence to applaud a particularly good word.

### 8.5 — DURATION RECORDS

Shortest recorded Grand Bang: 138 minutes actual. Longest: 6 hours 42 minutes — the Montevideo Suspension, 2037. Average: 2 hours 47 minutes. Most clock stoppages in one match: 34, Lagos v. Seoul Grand Bang, 2039. Most Centrist Accords in one match: 3 — a record that has stood since 2031 and that the IMA considers unlikely to be broken.

#### 8.5.1 — THE MONTEVIDEO SUSPENSION

The Montevideo Grand Bang of 2037 holds the record for longest match duration at six hours and forty-two minutes. The Proposition — concerning the rights of non-biological intelligences to participate in the Crowd Argument Mass — was later described by the IMA's philosophical review panel as "perhaps the first Proposition that the Mootball itself had a material stake in." The losing team's Orchestrator's Record for that match is required reading at Athena's Owl University's Mootball faculty and has been for eleven years.

### 8.6 — ON WHY TIME IN MOOTBALL IS NOT EQUIVALENT TO TIME IN OTHER SPORTS

In most team sports, time is a neutral container. In Mootball, the clock stops when the argument demands it. A match of nominal 120 minutes may take three hours of actual time, because the argument required three hours to be properly made. The clock is not a constraint on the game. It is a record of how much the argument needed.

#### 8.6.1

The IMA acknowledges this has consequences for broadcast scheduling, venue logistics, and the patience of certain categories of spectator. It remains unmoved. A game designed to model the honest resolution of genuine civic questions cannot pretend that such resolution is available on a fixed timetable. The world's most important arguments have never concluded on schedule. The IMA sees no reason why their sporting equivalent should be asked to do so.

#### IMA NOTE — ON THE EXPERIENCE OF TIME DURING ACT III

*"Players consistently report that Act III feels shorter than Act I, despite their nominal durations being identical. The most succinct explanation was offered not by a scientist but by a Presticogetator who had played in eleven Grand Bangs: 'In Act I you are thinking about time. In Act III you have forgotten it exists.' The IMA considers this the most accurate description of what the game is trying to produce in its participants, and is mildly embarrassed that it required eleven years of data collection to arrive at something a player knew already."*

## LAW IX

# Scoring

## 9.1 — THE NATURE OF A SCORE

A score in Mootball is not a single event. It is the simultaneous convergence of three independent conditions, each necessary, none individually sufficient. Remove any one of the three and what appears to be a score is not. This is not a complication introduced for the sake of complexity. It is the game's central philosophical statement made operational: that winning an argument requires more than being right, more than being strong, and more than having the world's attention. It requires all three at once.

## 9.2 — THE THREE CONDITIONS OF A VALID SCORE

A score is registered when, at the moment the Mootball fully crosses the Threshold Line, all three of the following conditions are simultaneously and verifiably met: **CONDITION 1 — PHYSICAL CROSSING** The entire Mootball — all twelve faces — must be on the far side of the Threshold Line. Partial crossing does not count. If not met: no score. Mootball returned to play at the point of closest approach to the Line. **CONDITION 2 — ARGUMENT DOMINANCE** At the moment of crossing, the Mootball's argument state must be blue (for the team crossing into the opposition's Threshold Zone) or red (for the team crossing in the reverse direction). A purple Mootball crossing the Threshold Line does not score. If not met: no score. The referee awards a Threshold Restart to the defending team's Keeper. **CONDITION 3 — LEGITIMATE POSSESSION** The Mootball must be in the uncontested physical possession of the team whose argument state it currently displays. A blue Mootball crossing the Threshold Line while in a red team player's hands scores for the red team, not the blue. This has produced some of the most remarkable own-goals in Grand Bang history.

## 9.3 — POINT VALUES

Standard goal (75–89% argument dominance): 3 physical points. Dominant goal (90%+ argument dominance): 5 physical points. Centrist Accord: 4 argument points shared equally between both teams — the only scoring event that awards points to both teams simultaneously. Fallacy Sanction: 2 argument points to the opposing team. Aesthetic Ruling: 1–6 argument points at referee's discretion. Threshold Forfeit: 1 physical point to the opposing team.

## 9.4 — THE COMBINED RESULT

The final result is determined by the combined total of physical points and argument points, plus the weighted Crowd Argument Mass contribution as set out in Law X. It is possible — and it has occurred — for a team to win on argument points despite losing on physical points, and vice versa. A combined result of zero to zero has occurred once in Grand Bang history. Both Orchestrators' Records are held in the IMA archive under the heading We Are Still Not Sure What Happened.

## 9.5 — WHAT HAPPENS IMMEDIATELY AFTER A GOAL

When a goal is confirmed, the following sequence occurs in strict order, taking no more than ninety seconds: the referee broadcasts confirmation simultaneously to all parties; the point total is updated; the Mootball is retrieved and placed at the dodecagonal centre; and play resumes. There is no pause for celebration. There is no ceremony. The clock has not stopped. A goal in Mootball is not a conclusion — it is a development.

## 9.6 — THE AESTHETIC RULING

The most controversial provision in the Laws. The referee may award additional argument points for an argument of exceptional elegance — one that is internally coherent, philosophically original, and constructed with craft. An Aesthetic Ruling may only be awarded if the argument has been sustained for a minimum of four

minutes and advanced the Mootball's argument state by at least 15 percentage points during that period. IMA Referee Guidance Note 7 on this subject runs to forty-three pages and concludes, on its final page, that a referee who requires the guidance note to tell them whether they are witnessing elegance is probably not witnessing it.

#### **9.7 — THE RESOLUTION PROTOCOL**

If the combined result is equal at the final whistle, the match enters a twelve-minute period of open play during which no clock stoppages are permitted except for injury. If the result remains equal, the referee makes a single adjudication: which team's argument, across the full duration of the match, was more coherently held, more honestly presented, and more genuinely engaged with the Proposition. This adjudication is final and unappealable. It is the only moment in Mootball where the result rests entirely on one person's judgement. The IMA has resisted every proposal to replace it with a further mechanical process, on the grounds that some questions, at the end of everything, require a human to answer them.

#### **IMA NOTE — ON WHAT A SCORE ACTUALLY MEANS**

*"A goal in Mootball is not a statement that one team is better than the other. It is a statement that at this moment, in this place, with this argument, under these conditions, the convergence occurred. The score is not the point. The score is evidence that the point was reached. There is a difference, and it matters."*

## LAW X

# The Crowd Argument Mass

## 10.1 — DEFINITION

The Crowd Argument Mass — designated the CAM — is the continuously measured, globally aggregated position of every participating citizen of the Interdependent Stake on the Proposition being argued. It is not a poll. It is not a vote. It is not an audience rating. It is an argument: the combined intellectual weight of every person who has chosen to engage with the Proposition, updated in real time throughout the match, and applied to the result at three specific moments of intervention.

## 10.2 — THE GLADIATORIAL INHERITANCE

The CAM draws its conceptual lineage from the Roman crowd's judgement of the fallen gladiator — the *pollice verso*. The CAM is that gesture made civilisational. The crowd does not decide whether the gladiator lives. It decides whether the argument does. The moral weight shifts from bloodlust to judgement. Which is, the IMA suggests, the precise shift the game was designed to make. "The gladiators died because the crowd was bored. Our players win or lose because the crowd is paying attention. I'll take that trade." — President O. Welles

## 10.3 — HOW THE CAM WORKS

Any citizen of the Interdependent Stake with a verified identity may participate in the CAM for any IMA-sanctioned match. Participation is voluntary, free of charge, and unlimited in frequency. The IMA's participation interface does not simply offer a For/Against/Undecided button. It requires the participant to read a plain-language summary of both sides' current argument and review the three most recent pieces of evidence submitted by each team before indicating their position. The IMA considers this the minimum standard of engagement consistent with the word participation meaning something.

## 10.4 — THE THREE INTERVENTION MOMENTS

The CAM is applied to the match result at three specific moments only. First Interval CAM Snapshot (at the Act I whistle): recorded and banked as baseline — no immediate mechanical weight. Act II Mid-Point Intervention (at the 50-minute mark): if the CAM shift from the Snapshot exceeds 12 percentage points, the leading team receives a 3-point argument bonus — the only moment the CAM produces a direct real-time scoring effect. Final Whistle CAM Weighting: applied as a weighted modifier per clause 10.5.

## 10.5 — CAM WEIGHT BY MATCH CLASS

Class I — Local: advisory only. Class II — Territorial: 15% in tied matches only. Class III — Grand Bang: 25% in tied matches only. Class IV — Grand Moot: determinative in all circumstances.

## 10.6 — THE TWELVE FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

Beyond the core position, the CAM interface offers twelve specific forms of participation — one for each face of the Mootball: evidence submission; precedent citation; personal testimony; expert endorsement; counterargument flag; coalition formation; rhetorical assessment; undecided reasoning; position change record; formation response; Centrist Accord nomination; and Grand Moot petition. The Grand Moot petition has twice resulted in Grand Moots being called within six months of the originating Grand Bang.

## 10.7 — THE UNDECIDED AGENDA

The aggregated reasons why the Undecided portion of the CAM has not yet been persuaded. It tells both Orchestrators, in plain language, precisely what questions remain unanswered for the people who have not yet made up their minds. The IMA has published the finding that teams winning on CAM weighting are statistically those whose Orchestrators read the Undecided Agenda at the start of Act III. The IMA has published this

finding four times. It continues to be ignored at approximately the same rate.

#### **10.8 — WHAT THE CAM CANNOT DO**

The CAM cannot override a physical score, reverse a referee's decision, award a goal, remove a player, change the Proposition, or sanction intellectual fouls. The CAM is not the game's ruler. It is its conscience. The distinction, the IMA has found, requires frequent repetition.

#### **10.9 — THE CAM DURING THE GRAND MOOT**

At Grand Moot level, the CAM is not an accessory to the result. It is the result's primary dimension. Both verdicts — sporting and civic — are announced simultaneously at the final whistle. Both are binding. A team may win every physical and argument point on the field and still lose the Grand Moot if the CAM is decisively against them. The players know this before they take the field. The Laws require it to be stated to them again at the moment the Quintessence toss is made, so that no one can later claim they were not warned.

#### **IMA NOTE — ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CROWD AND THE ARGUMENT**

*"Before the CAM existed, watching a match meant watching other people argue about something important whilst feeling no personal stake in whether they argued it well. After the CAM, watching a match means being part of the argument. The crowd does not judge the gladiator. The crowd is asked to think. The IMA considers this an improvement, and has always been mildly surprised that it requires defending."*

## LAW XI

# Fouls, Sanctions and the Spirit of the Game

## 11.1 – THE PRINCIPLE OF TWO REGISTERS

Mootball recognises fouls in two distinct registers: physical and intellectual. Both are sanctionable. Both affect the result. A physical foul can be accidental. An intellectual foul cannot. The IMA has never accepted the defence that a logical fallacy was deployed unintentionally, on the grounds that a player who does not know they are committing one has revealed a more fundamental problem than the foul itself, and should perhaps not be on the field.

## 11.2 – PHYSICAL FOULS

P1 – Impeding formation deliberately: 30-second free argument restart for the fouled team. P2 – Dangerous contact: 45-second free argument restart; possible Amber Card. P3 – Deliberate suit interference (targeting laser array, earwag system or argument display): Amber Card, 60-second restart, argument points deducted. P4 – Deliberate physical assault: Red Card, immediate removal, argument points deducted, mandatory IMA disciplinary review.

## 11.3 – INTELLECTUAL FOULS

An intellectual foul is not a bad argument. A team may make poor arguments all match and commit no intellectual fouls whatsoever. An intellectual foul is a dishonest argument — one that substitutes the appearance of reasoning for its substance, or that attempts to win through means the game was specifically designed to exclude.

## 11.4 – THE REGISTER OF INTELLECTUAL FOULS

The IMA maintains a formal Register of Intellectual Fouls, updated periodically. The Register has grown from its original forty-two entries to its current ninety-seven, which the IMA attributes not to increasing dishonesty in the game but to increasing creativity in the attempts to disguise it. AD HOMINEM — MINOR (2 ARGUMENT POINTS TO OPPOSITION) Attacking the character, identity or motives of those associated with the opposing argument rather than the argument itself. The most common intellectual foul in Mootball and the one the IMA considers most corrosive to the game's purpose. STRAW MAN — MINOR (2 ARGUMENT POINTS TO OPPOSITION) Representing the opposition's argument in a deliberately weakened or distorted form in order to refute the misrepresentation rather than the actual position. FALSE DICHOTOMY — MINOR (2 ARGUMENT POINTS TO OPPOSITION) Presenting the Proposition as though only two positions exist when the argument genuinely admits more. APPEAL TO AUTHORITY — MINOR (2 ARGUMENT POINTS TO OPPOSITION) Citing the position of an authority figure as evidence without engaging with the substance of that authority's reasoning. CIRCULAR ARGUMENT — MAJOR (4 ARGUMENT POINTS TO OPPOSITION, CLOCK STOP) Using the conclusion of an argument as one of its premises. Detectable by the Mootball's dronelet system when an argument's endpoint is found to be logically identical to its starting point, flagged as a Recursive Loop. PROPOSITION ABANDONMENT — MAJOR (4 ARGUMENT POINTS, FORMAL WARNING) Ceasing to argue the assigned Proposition and substituting a different, more convenient question. The IMA considers this the most fundamental intellectual foul because it abandons the game's civic purpose entirely. DELIBERATE MISDIRECTION — SEVERE (6 ARGUMENT POINTS, AMBER CARD, MANDATORY IMA REVIEW) The deliberate suppression of evidence known to the team that would materially damage their argument, combined with the active suggestion of a false impression in its place. ORCHESTRATOR FABRICATION — SEVERE (MATCH FORFEIT, PERMANENT BAN, NO APPEAL) An Orchestrator broadcasting fabricated evidence, false statistics, or invented precedents. Has occurred twice in Grand Bang history. Both Orchestrators were permanently banned. Both matches were forfeited. On both

occasions the fabrication was detected by the CAM's counterargument flag system before the referee identified it. The IMA considers this a validation of the CAM's design.

### 11.5 – THE CARDS

Amber Card: formal caution, player remains on field, a second Amber Card in the same match becomes a Red Card automatically. Red Card: immediate removal, team plays short, no substitution permitted, mandatory IMA disciplinary review. Purple Card: unique to Mootball, issued for the Body Without Mind offence — player must leave the field for exactly 12 minutes, may not be replaced, must demonstrate active intellectual engagement within five minutes of return or receive an Amber Card.

### 11.6 – THE FALLACY CARD

A formal challenge mechanism available to any on-field player or Orchestrator, once per Act. The challenge is lodged via the referee channel. The clock stops. The referee reviews within ninety seconds. If upheld: opposition receives the relevant sanction; challenging team receives 30 seconds of free argument development. If rejected: the challenging team loses their Fallacy Card for that Act and the opposition receives 15 seconds of free argument as compensation. The Fallacy Card as momentum-breaker is a recognised tactic. It is also a recognised act of desperation. Experienced crowds have learnt to tell the difference.

### 11.7 – THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME

The Laws of Mootball cannot anticipate every form of conduct that violates their purpose. The referee has a residual power to sanction any conduct that violates the Spirit of the Game, even if no specific Law has been broken. The Spirit of the Game is defined precisely: Mootball exists to demonstrate that the simultaneous exercise of physical and intellectual capacity, in honest contest around a question of genuine civic consequence, produces better outcomes than either capacity exercised alone or either contest conducted dishonestly. Any conduct that undermines this demonstration is a violation of the Spirit of the Game and is sanctionable accordingly.

#### 11.7.1 – THE REFEREE'S RESIDUAL POWER IN PRACTICE

The residual power has been invoked forty-one times in Grand Bang history. The most cited case is the Auckland v. Accra Grand Bang of 2038, in which the referee invoked the power not to sanction a player but to sanction an Orchestrator's broadcast strategy, judged to have been designed not to win the argument but to prevent any argument being made at all. The referee's written account opens: "There is a difference between arguing to win and arguing to prevent, and Mootball was not designed for the latter."

#### IMA NOTE — ON WHY INTELLECTUAL FOULS ARE HARDER TO ACCEPT THAN PHYSICAL ONES

*"The alternative — a game that can only sanction what is physically visible — would be a lesser game, and a lesser model of the world it is designed to improve."*

## LAW XII

# The Grand Moot

## 12.1 — DEFINITION

The Grand Moot is the supreme form of Mootball. It is not the largest match, the most watched match, or the most prestigious match. It is the match that matters most — because its Proposition is not a question the Interdependent Stake is curious about. It is a question the Interdependent Stake must answer. A Grand Moot is convened not to entertain but to decide. Everything the game has been — every Law that precedes this one, every formation ever projected, every Fallacy Card ever deployed, every Centrist Accord ever reached in twelve seconds of crowd silence — has been preparation for this.

## 12.2 — CONDITIONS FOR CONVENING

### 12.2.1 — EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

The Grand Moot must be called by the Auntie-In-Chief of the Interdependent Stake, exercising their sole executive prerogative. No other individual, body, institution or coalition may call a Grand Moot. The IMA notes that every Auntie-In-Chief in the game's history has described calling a Grand Moot as the most difficult decision of their tenure, and that this difficulty is a feature, not a flaw, of the design.

### 12.2.2 — GRAND COUNCIL RATIFICATION

The Proposition must be ratified by a two-thirds majority of the IMA Grand Council within fourteen days of announcement. The Grand Council may not alter the Proposition. They may only ratify or reject it. A Proposition rejected twice cannot be resubmitted. This has happened once. The resulting political consequences lasted a decade. The IMA records this without comment.

### 12.2.3 — PREPARATION PERIOD

No Grand Moot may take place fewer than six months after the announcement of the Proposition. Six months of public argument, education, and discourse is the minimum the IMA considers adequate for a question of Grand Moot weight. It has, on occasion, not felt like enough.

## 12.3 — HOW THE GRAND MOOT DIFFERS FROM ALL OTHER MOOTBALL

The Grand Moot is played under all Laws without exception, with the following escalations: CAM weight is determinative in all circumstances (not just tied matches). Duration is uncapped — the argument concludes when the referee judges it has been fully made. Team selection is by global draft: both teams selected by the IMA Grand Council from all eligible players across the Interdependent Stake, drafted for their suitability to argue the assigned side of the Proposition. Club allegiance is suspended. The result is a civic verdict, binding on the Interdependent Stake, entered into the IMA's Civic Record.

## 12.4 — THE GRAND MOOT PROTOCOL

The Grand Moot follows eight formal stages: (1) Announcement — simultaneously to all citizens and the IMA Grand Council, with no advance notice to any party. (2) Grand Council ratification — within 14 days, public vote, no abstentions. (3) Proposition Literacy period — minimum 6 months. (4) The Grand Draft — 90 days before the match; players learn their assigned side at the moment of the Quintessence toss, not before. (5) The Reading of the Laws — before kick-off, referee reads Law XII aloud to all twenty-four participants assembled on the field. (6) The match — all Laws apply in full, duration uncapped. (7) The dual verdict — sporting and civic, announced simultaneously. (8) The Orchestrators' Records — published in full within 24 hours, without redaction.

## 12.5 — ON ARGUING A POSITION YOU DO NOT HOLD

At Grand Moot level, the compelled advocacy provision reaches its fullest expression. Players who approach this demand with resistance tend to argue it poorly. Players who approach it with curiosity tend to argue it well. Players who approach it with genuine intellectual openness to discover, in the making of the case, something they had not previously considered — these players occasionally argue the opposing position better than anyone who actually holds it would have done. The IMA considers this the highest achievement available to a Mootball player, and the one that most clearly demonstrates what the game was built to produce in the people who play it.

#### **12.6 — THE PASSAGE THAT MUST CONCLUDE THE READING OF THE LAWS**

The following passage is read by the presiding referee to both teams assembled on the field immediately before every Grand Moot begins. It is not addressed to the players. It is addressed to the game. "These Laws were written because we believed that a game could be more than a game — that the qualities a game demands of its players could be the qualities a civilisation requires of its citizens, and that practising them in contest might make us better at them in life. We believed that thinking and acting are not opposites. That strength and intelligence are not rivals. That the crowd's opinion and the player's argument are not enemies but partners in a larger question neither can answer alone. We believed that a question worth asking deserves the best possible answer — and that the best possible answer requires the best possible version of both sides. We did not build this game because we thought we knew the answers. We built it because we believed the questions deserved better than they had been getting. What happens on this field today will be recorded. What it means is not yet known. That is as it should be. The game begins." This passage was written by President O. Welles at the founding of the IMA and has been read before every Grand Moot since. It has never been amended. The IMA has never been asked to amend it. These facts are related.

#### **12.7 — THE GRAND MOOT RECORD**

Total Grand Moots held: 3. Shortest: 3 hours 19 minutes — the First Grand Moot, 2029. Proposition: whether the Interdependent Stake had a duty to actively intervene in Undependent States experiencing humanitarian crisis. Civic verdict: intervention. The world has been living with what that means ever since. Longest: 11 hours 4 minutes — the Second Grand Moot, 2036. Proposition: whether non-biological intelligences meeting defined criteria of sentience should be granted Interdependent Stake citizenship. Civic verdict: undecided — the only Grand Moot in history to produce a CAM result below 50% in either direction. The question remains open. Third Grand Moot: Proposition, teams and date pending announcement by the Auntie-In-Chief. The IMA has received a petition of sufficient signatures. The IMA is waiting, as is the world. Quintessence completions in Grand Moot history: None. As yet.

#### **12.8 — WHAT THE GRAND MOOT CANNOT DO**

The Grand Moot produces a civic verdict. It does not produce a solution. It does not produce certainty. It does not produce the end of argument — only a decision about where the argument has reached, at this moment, in this world, with the evidence and the wisdom and the courage and the fallibility available to it. The verdict is binding. It is not eternal. It is the best answer the world could give today. Whether it remains the best answer is a question for another generation, another petition, another Grand Moot, another game. "What happens on this field today will be recorded. What it means is not yet known. That is as it should be. The game begins."

#### **IMA CLOSING NOTE — ON WHAT THE LAWS ARE FOR**

*"These are the Laws of Mootball. They are long because the game is complex. They are precise because the game is serious. They contain more dry humour than most legal documents because the IMA has always believed that a game which cannot laugh at itself has taken itself too seriously to be of use to anyone. They were written to govern a sport. They were written to describe a world. Whether they succeed at either is not*

*for the IMA to judge. The IMA wishes them, and the players, and the world, a good game."*

## LAW XII · CLARIFICATORY ADDENDUM

*On the Title of Auntie-In-Chief*

## IMA NOTE — FINAL WORD ON THE MATTER

*"The IMA is aware that this addendum is longer than strictly necessary for a clarification of a title. It is the length it is because the IMA felt, given the circumstances of its necessity, that the world's aunts deserved a proper accounting of how the matter arose, how it was resolved, and why the resolution took as long as it did. The IMA regrets the delay. The IMA does not expect to be forgiven for it quickly. The IMA has, in this respect, learnt something about aunts that it perhaps should have known already." INTERNATIONAL MOOTBALL AUTHORITY The Laws of Mootball — Version 4.1 Ratified by the IMA Grand Council, Athena's Owl University, Atlas Campus All twelve Laws and their Annexes constitute a complete and indivisible document. The Laws are the game. The game is the Laws. International Mootball Authority — The Laws of Mootball v.4.1 — Page*

## COLOPHON

*This is the IMA Authorised Edition of The Laws of Mootball, Version 4.1, as ratified by the IMA Grand Council in regular session at Athena's Owl University, Atlas Campus. It supersedes all prior editions.*

*Mootball is the central civic institution of the Interdependent Stake — the society depicted in the novel O.Welles 19/8.4 by Vincent Murphy, Book One of the Optopia trilogy. The Laws of Mootball function as appendix to that book, in the tradition of Orwell's Principles of Newspeak.*

*"A working society does not eliminate contest. It civilises it."*

— FOUNDING NOTE

[vincentmurphy.co.uk / mootball](http://vincentmurphy.co.uk/mootball) · [vincentmurphy.co.uk](http://vincentmurphy.co.uk) / [owelles](http://owelles)