

# Open Bocce Regulations of the Italian American Club

## THE EVOLUTION OF RULES

These OPEN RULES are in effect at all IAC recreational league matches. In addition, they are an excellent way to expose the sport, promote the game and draw in new players. Bocce is a game of skill and camaraderie. It is an easy game to play yet difficult to play well. These rules are based wholly upon USBF rules that have evolved over years of successful development. The USBF rules are recommended for all types of tournaments and basic social play and are the guideline for all USBF sanctioned tournaments as well as the annual National event.

A copy of these rules should be available at all IAC matches. These rules supersede all other rules, either posted or otherwise available during league play.

*Note: The U. S. Bocce Federation is the only internationally sanctioned governing body for Bocce in the United States. The USBF is also a member of the Federation International de Boules and the Confederazione Boccistica Internazionale. The Italian American Club of Boise is a proud member of the USBF as are most of its members.*

### Who plays Bocce?

Everyone can play! There is no race, sex, or age discrimination in the sport of Bocce. It is played all over the world and is part of the International Special Olympics and the Senior Olympics. All this being said, persons desiring to participate in the IAC League should be members of the Italian American Club of Boise.

### What do you need to play?

A set of 8 balls will be used for each match between two teams. Each team will use four balls of different colors and one contrasting colored target ball called a “jack” or “pallino.” Tape measures will be available and used for measuring proximity to the pallino. Any device that can be used with accuracy can be used as well, such as antennae or expanding pens.

### How many people on a Team?

For Italian America Club league play, teams are comprised of four members each. Two teams compete at a time in matches over a series of weeks. Every team meets every other team at least twice in matches (this depends on the number of teams participating in league play for a specific number of weeks).

*USBF: Games can be played one-on-one, pairs, triples, or foursomes. In USBF format, singles are played with each person throwing 4 balls and alternating use of each end of the court. In doubles (pairs) each team member throws 2 balls and again alternate use of each end of the court. Triples have become the newest format and 12 balls are used instead of 8. Play is the same as Doubles with each team member throwing 2 balls each and alternating use of each end of the court. Foursomes should be played with 2 members of a team stationed at opposite ends of the court and playing 2 balls each. Variations to the foursome style are used in some regions of the USA and certainly are permissible and at the discretion of Tournament directors or organizers.*

### Court Dimensions

The courts being played in Boise are 60’ in length and 10’ in width. These are unofficial by accepted standards and USBF sanctioned tournaments cannot be conducted on them. Official Courts are 86.92’ in length and 13.12’ in width

39 Court surface has the greatest variation found in the USA. Some examples are: carpet, crushed stone, dirt,  
40 oyster shells, clay, and most recently synthetic carpets and poured liquid creating a smooth extremely fast  
41 surface. The courts in Boise are oyster shell courts and the surfaces are very soft. Lofting shots are discouraged  
42 due to the fact that they ‘crater’ the court surface making the surface unsuitable for rolling with accuracy.

### 43 **The Court:**

44 The court is the playing surface itself. In addition, Open Rules allow that the side boards are part of the court  
45 and are ‘in-bounds.’ Within the Open Rules, as stated below, the ‘back boards’ are ‘in-bounds’ also with  
46 exceptions as noted below. All play is initiated on or behind the foul lines and ON THE SURFACE OF THE  
47 COURT.

### 48 **Ball Size**

49 The IAC recommends for match play: 107 mm Diameter and 920 grams (approx 2 lbs) in Weight. The IAC  
50 allows players to use their own set as long as the size and weight are approved and agreed upon by opposing  
51 capos prior to start of matches.

### 52 **Foul Lines:**

- 53 • Are clearly marked in RED on the side boards
  - 54 • There is only one line for pointing and shooting that is approximately 7.5’ from the back wall.
  - 55 • Players may step on but not over the foul line before releasing the pallino or the ball.
  - 56 • A center line in WHITE is marked on the side boards
- 57  
58

## 59 ***Start the game!!***

60 Begin the game with a flip of a coin between the capos (captains) of each team. The winner of the coin flip will  
61 determine the end from which play will start and has control of the pallino. Before match play begins, an  
62 additional benefit of winning the coin toss can be the choice of color of the balls used. This last benefit must be  
63 determined prior to match play. When teams wish to use their own personal set of four balls, the balls must be  
64 of a different color than the opposing team and of comparable size and weight.

65 Coin toss winner throws the pallino!

- 66 • Toss is valid if pallino passes center line and does not touch the back wall on opposite end.
- 67 • If the player fails to place the pallino in valid area, the opposing team will put the pallino in play.
- 68 • IF both players fail, the pallino returns to the original team for an additional attempt. Alternating  
69 process continues until pallino is in valid position.
- 70 • The Team that originally tossed the pallino will play the first ball.

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### 72 **The Game!**

- 73 • The first ball may be rolled by ANY member of the Team that placed the pallino in play
- 74 • Should the ball rolled hit the backboard without touching the pallino; it is a dead ball and removed from  
75 the court.
- 76 • The same Team must throw again and continue rolling until a valid point is established.

- Once the point is established, the opposing Team must point or shoot until they make a new point – closer to the pallino than the previous opposing point.
- Players may use side boards at any time. The side boards are part of the playable area of the court.
- **a)** Balls can be measured at any time. Any member, through their capo, can request such. If there is doubt as to the measurement, an official referee or Tournament official (umpire) should be called.
- **b)** In the event a tie is determined, the last Team to roll a ball must roll again until the tie is broken.
- **c)** If after all balls are played there is still a tie, no points are awarded and play resumes with the Team last scoring tossing the pallino from the opposite end of the court.
- In the event a ball/balls are moved during a measurement by an official, the balls are returned to approximate position and official will still make the call. If however, a member of a Team currently playing measures and moves a ball, the point is awarded to the opposing team. In any case, the decision of a referee or official is final.
- One Team Member can cross the centerline to measure balls. Other players need to remain at their respective end of the court.

### **Backboard:**

- If a ball hits the backboard without first touching another ball or pallino, it is a dead ball and removed from the court.
- If a ball is shot, hits the backboard illegally and then strikes a stationary ball/s, the shot ball is removed from the court and the stationary ball/s are placed in their approximate original position/s
- The pallino is always a valid target and remains in play even if it strikes the back wall after being struck by any valid ball during a frame. If however, the pallino is knocked out of the court or bounces back in front of the center line, the frame is considered void and the Team that started the frame will begin again at the opposite end of the court.
- In the event ball/s resting against a backboard are moved as a result of a valid shot, they remain in their new position. If however they move as a result of an invalid shot, they are returned to their approximate original positions.

### **Scoring:**

- Only one team scores in a frame (unless there is a tie)
- Games are usually played to 12 points
- Final games are usually played to 15 points (USBF recommended)
- Tournament Directors can decide any variation to game points but should do so prior to start of event.

### **Illegal movement of balls or pallino:**

- Players should never touch or move any ball or pallino. At the end of a frame and after both capos are in agreement regarding who wins points can the balls be taken from the court.
- ALL players should be out of the court . If not possible, they should be positioned in front of play area when a player at the opposite end is shooting.

### **In the event that a player touches a ball after a valid shot, the following rules apply:**

- 1) If player in violation is from the same team, all struck balls are returned to their approximate positions and thrown ball is removed from play.
- 2) If player in violation is from the opposite team, the team shooting is awarded one point for the shot ball and one point for any remaining ball/s not played

118 3) Again, no one should be on the court!! At no time is an opposing player permitted on the court when a ball  
119 is being delivered.

120 4) In the event any player moves a stationary ball, that ball should be placed in the original position as long as  
121 it doesn't affect the established point.

### 122

### 123 **Shooting and Pointing:**

- 124 • There are basically two (2) types of shooting
- 125 • Volo: the act of lofting the ball in the air attempting to hit the target.
- 126 • Raffa: the act of shooting at a target either by releasing the ball at ground level, slightly lofting the ball  
127 or rolling the ball in a forceful manner.
- 128 • Pointing is done with either foot or both feet before or on the pointing line. A throw is valid as long as  
129 any part of the foot/feet is on the line.
- 130 • When shooting (either style) the player is allowed to step on the line prior to releasing the ball. As long  
131 as even the heel is on the line, it is a valid shot.
- 132 • Once a player has released the ball, he/she is allowed to continue steps up to the center line. This is  
133 considered valid.

### 134 **Late arrivals, substitutions, delays, etc:**

- 135 • A team not present within 15 minutes of scheduled start of game will forfeit the game.
- 136 • In a tournament where substitutes are allowed, a Team may substitute only once during a game and it  
137 must be announced to the opposing Team before the start of the next frame.
- 138 • A substituted player may not return to that game.
- 139 • If a player/s arrive late, the game will start with that Team playing shorthanded and minus the  
140 appropriate number of balls. Player may then enter game at "short handed" end, after frame is  
141 completed. In the event a player must leave a game in progress, an alternate may enter at the end of a  
142 frame and player that leaves can not return for remainder of game. If no alternate is available, the game  
143 continues using late arrival rule.
- 144 • Repeated "conferences" during a frame causing delays in the game are discouraged. If delays continue,  
145 the offended Team Captain should notify an official.
- 146 • If an official issues a one minute warning and delays continue, the "burned ball" rule should be placed in  
147 effect and one of the offending players balls will be removed from the court.

### 148 **Game Notes:**

- 149 • Consecutive or alternating throws by teammates shall be at the option of the players.
- 150 • Any time a player is in action, opposing players should be off the court or far behind the player if courts  
151 don't have adequate space.
- 152 • If a player plays the wrong color ball, simply replace it with correct color when it comes to rest. Play  
153 continues.
- 154 • If a player rolls/shoots out of turn or plays more balls than allowed, the opposing team has two (2)  
155 options. Leave all balls as they rest or remove the illegally thrown ball from play and return all other  
156 ball/s to previous position.

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158 These rules are approved by the IAC Bocce Ball Committee.