

## BOCCE RULE INTERPRETATIONS

### SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

- A-1. In cases not covered by these interpretations, Special Olympics Inc. rules will govern. Rules can be downloaded at [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org).
- A-2. The Games Rules Committee will make all final decisions.
- A-3. At all times athletes are expected to compete to the best of their ability to ensure a quality competition at all levels. Coaches are expected to provide accurate and honest scores of their athlete's ability.
- A-4. Official Events for Traditional Bocce are Singles, Doubles and Team. We also offer ramp competition. Events for Unified Bocce Competition will be Doubles and Team Competition.
- A-5. Athletes must qualify from a Regional event to attend the State Summer Games.
- A-6. When appropriate, for the Unified doubles competition, each court may be asked to keep their own score. In the case of a discrepancy an official shall be requested. The official will determine the outcome of the discrepancy.
- A-7. Substitution of players is not allowed in Special Olympics Colorado Bocce Competition.
- A-8. Tennis shoes, shorts/sweatpants, T-shirt or polo shirt will be the proper attire for competition. No street shoes or open toed shoes will be allowed for any athlete or partner in Bocce events. Players will not be permitted to play without shoes. Athletes or partners will not be allowed to wear jewelry or awards during competition.
- A-9. No advertising or sponsorship is allowed to be worn on competition or warm up uniforms.
- A-10. The following process will be used for all Special Olympics Colorado round robin tournaments:
  - a. The team with the best record at the end of competition will receive first place.
  - b. If all teams have the same record (one win-one loss), places of finish will be determined by the point differential in the games played.
  - c. If the point differential is the same, places of finish will be determined by the total points scored by each team during the tournament (highest scoring team receives first place).
  - d. If the total points are the same, then a tie is declared and appropriate awards will be given to each team.
- A-11. The score for a forfeited singles, doubles or team game is 12-0.
- A-12. Coaching or having a discussion with any athlete and/or partner is prohibited once the athlete and/or partner steps into the court. If an official determines that a coach/partner/spectator is violating this rule, the official may sanction the offending individual. Sanctions may include:
  - a. Verbal Warning
  - b. Citing the coach/partner with unsportsmanlike conduct (forfeiture of the game)
  - c. Expulsion from the event

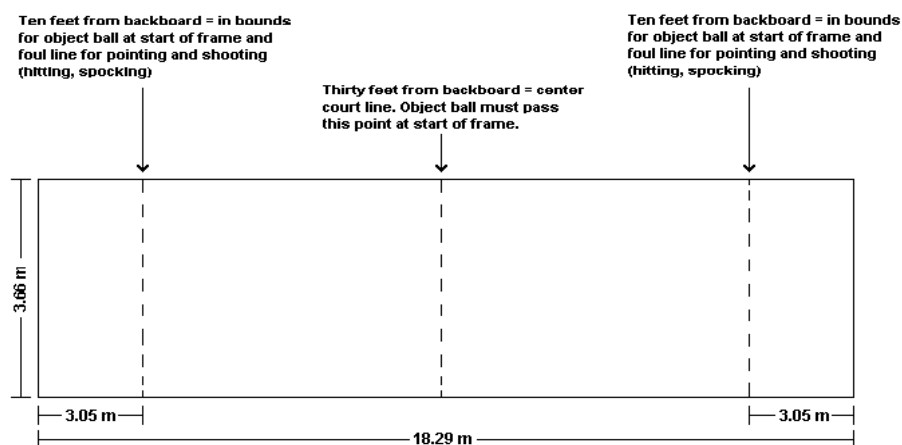
- A-13. For athletes with a significant visual impairment that require a visual aid to establish the location of the Pallina, the following adaptations may be made:
- A marker may be placed by an official over the Pallina but must be removed once the ball has been delivered so as to not interfere with the course of the Pallina or Bocce balls. Approved marking device is a cone held over the Pallina.
  - An official may stand next to the Pallina but must move once the ball has been delivered so as to not interfere with the course of the Pallina or Bocce balls.
  - An official may stand next to the Pallina and provide sounds or verbal cues as to the location of the Pallina ("the Pallina is here") but may not indicate the direction the Bocce ball should be rolled.

## SECTION B - THE COURT AND EQUIPMENT

### B-1. Court

- The Court is an area 3.66m. (12') wide by 18.29m. (60') long. All courts should be clearly marked for the following:
  - 3.05m. (10') from back boards - inbounds for first toss of Pallina and foul line for pointing
  - Half court marker - minimum distance Pallina may be played on first toss of Pallina during the course of play. The position of the Pallina may change as a result of normal play; however, the Pallina may never come to rest closer than the half point marker or the frame is considered dead. The 10 foot and 30 foot lines should be permanently drawn from sideboard to sideboard.

#### Court Diagram:



- The court surface may be composed of stone-dust, dirt, clay, grass or artificial surface provided there are no permanent or temporary obstructions in the court that would interfere with the straight line delivery of a ball from any direction. These obstructions do not include variations in grade or consistency or terrain.

### B-2. Equipment

- Bocce balls may be composed of wood or metal and of equal size. Official league and tournament ball sizes may be no larger than 107-110 mm (4.20" to 4.33") and weigh between 1 and 2 pounds. The color of the balls is immaterial provided that the four balls of one team are clearly and visibly distinct from the bocce balls of the opposing team.

- b. The Pallina must not be larger than 63 mm (2.5") or smaller than 48mm (1.875") and should be of a color visibly distinct from both bocce ball colors.
- c. A measuring device may be any device that has the capacity of accurately measuring the distance between two objects, and acceptable to tournament officials.

#### SECTION C – THE GAME

- C-1. All teams must report to its court at the assigned time. Any teams not ready to compete within five minutes of the assigned time will forfeit.
- C-2. The winner of the coin toss will be awarded the toss of the Pallina and the choice of color of ball.
- C-3. Three-attempt rule—The team possessing the Pallina will have three attempts at placing the Pallina beyond the 9.125-meter (30-foot) mark and before the 3.05-meter (10-foot) mark on the opposite end. If these three attempts are unsuccessful, the opposing team will have one opportunity to place the Pallina. If this attempt is unsuccessful, the referee will place the Pallina in the center of the court at the 15.24-meter (50-foot) mark (opposite end foul line). However, at no time does a team lose its earned Pallina advantage of being able to deliver the first ball. Note: in doubles and team play, ANY member of the team may throw the Pallina at any point (i.e. The first person to throw the Pallina does NOT have to make all three attempts.) The player making the successful toss must deliver the first ball.
- C-4. The Pallina and Bocce balls, whether using 1 or 2 hands, must be delivered in an underhand motion. The player may roll, bounce, loft, bank, etc. during the delivery of the Pallina or ball. If, in the judgment of the official, the delivery is a danger to anyone then the athlete will be warned and if the delivery is outside the court the ball will be removed from play.
- C-5. Once the player has delivered the bocce ball, they must step outside the court. A player with a mobility issue may be allowed to remain on the court, upon agreement of both head coaches. That player must move to a corner of the throwing area that does not interfere with their opponent's throw.
- C-6. Athletes with physical limitations that do not allow an underhand throw may be approved to compete in bocce. To receive approval, the Local Program Coordinator or Head Coach must contact their Regional Manager at the beginning of the 8 week training period, or earlier if possible. The Regional Manager will work with the program and athlete to determine if the athlete will be allowed to compete in Bocce. If approval is granted, guidelines for the athlete's participation will be agreed upon and communicated to necessary personnel. In cases where the athlete is visually impaired, the Regional Manager must be contacted at the beginning of the 8 week training period or earlier if possible, and cases will be handled on an individual basis.
- C-7. Sequence of Play - Sequence of play—The Pallina is rolled or tossed by a member of the team having won the coin toss to start the game. The player successfully tossing the Pallina must deliver the first ball. The opposing team will then deliver their bocce balls until the point is taken or they have exhausted their four balls. This "nearest ball" rule governs the sequence of played balls. The side whose ball is the closest to the Pallina is called the "in" ball and the opposing side the "out" ball. Whenever a team gets "in," it steps aside and allows the "out" team to deliver. Note: the tossing of the Pallina is NOT required to be rotated through all members of the team during a game.

- The same individual could throw the Pallina and the first ball for an entire game. It is required that each member of a team throws the same number of balls each frame (2 ball per two-player team member, 1 ball per 4-player team member).
- C-8. At the end of each frame (when both teams have exhausted all balls), scoring will be determined as follows: points are awarded to the team whose balls are closer to the Pallina than the closest ball of the opposing team, which can be determined by viewing or by mechanical measurements. A player may request a mechanical measurement. Measurements will be taken from the center side of the bocce ball to the center side of the Pallina. At the end of a frame, when the referee has determined the “in” balls and has called out the number of points, and the player or team agrees with the number of points awarded, the player or team then proceeds to remove the balls to start the next frame. The scoring team for each frame will also win the Pallina advantage for the subsequent frame.
- C-9. Ties during frame—In the event that two opposing balls are equidistant from the Pallina (tied), the team that rolled last will continue to roll until the tie is broken. Example: Team A rolls a ball toward the Pallina and establishes the point. Then Team B rolls its ball toward the Pallina, and the referee determines that they are both exactly the same distance from the Pallina. Team B must continue to roll until it has a point closer than Team A’s ball. If Team B does roll up to the point, and Team A hits that ball out re-establishing a tie, Team A must continue to roll until the tie is broken.
- C-10. Ties at the end of a frame—In the event that the two balls closest to the Pallina belong to opposing teams and are tied, no points will be awarded. The Pallina returns to the team which last delivered it. Play resumes from the end of the court from which the frame was last played.
- C-11. At all levels of competition, the following procedures will be utilized to determine winners of a match:
- a. Single, Double and Team games will be played to 12 points or the competition’s pre-established time limit, whichever comes first.
  - b. If the score is tied when the time limit is called, one additional frame will be played to determine the winner.
  - c. Games with teams who have players with mobility issues may play from the same end of the court throughout the game.

#### SECTION D - FOULS, ILLEGAL MOVEMENT, INTERFERENCE

- D-1. The official may grant a timeout whenever the circumstances explained appear to be of sufficient validity to do so. The timeout will be limited to ten minutes.
- D-2. Foul-line Fouls - In pointing and hitting, the foremost part of the specific foul line will not be surpassed by any part of the foot or any apparatus used by an athlete before the ball touches any part of the playing field. For wheelchairs, the front wheels are determined to be the first point of contact with the ground and may not surpass the foremost part of the foul line. A referee as a result of witnessing the foul must call all fouls.
- a. The ball thrown will be declared dead. If possible and safe, the referee will seek to stop the just thrown ball before it reaches the Pallina and other balls “in contention”, remove the ball from the court and declare it a dead ball. If the just released ball comes in contact with the Pallina and/or other balls “in contention” and these balls are moved from their original position, then the referee will place the balls back as close to their original position as possible and play will continue.

- D-3. Illegal movement of a ball belonging to your own team - If a player moves one or more of his or her team's balls "in contention," the ball(s) are removed from the court and considered dead and play continues.
- D-4. Illegal movement of an opponent's ball - If, after all eight balls have been thrown, a player moves one or more of his/her opponent's balls, the opponent's balls that were moved will be awarded one point each and play continues. If a player moves one or more of his/her opponent's balls, and there are remaining un-played balls, the referee will place the balls as close to their original position as possible and play will continue.
- D-5. Illegal movement of the Pallina by a player - If the Pallina is moved by a player, the team fouled against may be awarded as many points as the number of live balls that were "in contention" plus the number of balls yet un-played by that team during the frame in which the foul occurred.
- D-6. Interference with a Ball in Motion
- a. By one's own team - If a player interferes with his or her team's ball in motion, his or her team automatically forfeits the ball (it is declared dead) and play continues. If possible and safe, the referee will seek to stop the ball just delivered before it reaches the Pallina and other balls "in contention", remove the just released ball from the court and declare it dead. If balls in play are disrupted as a result, the referee will place the balls back as close to their original position, as possible and play will continue.
  - b. By Opponents Team - If a player interferes with an opponent's ball in motion, the team fouled against has one of the following options:
    1. Playing the ball over.
    2. Declaring the frame dead.
    3. Declining the penalty, accept the lie of the touched ball, and continue playing.
- D-7. With no disruption of position - If a spectator, animal or object interferes with a ball in motion and that ball does not touch another ball already in play, it must be played over by the same player.
- D-8. With disruption of position - If a spectator, animal or object interferes with a ball in motion and that ball touches another ball already in play and "in contention" the frame is dead.
- D-9. Other disruption of play - Any action, which interferes with the position of the Pallina or the ball of each team closest to the Pallina, renders the frame dead. In the event balls other than the Pallina or the two opposing balls closest to it are moved, they may be replaced as close as possible to their original position by the two captains or referees. Such disruptive action may be the result of a dead ball from another court, foreign objects, spectators, or animals entering the court and changing the position of the ball(s) in play.
- D-10. If a player delivers a wrong color ball, another player or the referee may not stop the ball. The ball must be allowed to come to rest and replaced with the proper ball by the referee.
- D-11. If a player delivers a ball of the wrong color which cannot be replaced without disturbing another ball already in play, the points of the play will be recorded at that time, wrong color ball counting for team which rolled or delivered it, and play will

- continue. It will be the responsibility of the two team captains and the referee to maintain identity of the “wrong color” ball(s).
- a. Team Red delivers a green ball by mistake.
  - b. If the green ball rolls, hits other balls and lands in a place that cannot be easily replaced with the red ball that was supposed to be played, the green ball will remain “live” as a part of Team Red and they will receive points accordingly.
  - c. It will be the responsibility of the two team captains and the referee to maintain identity of the “wrong color” ball(s).
- D-12. If a player delivers a ball of the wrong color which cannot be identified by the referee as a result of hitting or scattering of balls, the frame will be considered dead and no points awarded.
- D-13. If the pallina is played or knocked outside of the side or end lines, the frame will be considered dead. Athletes will switch to the other side of the court and the individually who started that dead frame will begin the next frame.*

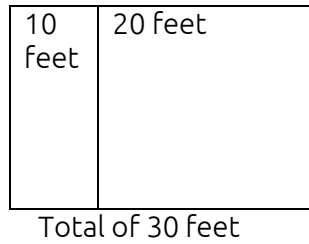
## SECTION E – PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ENTRY SCORE

- E-1. The athlete/unified partner should alternate from each end of the court and play the following allotted balls. The athlete/unified partner should not surpass the foul line when he/she plays the allotted balls:
- a. The referee should place stationary flag or marker at the 30-foot line, and the player should play eight balls. The referee will measure the closest three balls and record their distance in centimeters.
  - b. The referee will then place stationary flag or marker at the 40-foot line, and the player should play eight balls. The referee will measure the closest three balls and record their distance in centimeters.
  - c. The referee will then place stationary flag or marker at the 50-foot line, and the player should play eight balls. The referee will measure the closest three balls and record their distance in centimeters.
- E-2. Measurements will be taken from the top center of the bocce ball to the top center of the stationary flag, marker or Pallina for a total of nine measurements. All measurements must be done in metrics.
- E-3. Add up all 9 scores to document your qualification score.
- E-4. If a Pallina is used as a marker, then place the Pallina back to its original spot if it is bumped during the divisioning measurements.
- E-5. You will utilize this same score when entering your athletes or unified partners into doubles or team competition. A combined score of athletes or unified partners will be utilized when placing athletes in divisions.
- E-6. All divisions qualification round scores must be done on grass.
- E-7. Process should be repeated when advancing from a regional to the state tournament.

## SECTION F – LEAD-UP AND RAMP BOCCE

## F-1. Courts

- a. Will be played in half of the space – 30 feet (9.144 meters) total.
- b. Fault line will be placed on one side at 10 feet (3.048 meters).
- c. Width will remain 12 feet (3.6576 meters).



## F-2. Rules and Accommodations

- a. Athletes will stay on one end where the fault line has been placed.
- b. Scoring/time limit will be the same.
- c. Coaches should use half the distances when turning in measurements for regional and state games.
- d. All Lead-Up Athletes will be divided by ability in their registered event. For example, Lead up Bocce will be with Lead up Bocce and Ramp Bocce will be with Ramp Bocce.