

UNITED STATES BOCCE FEDERATION (USBF) OPEN RULES

Condensed Version for the Aldo Della Croce Tournament

Start the game!

Begin the game with a toss of a coin between the captains of each team. The winner of the coin toss will determine the end from which play will start and also has control of the pallino. The USBF grants the coin toss winner not only where play will start, control of the pallino, and the color of balls when "house" balls only are used. Coin toss winner throws the pallino! The toss is valid if the pallino passes the center line and does not touch the back wall on opposite end. If the player fails to place the pallino in valid area, the opposing team will put the pallino in play. If both players fail, the pallino returns to the original team for an additional attempt. Alternating process continues until pallino is in valid position. The Team that originally tossed the pallino will play the first ball.

The Game:

The first ball may be rolled by ANY member of the team that placed the pallino in play. Should the rolled ball hit the backboard without touching the pallino, it is a dead ball and removed from the court. 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 (closer) point.

Players may use side boards at any time. Balls may be measured at any time and in case of doubt, an official referee or tournament official should be called. In the event a tie is determined, the last team to roll a ball must roll again until the tie is broken. If after all balls are played, if 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 positions 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.

The Backboard:

If a ball hits the backboard without first touching another ball or pallino, it is a dead ball and is removed from the court. If a ball is shot, hits the backboard illegally, and then strikes a stationary ball/balls, the shot ball is removed from the court and the stationary ball/balls 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/balls 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.

The Scoring:

Only one team scores in a frame unless there is a tie.
Games are played to 12 points.
Final games are played to 15 points.

Illegal movement of balls or the pallino:

Players should never touch or move any ball or the pallino until frame has ended. ALL players should be out of the court if possible. If not possible, they should be positioned in front of play area when a player at the opposite end is shooting.

In the event a ball strikes/touches a player after a valid shot, the following rules apply: 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. 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/balls not played. In the event any player moves a stationary ball, that ball should be placed in the original position as long as it doesn't affect the established point.

The Shooting and Pointing:

There are basically two (2) types of shooting:

- 1) Volo is the act of lofting the ball in the air attempting to hit the target.
- 2) Raffa is the act of shooting at a target either by releasing the ball at ground level, slightly lofting the ball, or rolling the ball in a forceful manner.

Pointing is done with either foot or both feet before or on the pointing line. A throw is valid as long as any part of the foot/feet is on the line.

When shooting (either style) the player is allowed to step on the line prior to releasing the ball. As long as even the heel is on the line, it is a valid shot. Once a player has released the ball, he/she is allowed to continue steps up to the center line. This is considered valid.

The late arrivals, substitutions, delays, etc.:

A team not present within 15 minutes of scheduled start of the game will forfeit the game. Substitutes are allowed, a team may substitute only once during a game and it must be announced to the opposing Team before the start of the next frame. A substituted player may not return to that game. If a player/s arrive late, the game will start with that team playing shorthanded and minus the appropriate number of balls. Player may then enter game at "shorthanded" end after frame is completed. In the event a player must leave a game in progress, an alternate may enter at the end of a frame and the player that leaves cannot return for remainder of game. If no alternate is available, the game continues using the late arrival rule. Repeated "conferences" during a frame causing delays in the game are discouraged. If delays continue, the offended team captain should notify an official. If an official issues a one-minute warning and delays continue, the "burned ball" rule should be placed in effect and one of the offending player's balls will be removed from the court.

Game Notes:

Consecutive or alternating throws by teammates shall be at the option of the players. Any time a player is in action, opposing players should be off the court or far behind the player if courts don't have adequate space. If a player throws the wrong color ball, simply replace it with the correct color when it comes to rest and let play continue. If a player rolls/shoots out of turn or plays more balls than allowed, the opposing team has two (2) options.

- 1) Leave all balls as they rest
- 2) Remove the illegally thrown ball from play and return all other ball/balls to previous position/s.

Summary:

The intent of the USBF Open Rules is to provide a guideline for playing a game of Bocce. These rules are used in all sanctioned USBF tournaments and are strongly recommended for any tournament at any level from social to competitive. For further information or questions regarding these rules, court construction, USBF events, etc., please contact the USBF @ www.usbf.us definitive guide to the sport.