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Bocce League Rules – Summer 2023

How many people on a team? A minimum of 1 player per team must be present to play each week. We recommend signing up a team with 2-4 players per team to make sure enough people show up each week, and to increase fun and camaraderie. You can always sub people in each night too! Substitutions can happen as often as after a frame. If a player arrives during play, they may only join their team after a frame.

Game play: Begin the game with a coin flip or play “rock, paper, scissors” between the two captains. The winner gets the first toss of the pallino and chooses the starting direction, the loser chooses ball color. The pallino is tossed or rolled to start the game. The pallino must cross the centerline of the court and stay in bounds. If the first toss of the pallino does not result in play, the other team has a chance at first toss. This goes back and forth until the pallino is in play.

The player who tossed the pallino into play then delivers the first ball. If the ball lands out of bounds, that team must roll again until the first ball is in play. Once the first ball is in play, it is the opposing team’s turn. The opposing team now throws/rolls their balls until one ball is closer, not tied, to the pallino. This is called the “in” ball. When a team gets “in” it steps aside to allow the “out” team a chance to deliver their balls until they get “in”. This play continues until all balls are thrown, at this point the frame is over and points are awarded.

There is no set order players must follow when throwing, so long as it is their team’s turn to throw. Players’ feet must be completely behind the foul line when delivering the ball or pallino.

Scoring, Turnovers, Fouls, Game Length: The gameplay outlined above occurs until the end of the frame, at which point the frame is scored. Only one team scores per frame, as only one team can be “in”. One point is awarded for each bocce ball that is closer to the pallino than the closest ball of the opposing team. In the event of a tie, no points are awarded and the pallino is returned to the team that delivered it. Balls must be distinguishably closer to the pallino than any of the opponent’s balls. Close balls will be measured from the center of the pallino to the edge of the bocce ball. If a bocce is touching the pallino at the end of the frame, this is called a baci and is worth 2 points.

After scoring, game play resumes from that end of the field. Teams continue changing direction on the field as is naturally dictated by the gameplay. The scoring team starts the next frame by tossing the pallino. In the event of a tie, the pallino is tossed by the team that last delivered it into play.

If the pallino is knocked out of bounds or back in front of the center line, the frame is over and no points are awarded. The next frame will start as it normally would following a non-scoring or tied frame.

Stepping on or over the foul line results in a foul. Players will receive a warning for the first foul. If a player continues to step on or over the foul they will receive subsequent fouls. Subsequent fouls result in the following: The opposing team will receive one point and the frame will end with the fouling team receiving no points for the frame. The fouled against team may opt to decline the penalty and complete the frame. Any ball delivered on a foul is a dead ball. If the foul ball strikes any balls in play, they will be returned to their original position.

Games are played up to 16 points. Maximum game play length is one hour. Games may be limited to 45 minutes based upon start times and available daylight.

Court Set Up and Boundaries: The court is 60 feet long by 12 feet wide. Our backyard court does not have hard boundaries, only painted lines. The center line is 30 feet from the end, the foul lines are 10 feet from the end. Because our courts are painted we will use an out of bounds rule for the side boundaries. If a ball rolls out of bounds via a side boundary, it is a live ball and will be placed at the spot it exited the field. If a ball rolls over or is touching the end line, it is out of play. The pallino however, may touch the end line and will remain in play. Balls will be treated the same whether they are rolled/thrown out of bounds or struck out of bounds. Please keep in mind this is a Backyard Bocce league, the courts will not be up to regulation specifications.

Can I bring and use my own balls? Yes, balls must be regulation size of 107mm and 920 grams. P&R reserves the right to implement a "house balls" rule at any time.

What area can I stand in during gameplay? Players should stay off the field unless delivering a ball, or scoring. Players should also keep feet off of all field boundary lines when spectating. Contact by a spectator with a live in bounds ball or boundary will result in a warning/foul.

How do I know when I play? The schedule for each week is posted on the Bocce page at: <https://gpr.greendale.k12.wi.us/bocce.html>

Standings: Teams will be ranked based on their number of wins/losses. Tie breakers will be awarded based on schedule first, then on overall points. The number of teams will determine how many times teams play each other and how many games they play per night.

League Winner/Prizes: After divisional round robin regular season, a one-night, single game, single elimination playoff bracket will determine League Champion. Prize will be given to the League Champion courtesy of the Milk Can Diner!

What happens if the other team doesn't show up? A team has 5 minutes past the designated start time to show up. If they do show up late, but within the allotted 5 minutes, teams will not receive extra time to play and you must complete your game in the remaining time. If they do not show up, the result is a forfeit. The team that shows up will win with a score of 16-0. If a team "no-shows" twice in one season, they will forfeit their registration and forfeit the rest of the season.

What if there is a scoring issue/dispute? All questions and issues will be handled by the league manager at the time of the issue/dispute. The league manager will make the final ruling on all protests. Please remember, we are all out here to have fun! At the end of the day, it is friendly backyard bocce!

Weather: In the likelihood of inclement weather, please monitor your email leading up to game time. If inclement weather causes games to be canceled, we will make our best effort to make-up games. In the event we cannot make-up games, the existing score will be considered final. Weather cancellations will also be recorded on the Park and Recreation Department's weather line (414)423-2803.

Have Fun! Like all recreational sports, everyone in the league comes out for a good time, so please exercise good sportsmanship and watch social distancing. Please consider choosing The Milk Can Diner for all of your pre and post-game food and drink!

July 5, 2023