

# Port Colborne Bocce Club

## Playing Rules, Guidelines & Etiquette

Apr 25th, 2023

### Housekeeping:

- All rules apply to all leagues, regular season, and playoffs except when specified.
- Players should wear flat sole shoes while playing the game as to not affect the court. For your own safety, we encourage you to not wear sandal or slippers.
- Smoking is not allowed anywhere at the Vale Health and Wellness Center as per provincial law.
- Beverages are not allowed on courts or walking lanes of courts. All beverages should remain on the patio area.
- Spitting is not allowed anywhere at the Port Colborne Bocce Club.
- Please throw all garbage including gum into a garbage can.
- To promote an enjoyable playing experience for all, please understand that not everyone speaks Italian or French, so we encourage that players speak English during games to ensure there is no miscommunication.
- Being a member of the Port Colborne Bocce Club does not guarantee you a spot on a team. If you are on a team, then you are guaranteed a spot. If you are not on a team, then you must go on a waiting list even if you used to play for a team.
- The bartender(s) are not to be bothered with questions or complaints about playing rules or playing issues. They are there to bartend. All players should read and understand the rules. The rules are posted on the League board in the hall if there is any disagreement about rules. If you have any concerns about anything send them to [portbocce@gmail.com](mailto:portbocce@gmail.com)
- Playing courts are named from North to South as #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, and #6. The schedule will show which court you play on.
- You need a set of 8 balls, four for each team, with different colors and a target ball called the “pallino” which is white. The balls are kept in the hall. Home team captain or team representative handles getting the bocce set. Winning team handles bringing them back into the hall. If the winning team does not put their bocce set back, they will give up 1 of their wins.
- You should always be ready to throw when you are playing in a game (going to the washroom is an acceptable reason for not being ready to throw).
- Repeated “conferences” during a frame/end causing delays in the game are discouraged. If delays continue, the team captain or team representative should notify the opposing captain. If this continues, please submit an email to [bocce\\_exec at portbocce@gmail.com](mailto:bocce_exec@portbocce@gmail.com)

- If there are puddles on the courts, no game is to be played on the court. When the courts are too wet, playing and walking the courts damages them.
- A team may pickup new players anytime during the regular season but not during playoffs.
- From the Constitution: A member who pays an annual prescribed fee to play in any of the organized leagues (Men's League, Women's League, or Mixed League)  
A member who wishes to join a second organized league will pay 1/2 the prescribed fee.

## Playing Rules:

# 1. A team who has any member that has not paid their dues at the start of the season forfeits all games by 4-0 score until dues are paid.

# 2. Once a match has started on a court you cannot switch courts because a team does not like the court surface. You must finish the match on the same court you start on.

# 3. A match consists of 4 games to 12 points. Each ball counts for 1 point. If for any reason (weather, lighting, etc.) all games of the match cannot be completed, and you have played 2 or more games the match will be considered complete, and the games played will count.

# 4. Teams must rotate all attending team members to play an equal number of games as possible. A player should not sit two games in a row unless injured, or games are balanced.

Examples: 5 players present: 1 player plays 4 games, and 4 players play 3 games.

6 players present: 4 players play 3 games, and 2 players play 2 games.

7 players present: 2 players play 3 games, and 5 players play 2 games.

8 players present: 8 players play 2 games.

9 players present: 7 players play 2 games, and 2 players play 1 game.

10 players present: 6 players play 2 games, and 4 players play 1 game. Etc...

# 5. If both teams have an equal number of players both teams can play 4 balls. If 4 or more players are present for both teams, you must play 4 players with 1 ball per player. When one team has less than 4 players (whether it is 2 or 3) they will play with 3 balls for all four games. When the team has 2 players the player throwing the 2 balls plays 2 balls for the entire game and can throw both ball in a row. After each game, the other player must throw 2 balls. If a team has only 1 player, they will forfeit all four games. If both teams have only one player, then both teams get 2 games each and it's a tie. As a Captain or team representative you must **not** ask the opposing team if you can play 4 balls when you are short handed.

# 6. Substitution of players while game is in progress is allowed where there is an injury, ailment or player must leave. A substituted player may not return to that game. When a player is present but not feeling well or leaving early, they must report to their captain or team representative and in turn the opposing captain must be notified. Before play starts the captains will come to an agreement as to how they will play.

- # 7. If a scoresheet is submitted and a team has not played each player evenly, the offending team will forfeit the game that caused imbalance. Please advise the league convenor so that the scorecard will be changed.
- # 8. At the end of the season, if teams are tied after the final standing the tie breakers are: 1-head-to-head, 2-games won, 3-matches won, 4-differential. If still tied, then the year ends with both teams in first. For playoff purposes for seeding, we will have a coin toss to decide first seed.
- # 9. Final standings will show the groupings for the playoff. There will be 8 teams in each division. There will be 3 rounds of playoffs with winners moving on each week. When there are not even groups, special playoff rounds will be played.
- # 10. (Playoffs Elimination Style) Your team lineup for the evening must consider the possibility of playing 5 games. Players that are present must play as balanced a number of games as possible. At the end of 3 games there can be an imbalance but there must be the possibility of all players playing an equal number of games.
- # 11. Court maintenance is only done by the court keeping staff, no one else is to brush, scrape, roll and never dig the courts. Anyone not following this rule will cause their team to give up all 4 games for that night.
- # 12. If the weather conditions in Port Colborne before game time is steady rain or worse, you do not need to show up and the game will go in as a tie. If the weather conditions are uncertain, then your team must show up because the condition of the courts may be playable unless the club has communicated those games are cancelled. If the condition of all courts is playable and one team shows up and the other does not, then the team that shows up will receive a 4-0 win.
- # 13. If 1 or more courts are unplayable, then all games will go in as a 2-2 tie. A designated member of the club will make the decision which is final. Please do not harass the person making the decision as they are looking out for the best interest of the courts.
- # 14. If the courts could not be rolled because the courts were too wet, then all games for the night will be cancelled.
- # 15. If both teams cannot play because of court conditions, it will be considered a tie with both teams getting two games each. Please fill in a score sheet with the team names date game was supposed to be played and 2 games each for games won. Courts are maintained Monday through Friday and Weekends are used for rentals. There are no makeup games except for playoffs. Playoff makeup games will be played the next available free day even if it is not the normal league night.
- # 16. Each team assigns a captain/coach that is allowed to coach when they are not playing from the bench only. The assigned player cannot leave the bench area to coach.
- # 17. To be eligible for playoffs, all players on a team must have played 5 weeks. If not, you are eliminated from playoffs except for illness. It is the captain's responsibility to ensure this.

## **Teams & Players:**

- # 18. If you cannot field a team on the day you are scheduled, you must notify the opposing team ahead and the opposing team will receive a 3-1 win. If you do not notify the other team, it is 4-0. Only exception is the 3 regular season long weekends in which you take a 2-2 tie. This applies to women's and mixed leagues.
- # 19. You cannot pick up an existing player from another team in your league.
- # 20. A player must be 19 years of age or older to play.
- # 21. A team must be registered with a minimum of 6 players for men's and women's league and 8 players for mixed league.
- # 22. All games for all leagues start at 6:30pm (unless arrangements have been made). Please try to arrive at least 5-10 minutes before game time so the score sheets can be filled out. Teams have a 15-minute grace period to field 2 or more players. At 6:45 pm if a team does not have at least 2 players they forfeit all 4 games. If you have 2 or 3 players, you must start the match by 6:45pm.
- # 23. Any players arriving late must wait for the current game to be completed. Then you must follow the standard number of players playing rule to allow an equal number of games to be played by all players on the team. If you start with 4 players and 1 player cannot finish the game, you then follow the 3 player rules. If you start with 3 players and 1 player cannot continue to play, the team can finish with 2 players. If a team is down to 1 player, they must forfeit remaining games.
- # 24. When you are not playing, you are not to be on the court. Only the captain or team representative can coach your team from the bench. If you are sitting, you must not be on the playing area. The team captains or team representative should be informed of this situation at once. The same goes for spectators.
- # 25. The captain or team representative must fill in the score sheet and set the lineup for each game. The home team gets the clipboard and score sheet and fills their information in. Then the away team fills in their information. You put an X in the square when a player has played. If a player is absent, it is not necessary to put their name on the sheet. When the game is complete, you must sign and complete the score sheet by entering games won then return it to the bar. Both teams are responsible for the score sheet.
- # 26. If no score sheet is submitted, the game is scored as a 2-2 tie.
- # 27. There is no positional order of play in bocce. Any player can choose to throw any position at any time of the game. Often the captain or lead will select who they want to play next.

- # 28. The captain or team representative decides on the lineup for each game and who plays. The opposing team has no say whatsoever in the decisions of the opposing team unless they are breaking any rules.
- # 29. (Mixed League Only) Whenever possible there must be an equal number of women and men on the court for each team. Only 2 men can play in any one game.
- If 4 or more women present for the match: team plays 4 balls, 1 ball per player.
  - Only 3 women present for the match: team plays 3 balls, 1 ball per player.
  - Only 2 women present for the match: team plays 3 balls, 1 player 2 balls, 1 player 1 ball.
  - If 3 or more men present for the match: team plays 3 balls, 3 players, 1 ball per player.
  - Only 2 men present for the match: team plays 3 balls, 1 player 2 balls, 1 player 1 ball.
  - If 3 or more men and only 1 woman: 2 men and 1 woman play, 3 balls, 1 per player.
- For any other scenario refer to normal playing rules.

## **Playing the Game:**

- # 30. Home team throws the pallino to start of the first game. Any player from the home team can throw. After the first game, the team that won the previous game starts with the pallino.
- # 31. At the beginning of each play, the pallino must be played past the centre line but not past the opposing 7-foot black point line and must be at least 1 foot from the side rails. The Pallino cannot hit the end board and come back into play. If a player cannot put the ball in play after 2 attempts, the pallino is turned over to the other team. Alternating process continues until pallino is in a valid position.
- # 32. When throwing, players may use side boards at any time.
- # 33. When a player is preparing to throw, the opposing team must not talk to or shout at the player to distract them.
- # 34. Once a player has released the ball, he/she must continue forward up the court. The lead should do this quickly to be in position to measure the next throw.
- # 35. 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/end. If, however the pallino is knocked out of the court or bounces back in front of the center line, the frame/end is considered void (no points counted) and the team that started the frame/end will begin the end again.
- # 36. If a ball from a neighbouring court comes into play and moves any balls that affect scoring, no points are counted and you start the end over, pallino stay with same team that threw it in that frame/end.
- # 37. When a player releases the pallino or bocce, both feet must be on the court or one foot in the air but you cannot have one foot touching the sidewalk when throwing unless the player has a significant physical impairment.

- # 38. Foul lines should be clearly marked on side boards. There should only be one line for pointing (7-foot black line) and shooting (14-foot red line) from the back wall.
- # 39. Players may step on but not have their foot completely over the foul line before releasing the pallino or the bocce ball. If a player commits a foot foul while in the act of shooting (shooting or pointing), a warning is issued for the first offense. Should the same player foul again, the thrown ball is removed from play and all struck balls returned to their approximate original positions. NOTE: Unless there is a referee on the court, this is a very difficult rule to enforce and should be addressed by both teams and if no resolution then by the league.
- # 40. A player who has not thrown their ball cannot pass the 14-foot red shooting line to see what the position of the balls in play are in or to talk to your teammates at the other end of the court. Team captains or team representative are to ensure this does not occur.
- # 41. Any time a player is in action, all opposing players must be off the court.
- # 42. At no time are you to mark the ground with your foot (toe or heel) or hands.
- # 43. Once the point is established, the opposing team must point or shoot until they make a new (closer) point.
- # 44. Any team can measure balls at any time unless the point was already agreed to by both teams earlier in the play and the 2 balls in question were not touched. Reason you cannot re-measure is game play would have changed if other ball was closer.
- # 45. In the event a tie is decided by both teams, the last team to roll a ball must roll again until the tie is broken. If the 2 balls remain in place after all balls have been played, they cannot be re-measured as both teams agreed on the tie. Reason being game play would have changed if one team was closer.
- # 46. 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.
- # 47. When measuring for point, 1 player from each team will verify the measurement. All other players should stay away from immediate area. Lead-off players have the honours of measuring. Laser measuring device are to be used not measuring tapes. A player from a neighbouring court can be called in to verify the measurement if there is a disagreement. Any ball can be measured even if you want to measure for second, third point while there are still balls to be played.
- # 48. Both teams must agree on final points awarded. If a team does not agree on points and wants to measure but before measuring a player kicks away balls to be measured the point or extra point are given to the team that did not kick balls away.

## **Scoring:**

- # 49. Only one team can score points in a frame/end (unless there is a tie in measuring).
- # 50. Only 1 person should mark the score for both teams. The person marking must be playing in the game. This keeps multiple people from touching the scoreboard and possibly duplicating points or making a mistake.
- # 51. The scores must be marked only when you return to the patio then both ends are marked at one time. The scoreboard must never be marked without all players from both team's present.
- # 52. The person marking the score must announce the score when the board has been updated.

## **Shooting and Pointing:**

- # 53. Pointing: is done with either foot or both feet on or behind the point line (7-foot black line). A throw in which you are trying to get close to the pallino.
- # 54. Shooting/Volo: the act of lofting the ball in the air attempting to hit the target in a forceful manner. Raffa: 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. When shooting you cannot stand still at the 14-foot shooting line, you must have a walking/running motion to the line. If you choose to shoot standing still, you must be at the 7-foot point line.

## **Illegal Movement of Balls or Pallino:**

- # 55. If a player throws the wrong color ball, replace it with the correct color when it comes to rest. Do not stop the ball to re-throw.
- # 56. If a player rolls/shoots out of turn or plays more balls than allowed, the ball may be stopped before it contacts any balls. Otherwise, the opposing team has two options. Leave all balls as they rest or return the illegally thrown ball from play and return all other ball/s to earlier position/s.
- # 57. In the event a ball or balls are moved during a measurement, the point is awarded to the opposing team of that who committed the foul.
- # 58. Players should never touch or move any ball or the pallino until frame/end has ended. If a player moves a ball prior to the end of a frame/end (thinking play is over) and the balls cannot be accurately moved to their positions, all remaining non-thrown balls of the non-offending team are counted as points. If the offense is committed by the playing team, all non-thrown balls of that team are voided, and the frame/end is over. If a team's ball is still rolling and kicked away by the same team that ball is dead, and play continues.
- # 59. If a player is standing on the court (In harm's way) and is struck by a ball or pallino because of a shot, the opposing team receives the advantage. The options are:
  - Leave all balls and pallino in the new configuration. or

- Remove the ball or pallino that struck their opponent from the court. If the pallino is removed from the court, the frame/end is over, and play begins from the opposite end. or
- They can place the ball or pallino that struck their opponent back to where it was on the court.

# 60. Once game is complete, all balls should be placed in the bags with the measuring tape and returned to the hall. The new measuring devices should be returned to the bar. The teams on the court are both responsible for returning the laser measuring device.

## **Using the Laser Measuring Device**

The device is easy very easy to use. Here are the basic steps:

1. Press the Red Pointer button to turn on the device. The red laser will go on.
2. Put the device flat on the ground by the palino and aim the laser to the middle (horizontal) of the ball.
3. Press the Red Pointer button to hold the number (it will store the number).
4. Now press the Red Pointer button again and aim it at the second ball again aiming at the middle (horizontal) of the ball.
5. Press the Red Pointer button and the second number will be stored. The units are in Meters/Millimeters. The lower of the 2 numbers is the closest.
6. Press and hold the Red Pointer button for 2 seconds to power it off.

If you must measure 3 or more balls just remember the lowest number that has been measured.

The device is not a high-power laser, regardless you should not point it at anyone's eyes.

Please do not leave the laser measuring device on the ground, one of the 2 leads should keep it in their pocket.

[http://www.portbocce.com/misc/bocce\\_rules.html](http://www.portbocce.com/misc/bocce_rules.html)