



2017 BOCCE BALL LEAGUE RULES

The Lake of the Pines Bocce Ball League (LOPBBL) is intended for the enjoyment of both players and spectators. The following rules are a modification of international rules and are designed to maintain that intended enjoyment.

- I. **THE GAME OF BOCCE BALL:** Bocce Ball is played with eight (8) large Bocce Balls of two different colors and one small target ball called the "Pallino", which is usually white. The objective of the game is to roll your Bocce Balls closer to the Pallino than your opponent's Bocce Balls. A team must get a Bocce Ball closer to the Pallino than their opponent's closest ball or they continue to throw until they do or until they run out of balls.
- II. **LEAGUE EQUIPMENT:** Only the composite resin balls with 109 millimeter diameter are permitted during League play. The League will supply Bocce Ball sets, tape measurers, clipboards, pencils, scoresheets, and flip-type scorecards.
- III. **DEFINITIONS**
- A. **Backboard** – the 2 barriers at each end of the court.
 - B. **Bocce Ball** – the larger colored balls.
 - C. **Center Line** – the line in the middle of the court.
 - D. **Dead Ball** – a Bocce Ball that is removed from the court for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. The Bocce Ball contacts the Backboard or is hit into the Backboard.
 - 2. The Bocce Ball jumps out of the court.
 - 3. A Player Foot Faults during a throw. The thrown ball is a Dead Ball.
 - 4. A Lobbed Bocce Ball that lands on or beyond the Center Line, or is thrown higher than the waist, or lands on the Pallino or another Bocce Ball.
 - 5. A Bocce Ball thrown out of turn that strikes any other ball on the court. (NOTE: A ball thrown out of turn that does not strike another ball on the court is NOT Dead and can be re-thrown on the correct turn.)
 - E. **Foot Fault** – during a throw, having any part of the foot beyond the Foul Line. A foot may be touching the Foul Line but not go over it. NOTE: Stepping over the line after the throw is not penalized.
 - F. **Foul Lines** – the line a player throws from. There is one Foul Line at each end of the court.
 - G. **Frame** – when all 8 Bocce Balls have been thrown from one end of the court.
 - H. **Game** – A game is played to 9 points and you do NOT need a 2-point differential, therefore the first team to 9 points wins. An exception is when the **one hour and 15 minute** time limit ends, in which case you finish the Frame and the game ends with whatever points were accumulated in the game.
 - I. **Lob** – a high throw that is intended to roll less. Lobs must contact the surface at least once before touching the Center Line. It is not legal to lob a ball directly onto another ball; it must contact the playing surface first. To preserve the integrity of our new courts, no Lob is allowed to arc higher than the waist.
 - J. **Match** – 3 Games played within a **one hour and 15 minute time** limit. Sometimes during close Games, only 2 Games are completed, in which case the 3rd Game is considered a tie at 0–0. Tied games equate to 1/2 Match point for both teams.
 - K. **Pallino** – the small target ball a player tries to get his/her Bocce Ball close to.
 - L. **Scoresheet** – the form for recording Match results.
 - M. **Sideboard** – the 2 barriers on each side of the court (the long sides).
- IV. **COURT RULES**
- A. **Animals** – All pets are to be kept on leash at all times.
 - B. **Kids** – Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters and/or non-bocce related activities are prohibited on or around the courts.
 - C. **No Smoking** – Smoking is not allowed within 30 feet of the Bocce Ball courts.
 - D. **Storage Box** – Teams playing the first Matches of the night are responsible for unlocking the storage box and setting out the equipment. Teams playing the last Matches of the night are responsible for storing (in **an orderly fashion**) all the League equipment and locking the Storage Box.
 - E. **Trash** – All trash, cigarette butts, are to be discarded in appropriate container.

V. MATCH RULES

- A. Assigned Court – The Match must be played on the assigned court, even for reschedules.
- B. Before the Match Starts – Captains, or their representative, must perform the Coin Toss and agree which individuals will keep score and referee each game.
- C. Coin Toss – Before the Match starts, Captains will flip a coin. The Captain winning the coin toss may choose one of the options below, and the other Captain gets the option not chosen.
 - 1. The ball color their team will throw OR
 - 2. To throw first.
- D. Starting End – The 1st game always begins on the North End of the court. The 2nd and 3rd games start on the end of the court that the current game just finished on.
- E. Match Points – There are always 3 possible Match Points. A team earns 1 point for each Game won. Any game that ends in a tie equates to 1/2 Match point for both teams. If only 2 Games are completed, the 3rd Game is considered a tie at 0–0 and each team gets 1/2 point.
- F. Number of Games – A Match consists of 3 Games.
- G. Rescheduled Matches – **Reschedules are allowed, but must be completed before the last scheduled league night.** Captains need to notify the opposing Captain or Assistant Captain of the need to reschedule at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game time, find an agreeable date/time to reschedule, and reserve a court time. NOTE: If it is raining, or other weather-related events, you can choose to reschedule if both Captain's agree.
- H. League Standings – Results are posted on the bulletin board as well as on the www.lopsac.com website, no later than the next week of play. (Website results are often updated sooner.)
- I. Start Time – Matches must start at the officially scheduled time. **NOTE:** A Game can start before the assigned time only if both Captains, or his/her representative, agree. However, the Match is still played to only **one hour and 15 minutes**, so please make note of the actual start time.
- J. Tied Games – Any game that ends in a tie equates to 1/2 Match point for both teams.
- K. Time Limit – A Match is limited to **one hour and 15 minutes** only. When the **one hour and 15 minute time** limit has expired, the current frame being played is allowed to finish.

VI. GAME RULES

- A. Balls Thrown – No Player may throw more than 2 Bocce Balls, including a Game where a team has fewer than 4 players.
- B. End of Frame – At the end of a Frame, the Referee determines the points and announces the score. Only the Captains **or End Captains** and the Referee are allowed on the court during the measurements. On close ones, Captains **or End Captains** may ask the Referee to re-measure. **Players may not pick up any balls until the Referee has determined the points AND announced the score.** The team that won the points throws the Pallino and the 1st Bocce Ball from the other end of the court to begin the next Frame.
- C. First Bocce Throw in a Frame – If the first Bocce Ball thrown at the start of the Frame is not validly thrown, the same team must throw again until a Bocce Ball is validly thrown or they are out of balls to throw.
- D. Forfeited Game – A forfeited game is incurred for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. A team that does not have at least 2 players (the minimum required for a Game) at the scheduled start time will forfeit Game 1.
 - 2. After 15 minutes from the scheduled start time, Games 2 and 3 are forfeited as well.
 - 3. Playing with a non-registered player.
- E. Frame Points – At the end of a Frame, the Referee determines (measuring if needed) which team has one or more balls closest to the Pallino. Each Bocce Ball that is closer to the Pallino than the opposing team's closest ball is worth 1 point. **NOTE:** If each team's closest ball to the Pallino is exactly the same distance, they are removed, with no points awarded for the removed balls. Points are then determined by the remaining balls on the court.
- F. Game Points – Games are played to 9 points and you do NOT need a 2-point differential, so the first team to 9 points wins. In the 3rd Game, if the **one hour and 15 minute** time limit expires, and the Game is not finished, teams will finish the Frame, and the team with the most points wins. If the 3rd Game is not started when the **one hour and 15 minute** time limit expires, it is considered a tie at 0-0. Tie games equate to 1/2 Match point for both teams.
- G. Pallino Thrower – The team winning the current Game throws the Pallino as well as the 1st Bocce Ball to start the next Game.

(GAME RULES continued)

- H. Players – A Game is played with 4 players from each team, 2 teammates at one end of the court, and the other 2 teammates at the other end. When a team is short on players, a Game may be played with just 2 players from a team, one at each end of the court. However, a player will still only throw 2 balls, not all 4.
- I. People On the Court – When a player is in the act of throwing a ball, they are the only person allowed on the court. When the Referee is measuring, only the Captains **or End Captains** are allowed on the court to view it.
- J. Practice – Must be done before the start of the Match. No Practicing between Games.
- K. Starting End – The 1st game of the Match always starts at the North End of the court. The 2nd and 3rd games start on the end of the court that the current game just finished on.
- L. Substitutions – Are allowed as follows:
 - 1. Between Frames – At the end of a Frame, a team may make up to 2 substitutions, one on each end of the court. **The Captain of the team making the change must notify both the Referee and the opposing Captain of the substitution(s).**
 - 2. Between Games – At the end of a Game, a team may substitute up to 4 players.
 - 3. Immediate substitution – Only if a player is injured.
- M. Switching Ends – A Player may NOT play at the same end of the court for consecutive games. They may play consecutive games but must switch ends.
- N. Taking Turns – After a Bocce Ball has been validly thrown, the opposing team must throw their Bocce Balls until they place one closer to the Pallino than the opposing team's Bocce Balls, or they run out of balls. If one team runs out of balls without getting closer to the Pallino, the other team then throws any remaining balls to finish the Frame.

VII. PALLINO THROWS

- A. Sideboards – On the throw, the Pallino may hit a Sideboard so long as it ~~stops at least 12 inches from the wall.~~ **is not touching the Sideboard when it comes to rest.**
- B. Backboard – The Pallino must not contact the Backboard and must stop at least 12 inches from the Backboard. **NOTE:** The Pallino may touch or be within the 12 inch distance from any board if it was moved by a Bocce Ball throw.
- C. Illegal Throw – If a player fails to throw the Pallino validly into play after one attempt, the opposing team will then attempt to make a legal Pallino throw. The Pallino throws continue to alternate between teams until the Pallino is validly thrown into play. **NOTE:** The Team who first threw the Pallino then throws the first Bocce Ball.
- D. Length of Throw – The Pallino must come to rest beyond the Center Line and not touching it. **NOTE:** If the Pallino is moved in front of the Center Line by contact from a thrown Bocce Ball, it is allowed and play continues.
- E. Lobs – Lobbing the Pallino beyond the Center Line **IS** allowed.
- F. Out of Court – If a Pallino is knocked out of the court by a Bocce Ball, the Frame ends, no points are awarded, and a new Frame begins at the other end of the court with the same team throwing the Pallino.
- G. Wrong Thrower – If the wrong team throws the Pallino, bring it back for the correct team to throw. If Bocce Balls from BOTH teams were placed into play before a team realized that the wrong team started the Frame, just continue with the Frame “as is”.

VIII. BOCCE BALL THROWS

- A. Backboard – A Bocce Ball that contacts the Backboard from the throw, or by being hit into the Backboard, is a Dead Ball and is removed from the court.
- B. Center Line – A Bocce Ball does **NOT** have to cross the Center Line.
- C. Foot Fault – A Player may have their foot touching the Foul Line, but no part of the foot may be beyond the Foul Line. A Bocce Ball thrown during a Foot Fault is a Dead Ball and is removed from the court.
- D. Foot Fault Line – A Bocce Ball must **NOT** contact the ground before or on the Foot Fault Line.
- E. Lobs – Rules for Bocce Ball Lobs are as follows:
 - 1. No Bocce Ball Lobs are allowed to land on or beyond the Center Line.
 - 2. A lobbed Bocce Ball must contact the playing surface at least once before the Center Line.
 - 3. A lobbed Bocce Ball must contact the playing surface first, not another Bocce Ball or the Pallino.
 - 4. The highest point of the arc of a lobbed Bocce Ball must be waist high or less.
 - 5. The illegally Lobbed ball is a Dead Ball and is removed from the court
- F. Number of Throws – A player may only throw 2 Bocce Balls.
- G. Out of Court – A Bocce Ball that jumps out of the court is a Dead Ball.

(BOCCE BALL THROWS continued)

- H. Out of Turn – If a player throws out of turn and the ball strikes any other ball on the court, the ball is Dead and removed from play. If the ball does not strike another ball on the court, it is NOT Dead, and can be re-thrown on the correct turn.
- I. Safety – For the safety of players and spectators, no player may throw a Bocce Ball so hard that it causes any ball to fly off the court. A player will be warned that hard throws are not allowed, and if it happens a 2nd time that player will be ejected from the game.
- J. Teammate Turns – Teammates may alternate turns or throw consecutively. It is their choice.
- K. Wrong Color – When the wrong color ball is thrown, just replace it with the correct color.

IX. ERRORS

- A. Balls Affected by an Illegal Throw – Any balls effected by a Dead Ball are left “as is” and are NOT returned to their original position.
- B. Foot Fault – While throwing any ball, a player may not have any part of their foot beyond the Foul Line. Only active players on the same end of the court may call the Foot Fault, not spectators or non-playing players. The Foot-Faulted ball is a Dead Ball and is removed from play. (**NOTE:** Stepping over the line after the ball has been released is not a penalty.)
- C. Lobs – A lobbed Bocce Ball that lands on or beyond the Center Line, hits the Pallino or another Bocce Ball before hitting the playing surface, or is thrown higher than the waist, is a Dead Ball and is removed from play.
- D. Moved Ball before Referee Measured – Only Captains **or End Captains** and the Referee are allowed on the court during measurements. Players are NOT allowed to pick up or move ANY ball until the Referee has measured AND announced the score. If a player does this, **in addition to all points awarded as a result of play**, the opposing team is awarded a **penalty** point. It doesn't matter if the ball was relevant to the points or not. If a ball is moved before the Frame has ended, as in the case where a team still had a ball to throw, the same rule applies, and the opposing team gets a point.
- E. Out of Turn – If a player throws out of turn and the ball strikes any other ball on the court, the ball is Dead and removed from play. If the ball does not strike another ball on the court, it is NOT Dead, and can be re-thrown on the correct turn.
- F. Pallino Thrown by Wrong Team - If the wrong team throws the Pallino, bring it back for the correct team to throw. If Bocce Balls from BOTH teams were placed into play before a team realized that the wrong team started the Frame, just continue with the Frame “as is”.
- G. Switching Ends – A Player may NOT play at the same end of the court for consecutive games. Penalty is as follows:
 - 1. If discovered prior to the finish of the 2nd Frame, there is No Penalty.
 - 2. If discovered after completion of the 2nd Frame, but before the end of the Game, the offending team loses 2 points.
 - 3. If discovered after completion of the Game, there is No Penalty.
- H. Wrong Color Thrown – If a player throws the wrong color ball, replace it with the correct color.

X. CAPTAIN'S DUTIES

- A. Before Start of Match – Captains, or their representative, will perform the Coin Toss, agree who will keep score and referee each game, and provide a team lineup for the Scorekeeper.
- B. Conduct – Captains are responsible for the conduct of their players and supporting fans. Please maintain sportsmanlike conduct at all times, honoring an opponent's wish to not be taunted or distracted by unsportsmanlike behavior. Use of profanity should be curtailed as well. Violations will be given a warning and repeated violations of unsportsmanlike conduct will result in a LOPBBL Committee Review and Discipline, with an Expulsion being one possible result.
- C. Disputes – Must be settled only by the Captains. If the Captains cannot agree, all points will be forfeited for the Game.
- D. Know the Rules – The Captain is responsible for knowing the rules and making sure that his players know the rules.
- E. Match Results – Both Captains are equally responsible for making sure that the **scoresheet is completely filled out and signed** by both Captains (or their representative) and **placed in the Results Mailbox** hanging on the side of the bulletin board.
- F. Players – Make sure your players know NOT to remove any balls until the Referee has finished measuring by announced the score. Removing a ball too soon could be penalized (see section on Errors IX-D).
- G. Spectators – Captains and their teammates are responsible for friend's and relative's behavior while viewing the Matches.

(CAPTAIN'S DUTIES continued)

- H. Storage Box – Captains that are scheduled to play in the first Matches of the night are equally responsible for coming early to unlock the storage box and set out all the needed equipment, including the shade canopies on hot days. The Captains scheduled for the last Matches of the night are equally responsible for putting all the equipment back into the storage box.
- I. Everyone Plays – We strongly encourage you to find a way to allow ALL your players to play.
- J. End Captain – To speed up play, a Captain may appoint an End Captain at each end of the court to observe measurements. Please Note: only 1 Captain or End Captain per team is allowed on the court for measurement observation.

XI. REFEREES

- A. Announcements – Please announce clearly which color is closest and who needs to throw next.
- B. Be Consistent – Measure the same way each time.
- C. End of the Frame Measurements – Allow the Captains **or End Captains** to observe your measurements. They are allowed to ask you to re-measure. But to preserve speed of play, you should not do it more than once.
- D. Eyeball It – Whenever possible, visually judge which ball is closer to speed up play.
- E. Know the Rules – Goes without saying. There is a Referee Clinic at the start of each season.
- F. Players – Only Captains, End Captains and Referees are allowed on the courts during measurements. Do not allow players to remove ANY balls until you have finished measuring AND announced the score. Only Captains are allowed to question a measurement.
- G. Scoring – The Referee is responsible for making sure the Scorekeeper acknowledges the announced score at the end of the Frame.
- H. Scorekeeping – The Referee is only responsible for the score at the end of each Frame. The current Game score is kept by the Scorekeeper.
- I. Short Distances – When the distance being measured is very short, it is easier to measure with just the tape part of the measuring device.
- J. **People on the Court - Make sure only the correct people are on the court. During play, only the players should be on the court and during measurements/disputes, only Captains or End Captains should be on the court.**

XII. SCOREKEEPERS

- A. Need 2 Scorekeepers – Try to have 2 scorekeepers, one from each team, to record scores on the scoresheet and to flip the numbers on the Flip-Type Score Card display.
- B. Pay Attention – It is all too easy to get distracted by friends, so please pay attention.
- C. Scoresheets – Make sure both Captains sign the sheet and put it in the Scoresheet box on the bulletin board post.
- D. Flip-Type Score Cards – A visual display for showing the current score. Flip score cards over as needed.

XIII. TEAMS/PLAYERS

- A. Adding Players to Roster – New players may only be added to the Team Roster prior to the start of the ~~3rd~~ **3rd** week of league play. **season**. Player additions must be submitted to the League Registrar with the League Fee before a player may play in a Match.
- B. Age Requirement – Players must be at least 18 years of age.
- C. Changing Teams – is NOT allowed after the 3rd week of league play. If a player quits a team they may not join another team that same season.
- D. League Division – a Player may only play in 2 divisions, Mixed (Co-Ed) and a Gender division (Men or Women).
- E. Replacement Players – Injured Players may be replaced anytime. However, they **cannot** play until approved by the League Registrar. Any reason for replacement, besides injury, must be approved by the LOPBBL Committee.