SAUSALITO BOCCE LEAGUE RULES

(Rules that have been revised are highlighted 8/12/26)

Introduction
The game of bocce is played with eight large colored bocce balls and one small target ball called the pallino. The object of the game is to have your team's balls closest to the pallino after all balls are rolled. Balls closest to the pallino score one point each. Games are comprised of 'rounds' which continue until one team scores enough points to win the game (or until time runs out, in which case, the team with the highest score after time runs out wins the game) – see Points. *Note: the pallino is considered a target and NOT a ball.

Number of Players
All players must be registered and sign a waiver. Team rosters must have a minimum of **five** players and a maximum of eight players. Teams must have a minimum of two players at each game during the regular season and a minimum of **four** players at each game during the playoffs. NO Player may play in both leagues.
Absolutely NO substitute players.

Number of Rolls
Team members may not roll more than two balls per round. If 3+ players are present and rotating, a player may not roll more than 2 consecutive rounds, unless that player only rolls 1 ball during each rotation. Teams with only two players must each roll two balls per round and both players must move from end to end.

Points
Regular season
Games are played to 12 points or until time runs out, in which case, the team with the highest score after time runs out wins the game.
Playoff games
Single Elimination Round Robin playoff games are played to 12 points or until time runs out, in which case, the team with the highest score after time runs out wins the game.
Semi-final match is played to 12 points and team must win by two points. No time limit.
Final match is played to 21 points and team must win by two points. No time limit.

Game Time
Games will begin at the scheduled start time. Games are timed at 40 minutes. After the 40-minute timer sounds, teams will finish the round and the team with the highest score wins. Teams can start another frame if there is time on the clock and the pallino has been thrown. Players cannot delay throwing the pallino to deliberately run out the clock.

Grace Period
A 5-minute grace period is allowed for teams with less than two players present at the scheduled start time. If two or more players are present, the game will begin promptly. Late players may join their team once they arrive.

Forfeit
Teams who do not have 2+ players present before the end of the 5-minute grace period forfeit the game and the opposing team wins the game. The team who forfeits scores 0 points and the other team receives a wins with 12 points. Teams that forfeits 3+ games in a season will have to wait 3 days past registration opening to register. If this occurs 2 seasons in a row all team members from that team will be forced to sit out a season and may not join any other team. If a team needs to forfeit but provides enough notice, they can contact the

opposing captain to arrange a makeup game. If both captains agree to a new game date, they can play and submit the score, allowing the forfeiting team to potentially make up for the points lost.

Make up Games

If the game can't be played due to the weather, each team will need to reschedule their game with their opposing captain by the end of the season. If a team fails to show up for a rescheduled game, it will result in a forfeit. Contact Candace at cpennisi@sausalito.gov to reserve a court.

A captain can ask the opposing captain to reschedule their game to avoid a forfeit but is not obligated to agree and take the win. Court reservations and ref are not offered for these makeup games.

Coin Toss

Each game begins with a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of either: 1) throwing the pallino first; or 2) the color of the bocce balls for their team.

Start of Game

The starting team must roll the pallino past the center line, but it cannot touch the back wall. If the pallino does not cross the center line or hits the back wall, the opposing team rolls the pallino. This will continue until one team successfully puts the pallino into play. The player who rolled the pallino first *always* rolls the first ball.

Playing the Game

Be always respectful to your referees.

If the ball of the starting team touches the backboard, that ball is out of play and is removed, and the starting team rolls again. If the roll is good, that player steps aside (and that team does not roll again) until the opposing team gets one of its balls closer to the pallino or has rolled all of its balls. The team whose balls are closer to the pallino is ‘inside’ and the opposing team is ‘outside’.

Whenever a team is inside, it steps aside and lets the outside team roll. All players must remain off the court when a ball is being rolled. The outside team rolls until its ball is closer to the pallino than the opposing ball. This continues until both teams have rolled all their balls.

If a ball strikes the backboard without touching another ball, it is out of play and removed.

If a ball hits the pallino and strikes the backboard without touching any other ball, that ball is out of play and removed. The pallino will remain in its current position.

If a ball touches any other ball prior to hitting the back wall it remains in play.

If a ball does not touch another ball and bounces off the backboard and then strikes and moves any other ball or strikes the backboard causing any ball resting against the backboard to move, those balls will remain in the current position. The thrown ball is out of play and removed. The Referee should try to remove the dead ball before causing any damage to balls in play. Players may not bounce their ball off the backboard with the intention of disrupting the balls in play; this call is at the discretion of the referee.

If the Pallino is knocked out of the court or in front of the center line, the frame ends, no points are awarded, and the game resumes from the opposite end of the court with the same team tossing the Pallino.

Players may use the sideboards at any time.

If the wrong color ball is rolled, it is replaced with the correct color ball.

If a ball is rolled out of turn, it shall remain in place at the sole discretion of the opposing captain. If the ball is returned, all balls that were moved are returned to their original place by the referee and that ball is re-rolled.

No balls shall be moved until the score is decided by the referee.

Players are not allowed to walk down the inside/outside of the court past the fault line for any reason when it is/or is about to be their turn. No player is allowed to step on the court if it is not their turn.

Scoring

Only the inside team scores. One point is given for each ball of the inside team that is closer to the pallino than any ball of the opposing team. The game resumes from the opposite end of the court with the same team that was awarded the most recent point will toss the pallino.

If a team throws a ball that is of equal distance from the pallino to the other team's ball, that team continues to throw balls until one of theirs is closer (not equidistant).

After all balls are thrown, if both teams have a ball(s) that are equidistant to the pallino, then neither team is closer to the pallino and neither team scores. The team that scored last rolls the pallino.

Players can move the balls only after the ref has called the winner of the frame.

If balls are cleared before all balls are thrown…

- If the team winning that frame did not get to throw their ball(s), assume that ball would've qualified and add another point to that frame's score.
- If the team losing that frame did not get to throw their ball(s), the frame will be a scratch and no teams will be awarded points for that frame.
    - o These rules only apply if the opposing team disrupts the frame.

• Captains have 14 days from score publication to dispute scores. Email cpennisi@sausalito.gov to update.

Tie-Break

If teams are tied at the end of the game, there will be a 'roll off'. One player from each team rolls one ball to determine the winner of the game. The team who scored the point(s) in the previous round rolls the pallino and then its ball from the opposite end of the frame that was most recently played. The other team then rolls its ball. The team closest to the pallino scores the point and wins the game.

Fault Line

The fault line is the front of the boxed area. Players should not step over the fault line before rolling the pallino or bocce ball. All players should be aware of the fault line. Referees may not notice a player stepping over the fault line, therefore opposing teams may *kindly* remind players of the fault line. A warning will be issued before a ball may be disqualified. Only if a player is severely abusing the fault line should any concern be voiced.

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Measurements

Only team captains may call for a measurement during each round unless a point is already conceded by the opposing team. Measurements are made from the inside edge of the bocce ball to the top center of the pallino. The pallino should not be touched. No one is permitted to assist with measurement until asked by the referee.

The clock is stopped for measurements made in the last two minutes of play or at the referee's discretion.

Division Ranking

Each win or loss affects the division's ranking.

Bocce by the Bay: The number of teams that make the playoffs varies depending on the season and the number of divisions in the league. For example:

- **Summer Season 2024:** This season features single-elimination playoffs. Teams will be randomly matched to play an 8-week season, with playoff games on the last Tuesday/Thursday, and Saturday, culminating in the Super - Roll on Saturday.
- **Fall Season 2024:** 11 weeks with 3 divisions of 12 teams each. The top 5 teams from each division, plus one wild card, will make the playoffs.
- **Summer Season 2025:** This season features single-elimination playoffs. Teams will be randomly matched to play an 8-week season, with playoff games on the last Tuesday/Thursday, and Saturday, culminating in the Super - Roll on Saturday.
- **Fall Season 2025:** 11 weeks with 3 divisions of 12 teams each. The top 5 teams from each division, plus one wild card, will make the playoffs.
- **Spring Season 2026:** 11 weeks with 3 divisions of 12 teams each. The top 5 teams from each division, plus one wild card, will make the playoffs.
- **Summer Season 2026:** This season features single-elimination playoffs. Teams will be randomly matched to play an 8-week season with playoff games on the last Tuesday/Thursday, and Saturday, culminating in the Super Roll on Saturday.
- **Fall Season 2026:** This season features single-elimination playoffs. Teams will be randomly matched to play an 7-week season with playoff games on the last Tuesday/Thursday, and Saturday, culminating in the Super Roll on Saturday.
- **Bocce Social:** All teams make the playoffs.

For teams in any of our leagues, in the event of a tie, the head-to-head match results will be the first criterion used to determine standings. If a tie persists, the points differential for the season will come into play, ultimately deciding the team's rank. For instance, if Team A scored 100 points and had 80 points scored against them, their points differential would be +20. This detailed tiebreaker rule ensures teams are fully aware of the criteria used to determine their standings, allowing them to prepare accordingly.

Any Social League team that wins three consecutive championships are eligible to register for the Bocce by the Bay League.

Pre-Game Practice

With only 5 minutes of time between games practicing is at a premium. Both teams should participate in practice simultaneously in a 'mock game' style of play from the end that each player is preparing to play. One team should not occupy the entire court unless no one from the other team has arrived. Upon the second team's arrival sharing space is mandatory.

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League Code of Conduct

• Players will not be rude, disrespectful, or aggressive to the referees, staff, or other players. Unruly behavior is not acceptable.

    o No yelling, swearing, or rude remarks towards the staff or players.

• Questions or concerns regarding the scoring, rule enforcement, or game play will be brought to the referee by the captain only, or temporary captain if the captain is not present.

• At any point, a referee has the right to remove a player from a game due to behavior issues.

• If you break this contract, you will not be eligible to register for future seasons. Captains will be responsible for holding their team accountable to these rules. Our department has the right to remove players from the game, the season, and from future registration. Disqualification periods will be up to the discretion of the Recreation Department and are not up for discussion. Repeat offenses may disqualify your team from participating in the league.