

Martinez Bocce Federation

Official “Open” Bocce Regulations

2024 – MARTINEZ BOCCE FEDERATION LEAGUE PLAY IS INTENDED FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF BOTH PLAYERS AND SPECTATORS. THE FOLLOWING RULES ARE INTENDED TO ENHANCE THE GAME OF BOCCE AND FURTHER THAT ENJOYMENT.

I. INTRODUCTION: The game of “Open” Bocce is played with eight (8) large bocce balls and one small target ball (the “pallino”). Only the composition balls accepted by the Martinez Bocce Federation, (MBF) are permitted. The object of the game is to roll the bocce ball closest to the pallino. There are two balls per person, and four players making up a team. Two players from each team are permanently stationed at each end of the court for each game.

A. The first team to reach 12 points will win the game.

II. MATCH INFORMATION & STARTING TIMES

- A. Matches consist of three (3) games.
- B. Matches played on **Sundays** begin at **5:00 pm**.
- C. Matches played on **Weekdays** will begin at **6:30 pm**.
- D. Matches played on **Thursday’s/Sr. League** will begin at **9:30 am**.
- E. **Matches will begin with a minimum of two players per team.**
- F. **A team not present at the starting time forfeits Game 1.**
- G. **A team not present within 15 minutes forfeits Game 2.**
- H. **A team not present within 30 minutes forfeits Game 3.**
- I. **Grooming STOPS 30 minutes before start of play.**
- J. **Grooming is limited to removing loose debris from the court surface. (DO NOT BROOM).**
- K. **Debris can be removed anytime in between shots.**

**NOTE:
BOTH CAPOS MUST AGREE
TO START EARLY.**

Starting the Match: A coin flip by both Capos will start the match. The winner of the coin flip will determine which end of the court play will begin and may either have the first toss of the pallino or choose the color of the balls. **Teams must play on assigned courts.**

A player may toss the pallino any distance so long as the pallino passes the centerline of the court and does not hit the back wall. If a player fails to validly toss the pallino after one attempt, the opposing team will have one chance to toss the pallino and put it in play. If the opposing team fails to properly toss the pallino, the pallino reverts to **any player** on the original team. In any case, when the pallino has been properly put into play, the team that originally tossed the pallino will throw the first bocce ball.

III. PLAYING THE GAME: The team who originally tossed the pallino, whether successfully or not, throws the first bocce ball. If the bocce ball hits the backboard, that team must roll again until a ball is left in play. After a ball has been left in play, the opposing team will roll until one of their balls is closest to the pallino or they have thrown all their balls. The team whose bocce ball is closest to the pallino is called “inside” and the opposing team “outside”. This continues until both teams have used all their bocce balls. The team who scores, throws the pallino to begin the next frame.

- A. If a player rolls the wrong colored ball, simply replace it with the correct color when the ball stops rolling. **The opposing team will replace the ball.**

- B. If a player rolls out of turn, return the thrown ball and replace any moved balls back to the approximate spot before the ball was thrown. The opposing team will replace the ball. If both teams agree which color ball was "INSIDE", whether by a measuring device or by sight, and subsequently it was found the decision was incorrect, the "PLAYER ROLLS OUT OF TURN" situation will not apply.
- C. If a ball or pallino is moved before all balls are played, the opposing team repositions the ball or balls to the approximate original position. If the pallino is moved during measurements, wind or other unintentional actions, both teams must agree on its repositioning to the original spot. This is to be done in the spirit of good sportsmanship.
- D. When a team wins a game, players exchange ends of the court and substitutions may be made. The team winning the previous game will toss the pallino to start the next game.
- E. NO PRACTICE BETWEEN GAMES.
- F. After the pallino is in play a thrown ball need only cross the foul line and does not need to cross the center line. Ball must come to rest on playing surface to be in play.

IV. **DEAD BALLS:** Should a player's bocce ball make contact with the backboard, the bocce ball is considered a dead ball on impact and is removed from play until the end of the frame. If after a valid play only the pallino remains on the court, the team that last rolled must roll again until a ball remains in play or that team is out of balls.

- A. If the thrown ball comes to rest on the pallino or another ball that is touching the back wall, that thrown ball remains in play. The ball touching the back wall is removed from play. If the pallino is touching the back wall it remains in play.
- B. If a bocce ball, after hitting the backboard, strikes a stationary bocce ball, that stationary bocce ball shall be replaced in its approximate original position. The thrown bocce ball is removed from play.
- C. If a bocce ball hitting the backboard is not removed quickly enough and, as a result, is struck by a moving ball that likely would have hit the backboard, the moving ball remains in play.
- D. If someone rolls 3 balls in the same frame, the 3rd ball is dead (taken out of play) and if it makes contact with other balls, those balls must be returned to original positions.

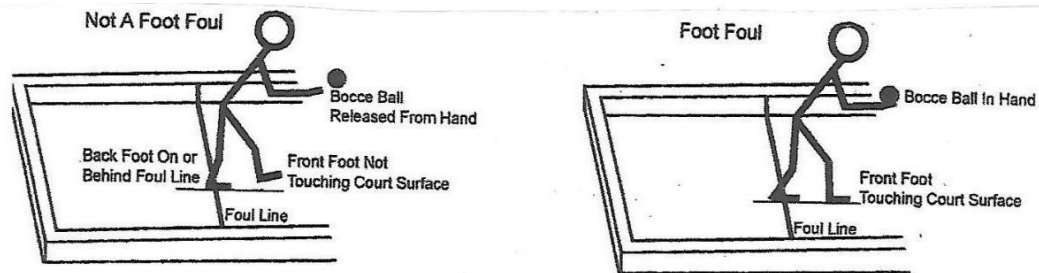
V. **PALLINO:** Once the pallino has been validly put into play, it remains in play even if it hits the backboard. However, if the pallino is knocked out of the court or is knocked in front of the centerline, the frame will end, no points are awarded, and the game will resume from the opposite end of the court with the same team tossing the pallino. **NOTE: For a ball or pallino to become invalid it must completely leave the boundaries of the court. The balls must come to rest on the playing surface to be valid.**

VI. **FOUL LINE:** Player's movements are limited to the foul line. The player may step on but cannot step over the foul line before releasing the pallino or balls.

If a foot foul occurs, the thrown ball will be removed from play when it comes to rest. Balls will be returned to their original position by the opposing team.....

When a player releases the pallino or bocce ball, both feet must be in the court unless that player has a significant physical impairment. **Only players on the same end of the court can call a foot foul. When a player is going to shoot they will alert the opposite team, If the shooter goes over the foul line the ball is dead and all balls are returned as close as possible to original positions.**

NOTE:- DO NOT WALK PAST THE FOUL LINE WITH THE BOCCE BALL IN HAND AS THIS CONTRAVENES "Player's movements are limited to the foul line"



VII. **SHOOTING:** Shooting is allowed if the thrown ball hits the playing surface before the center line and before hitting a bocce ball or pallino. **Lofting the ball beyond the center line IS NOT ALLOWED.** If the thrown ball does not hit the playing surface before the center line and hits a bocce ball or pallino, **everything goes back to the approximate original position. The thrown ball is taken out of play.**

VIII. **DISPUTES:** The teams playing will referee their own game. One member of the Martinez Bocce Foundation Board of Directors agreed to by both Capos shall decide any disputes, which cannot be resolved by the team Capos. Upon his/her decision the game shall continue.

IX. **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. If at the end of any frame the closest ball of each team is equal distance from the pallino, the frame ends in a tie and no points are awarded to either team. The game will resume from the opposite end of the court with the same team tossing the pallino. Capos of each team are responsible for keeping score sheets and for reporting the results of the match (by submitting “Official Score Sheet **signed by both**” to a designation location). **The score sheet is the official score.**

X. **MEASUREMENTS:** **All measurements will be made from the inside dimensions of the bocce ball to the inside dimension of the pallino. Do not touch balls. Only two members of each team may be in the court during measurement.** Both Capos must agree on which team has the point(s). If both teams have balls remaining, the team that does not have the closest ball to the pallino rolls again; if all balls have been played, points are awarded based on the balls that are closest to the pallino in accord with Rule IX. **If both teams cannot agree on point, anyone agreed to by both Capos can measure. The decision is final. FRAME OR GAME IS OVER WHEN BOTH CAPOS AGREE.**

Both teams must be aware, not to kick away or move the balls until both Capos/Teams have agreed on the points scored at the end of each frame. If this happens, the opposing team will replace the pallino/ball/s in the approximate original positions.

NOTE:- BALLS CAN BE MEASURED AT ANY TIME DURING THE FRAME AND ALSO AT THE END OF THE FRAME. ALL “INSIDE” BALLS SCORE.

XI. **PROTEST:** A protest will be considered valid only if the opposing Capo is notified at the time of the dispute (**before the score sheet is signed**). **Note: write “PROTEST” on the score sheet,** and the game is officially recognized as being played under protest. All protests must be submitted in writing (**forms in the Clubhouse and online**) to the Martinez Bocce Federation within 72 hours of the disputed game. Their decision will be final. A \$5.00 fee must accompany all written protests. **If you win the protest, the fee will be returned.**

XII. **FOREITS:** **As a courtesy, if your team is unable to play, you must notify your opponents that you will not be playing. The opposing team must submit an official scoresheet showing 3 wins by forfeit and sign it. It only requires the winning team’s signature.**

- A. If a team forfeits any three league matches, the team will finish the remainder of the season, but will return as a new team at the beginning of the next season.
- B. If you forfeit a match during the last four weeks of regular season play, you need to present your case to the Board. The Board will decide your eligibility to play the following season.

XIII. RESCHEDULING & RAINOUTS: ALL RAINOUTS WILL BE MADE UP. A Scheduling Coordinator has been assigned for scheduling all rainouts. The Scheduling Coordinator decides on rescheduling dates. If a team or teams are unable to field a legal team (two players) for a make-up match, the games will be forfeited. **No make-up matches will be pre-arranged. If they are, the games played will be counted as losses for both teams.** Notifications will be through the HOTLINE and/or Posting on the Bulletin Board and/or “The Website”. No games may be rescheduled for any other reason than bad weather or un-playable court conditions. On rainy days, call the **MBF HOTLINE AT 925-295-2003** for official information. A recorded message by **3PM** will announce the status of play that night. A MBF board member will be present to call a rainout. Any game, not completed or started at the time of the rainout, will be played in the makeup game from where the game was interrupted. So, if rain caused postponement during game 2 the makeup game will start from where game 2 was interrupted and then on to game 3. Teams must sign/submit the scoresheet as at the time of the interruption.

XIV. PLAYERS:

- A. Additions to team rosters may be made until designated deadlines. Completed rosters must contain names, addresses and phone numbers of all players. **Official team rosters become final on their fourth week of play. After the fourth week, if a rostered player has played one game for that team, they are obligated to stay on that team. If a player should choose to quit or is removed from a roster, they cannot play for another team for the remainder of the season. Vacated players will be allowed to play the following year.** You can replace **player vacancies** any time during the season. Any changes must be submitted by the team Capo using the **Roster Change Sheet** which is available at the Clubhouse and the MBF website and must be submitted to the Martinez Bocce Federation to be valid.
- B. **A PERSON CAN ONLY PLAY ON ONE “OPEN” LEAGUE TEAM.** Maximum of 12 persons per team and 6 minimum. A team forfeits any game in which they play a non-roster player or a player that plays on two different “Open” teams. The opposing team may not waive non-roster forfeits.
- C. A player must play at least 1 game on six nights of play to be eligible to play in the MBF playoffs and CCC championships. A team forfeits any game in which they use a player that did not reach the eligibility rule for the playoffs.
- D. If a team fields less than two (2) players, the game is considered a forfeit. **Two players constitute a team.** A 2- or 3-member team may play throwing only 2 balls per player. A 3rd or 4th player arriving late may enter the game after the completion of the current active frame.
- E. **There is no minimum age requirement;** however, no more than ½ of the team may be under the age of 18 and at least one person in every game must be 18 or over. The minimum age for the senior division is turning 50 during the season.
- F. **A team may make two substitutions per game (one substitution from each end).** Substitutions may only be made between frames.
- G. No player may play two consecutive games from the same end of the court.
- H. Players need not throw alternate throws. Consecutive or alternating throws by teammates shall be at the option of the players. After the pallino is thrown, either player can throw the ball.
- I. In the interest of SAFETY, all participating players must wear flat-soled shoes. **NO BARE FEET ALLOWED.**

XV. **ENTRY FEE:** The required entry fee must accompany the completed roster prior to the established registration deadline. **A returned check will have a \$50.00 return charge.**

XVI. **CONDUCT AND COURTESY:**

- A. Team Capos are responsible for the actions of their players and fans (spectators). If there is any problem with a spectator that is not involved with any team, both Capos will suspend play until the problem is resolved.
- B. The opposing team may be in the court behind the player rolling if the player rolling does not object. If the player requests that the opposing player step outside the court, in the spirit of good sportsmanship, that request will be honored.
- C. The teammates of the player rolling are the only ones allowed in the court, beyond the foul line, until the player's shot is complete.
- D. Balls not yet thrown should always be in the court and visible to each of the teams.
- E. If a player is standing in the playing half of the court while the opposing team is rolling and the opposing team requests that the player step outside the court, that request will be honored.
- F. Only participating players and team Capos will be on the court while the game is in progress. Spectators are not allowed on the courts at any time during regulation play.
- G. Courtesy and respect should be displayed at all times. Profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct are not permitted. Violations may result in a warning by an MBF Director to the player or team Capo. Severe violations or a violation after a warning may result in the player's expulsion by the MBF Board of Directors from the game, match or season.
- H. All trash is to be discarded in appropriated containers. (This includes peanut and other nut shells and bottle caps)
- I. Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters and/or non-bocce related activities are prohibited on or around the courts. Courts are to be used for Bocce play only. The courts are not to be used as playgrounds.
- J. Animals must be on a leash, and under control at all times. (City of Martinez, Contra Costa County and EBRPD ordinance).
- K. Slow play: To expedite play, team breaks should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- L. **NO SMOKING:** Smoking will not be allowed by team members, spectators or guests within the MBF courts and surrounding areas (Martinez Municipal Code 8.05.060). Any infraction for smoking may result in a player being brought before the Disciplinary Committee for punishment, including suspension from league play. Smoking includes cigars, cigarettes, vaping, pipes, marijuana and chewing tobacco.

XVII. **TEAM MOVEMENT BETWEEN DIVISIONS**

- A. Team movements between divisions for the upcoming season will be determined by the final standings of the current season. The top two teams will move up a division and the bottom two will move down. This may change if there is a need to fill division vacancies.

