

INDOOR

BOCCIA

RULES FOR

GUMBO

(Games Uniting Mind and Body)

Revised 10/01/10



Addendum to
A Resource Guide for the Conduct of Athletic Competition for
Students with Physical or Visual Disabilities

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INTRODUCTION

Boccia for GUMBO is a competitive game that is played one-on-one. It is played on a specially marked court, usually with a hard surface. The object of the game is to throw or bowl game balls so that they land as close as possible to a special target ball. The game begins with a player throwing the white target ball onto the court. The opponent then takes turns trying to throw or bowl their game balls as close as possible to the target ball. When all the game balls have been thrown, a referee determines the points awarded to the individual based on measurement of how close the game balls are to the target ball. The game requires mental planning and strategy in trying to place game balls for maximum scoring. It also can develop or increase hand/eye coordination. Boccia is a sport in which individuals with severe physical limitations can participate and develop high levels of skill. Boccia is a Paralympic sport and an official sport of the National Disability Sports Alliance (NDSA).

DEFINITIONS

1. **Jack** is the white target ball.
2. **Ball** is one of the red or blue balls.
3. **Side** in individual boccia, is defined as one (1) single competitor.
4. **Court** is the playing area enclosed by the boundary lines. This includes the playing boxes.
5. **Match** is a competition between two sides when a specified number of ends are played.
6. **End** is one section of a match when the jack ball and all the balls have been played by two sides.
7. **Assistive Device** is the term used to describe an aid to playing the game (such as a ramp or chute). The term includes all parts of the device, whether permanently attached or not.
8. **Violation** is any action committed by a player, side, substitute, aide, or coach which is against the rules of the game.
9. **Throw** is the term used for propelling a ball onto the court. It includes throwing, kicking, or releasing a ball when using an assistive device.
10. **Dead ball** is a ball which has gone out of the court after it has been thrown, has been removed from the court by the referee following a violation, or has not been thrown when a side's time expires.
11. **Disrupted end** is when balls are moved outside the normal order of play, either accidentally or deliberately.
12. **V Line** is the line that the jack ball must cross over and remain over to be considered in play.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. **Boccia balls** – a set consists of six red, six blue, and one white jack ball. Boccia balls used in sanctioned meets must meet the criteria laid down by the International Boccia Committee. Ball weight: 275 gr. +/- 12 gr.; Ball circumference: 270 mm +/- 8 mm.

2. **Measuring device** – a tape measure that has a locking mechanism, a compass, and/or a locking pointer. All must lock into place for accurate measurement during movement.
3. **Scoreboard** – must be visible by all players.
4. **Timing equipment** – an accurate means of tracking time. This may be a stopwatch. Each player is allowed one (1) minute to release the ball. Time begins when the referee indicates it's the player's turn.
5. **Dead ball container** – this container should allow the players to see how many balls are in the box. It should be placed at the side of the court near the V on the court.
6. **Color/side indicator** – any device that clearly allows the players to see which side should play.
7. **The Court**
 - a. The surface should be flat and smooth such as a tiled or wood gymnasium floor. Surfaces should not be greasy, highly waxed, or outdoors.
 - b. The dimensions of the court are 12.5m x 6m (refer to Appendix A, Court Layout).
 - c. All court markings will be between 2 cm and 5 cm in width and must be easily recognizable. Adhesive/court tape should be used to mark lines. 4 cm or 5 cm tape should be used for external boundary lines, throwing line, and the V line. 2cm tape should be used for internal lines, such as the line dividing playing boxes and the cross.
 - d. The throwing area is divided into six throwing boxes.
 - e. The area between the throwing line and the V line marks the area that a jack ball must land beyond to be valid. The tape for the V line should be placed on the side of the line that is considered to be the non valid area of play.
 - f. The cross "+" marks the replaced jack position and is also the position used to place the jack for a tie break end.
 - g. All measurement of the outside lines is measured to the inside of the relevant line. Lines inside the court are measured to the center of the tape.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PLAY

Boccia is open to **all** GUMBO athletes or other students with physical or visual disabilities. Indoor Boccia is a very strategic, competitive game which requires mental planning in trying to place game balls in a position for maximum scoring. Typically, GUMBO athletes in classes 1-2 will play in the B1 division. Players who lack the ability to throw the ball may be eligible for competition in the B3 division which allows for an assistive device and a sport assistant. GUMBO athletes in classes 3-9 and V1-V4 are eligible to play in the Open division.

DIVISIONS OF PLAY

GUMBO utilizes three (3) divisions of play. Each division is played by competitors of either sex. Age divisions will remain the same as in GUMBO: Bantam (aged 5-9 years); Junior (aged 10-14); Senior (aged 15-22). Divisions may be combined. The three divisions of play are as follows:

- B1** Individual Play for students who use a wheelchair (manual or electric) for daily activities. The student has sustained grasp and release action and

sufficient functional range of movement to consistently and independently propel a Boccia ball into the court. Typically, this division includes GUMBO athletes classified as 1a, 1b, or 2 who have limited but functional upper body movement. Players may be assisted by one sport assistant, who must remain seated at least 2 meters behind the playing box in a designated area. This sport assistant may only come forward and assist if visibly requested by the player to do so. They perform tasks such as: adjust or stabilize the playing chair, pass a ball to the player, roll (knead) the ball. The sport assistant should be positioned behind the playing box in a designated area. Players are not required to have sport assistants.

B3 Individual Play with an assistive device (ramp or chute). The student uses a wheelchair (manual or electric) for daily activities or is dependent on assistance for mobility. The student has no sustained grasp or release action, but may have arm movement. The student has insufficient functional range of movement to consistently propel a Boccia ball into the court. The student requires the use of an assistive device, also known as a ramp or chute, to assist with propelling the Boccia ball. Typically, this class includes GUMBO athletes classified as 1a, 1b, or 2 without functional upper body movement. Each player is allowed to be assisted by a sport assistant, who will remain in the player's box, but who must keep his/her back to the court with eyes averted from play. The sport assistant must not speak to the player, but only take directions from the player.

B5 Individual play for students in the Open division. The student has a physical or visual disability and may or may not use a wheelchair for daily activities. All players in this division must play from a seated position. The chair may be a wheelchair or a chair furnished or approved by the tournament director. Players may not be assisted in any way. Typically this class includes GUMBO athletes classified as 3-9 and V1-V4. Students with visual impairments who have no prior experience in GUMBO competitions must provide a copy of the most current visual acuity.

MATCH FORMAT

In Individual Divisions a match consists of four (4) ends except in circumstances of a tie-break. Each player initiates two ends with control of the jack ball alternating between players. Each player receives six (6) colored balls. The side throwing red balls will occupy box 3 and the side throwing the blue balls will occupy box 4 throughout the match.

PLAY

1. Start Time

Each player and team will receive the starting time. Each player is expected to report to the designated area or call room at least 15 minutes prior to the start time. Anyone who is not in the designated area or call room at the assigned time will forfeit the game.

2. Examination of boccia balls

A side is able to examine boccia balls prior to a match and if a request is considered reasonable, different ball/balls/set may be used. During a match, boccia balls may be changed at the discretion of the referee.

3. Coin Toss

The referee will toss a coin before the start of play. The winning side chooses whether to play red or blue.

4. Warm up balls

The players will position themselves in their designated boxes. Each player may throw up to six (6) warm up balls within a two (2) minute period.

5. Throwing the jack ball

- a. The side playing the red balls always initiates the first end.
- b. The referee will present the jack ball to the appropriate player and indicate the start of the end by verbally asking for the jack.
- c. The player must throw the jack ball into the valid area of the court.
- d. In each subsequent round, the jack ball rotates to the next box in sequence.

6. Fouled jack ball

- a. The jack will be fouled if:
 - 1). It fails to cross the V line or after crossing the V line, returns to the non valid play area.
 - 2). It is thrown out of the court.
 - 3). A violation is committed by the player throwing the jack ball.
- b. If the jack is fouled then the jack will be thrown by the opposing player (the player due to throw the jack ball in the next end). If the jack is fouled in the final end, it will be thrown by the player who threw the jack in the first end. The jack will continue to advance in sequence until it is thrown into court. This does not effect who will throw the jack in the next end.

7. Throwing the first ball into court

- a. The player who throws the jack ball also throws the first colored ball.
- b. If the ball is thrown out of court, or is retracted following a violation, that side will continue to throw until a ball lands in the valid area of the court or all their balls have been thrown.

8. Throwing the first opposition ball

- a. The opposition side will then throw
- b. If the ball is thrown out of court, or is retracted following a violation, that side will continue to throw until a ball lands in the valid area of the court or all their balls have been thrown.

9. Throwing the remaining balls

- a. The side to throw next will be the side which does not have the closest ball to the jack ball unless they have thrown all their balls, in which case the other side will throw next.
- b. This procedure will continue until all balls have been thrown by both sides.

10. Completion of end

After all balls have been thrown, including any penalty balls awarded to either side, the referee will score the end. The referee will then verbally announce the completion of the end. Before removing any balls from the court the referee must allow the B3 sport assistants to turn into the court.

If a sport assistant of a B3 player turns around, enters into the court or communicates with the player after all balls have been thrown, including any penalty balls awarded to either side, he/she will be told not to do it again and will be given a friendly warning. If the player of that sport assistant then asks the referee for a measure, the referee will not measure.

11. Preparation for subsequent end

All balls are then retrieved for the beginning of the next end (officials may assist). The referee will present the jack ball to the appropriate player and play will begin.

12. Throwing balls

- a. No jack or colored ball may be thrown until the referee has given the start signal or indicated which color ball is to be thrown.
- b. When throwing balls, players must not touch the court markings or any part of the court surface not deemed part of the player's throwing box. This includes any part of the body, wheelchair, assistive device, and sport assistant. This is judged at the point the ball is released.
- c. When the ball is released, the player must have at least one buttock in contact with the seat of the chair.
- d. When the ball is released, the ball must not be touching any part of the court which is outside the player's throwing box.
If a ball is thrown and it bounces off of the player that threw it, or the opposing player or their equipment, it is still considered to be in play. If a ball in play rolls on its own, without being touched by anything, it will remain on the court in that position.

13. Balls out of court

- a. Any ball, including the jack ball, will be considered out of court, if it touches or crosses the boundary lines.
- b. A ball that touches or crosses the line and then re-enters the court is considered to be out of court.
- c. A ball which is thrown and fails to enter court, except in the case of dropped balls, will be considered out of court.
- d. Any ball that is thrown out of court becomes a dead ball and is placed in the Dead Ball container. The referee is the final arbiter in these matters.

14. Jack knocked out of court

- a. If the jack ball is knocked out of court during an end, it is repositioned on the "Replaced Jack Cross."
- b. If this is not possible because a ball is already covering the cross, the jack ball will be placed as close as possible in front of the cross with the ball centered between the sidelines.
- c. When the jack has been replaced, the side to throw next will be the side that does not have the closest colored ball to the jack.
- d. If there are no colored balls on the court after the jack has been replaced, the side which threw the jack ball into play will throw.

15. Equidistant balls

When determining which side is to throw next, if two or more balls of different colors are equidistant from the jack and there are no other balls closer, it is the side that threw the last that must throw again. The side to throw will then alternate until either the equidistant relationship is disturbed or one side has thrown all its balls. Play will then continue as normal.

16. Balls thrown simultaneously

If more than one ball is simultaneously thrown by one side when it is that side's turn, both balls are deemed to have been played and will remain on the court. If in the referee's opinion there is an intention to gain an advantage because the time is running out, then both balls must be retrieved.

17. Dropped ball

If a player accidentally drops the ball the referee can allow that player to replay that ball. It is up to the referee to determine whether the ball was dropped as a result of involuntary action or it was a deliberate attempt to throw or propel the ball. There is no limit as to the number of times a ball may be re-thrown and the referee is the sole arbiter. In this case, time will not be stopped.

18. Referee errors

If due to an error of a referee the wrong side throws, the ball(s) is returned to the throwing player. In this case, time must be checked and amended as appropriate. If any balls have been disturbed the end should be treated as a disrupted end.

19. Positioning of coaches

Coaches should be positioned at the end of the court in the designated area. The definition of this area, however, will be determined by the Organizing Committee, and dependent upon the overall court layout.

SCORING

1. Scoring will take place by the referee after all balls have been thrown by both sides, including penalty balls where appropriate.
2. The side with the ball closest to the jack ball will score one point for each ball closer to the jack than the opponent's closest ball to the jack.
3. If two or more balls of different colors are equidistant from the jack and no other balls are closer, then each side will receive one point per ball.

4. The referee will note the score on the score sheet and the scoreboard. Players are responsible for ensuring that the scores are recorded accurately.
5. At the completion of the ends, the points scored in each end are added together and the side with the higher total score is declared the winner.
6. The referee may call players forward if measuring has to take place or the decision is close at the end of an end.
7. If the scores are equal, a "tie-break" end is played.

TIE-BREAK

1. A "tie-break" constitutes one extra "end."
2. All players will remain in their original boxes.
3. A coin toss will determine which side will throw first
4. The jack ball is placed on the "Replaced Jack Cross."
5. The "end" is then played as a normal end.
6. If 2 balls of different colors are equidistant at the end of the tie-break, the score will remain tied and a second tie-break will take place. This time the opposite side will begin the end. This procedure continues, with the first throw alternating between sides until there is a winner.

MOVEMENT ON THE COURT

1. With the exception of overstepping the throwing box sidelines to maneuver the wheelchair (chair) into position for the next shot, the permission of the referee must always be sought before moving from the playing box.
2. Players must remain in their designated throwing box throughout the match. However, referee permission can be requested to leave their box for the following situations:
 - a. after the referee has indicated which side to throw, that side may leave their box to check positioning of the balls on the court (the time clock is not stopped).
 - b. in matters of dispute or confusion (the time clock should be stopped).
 - c. scoring at the completion of an end.
3. The B3 players can not go into other boxes while preparing their next shot or to orientate the ramp. If this happens the referee will ask the player to get back into their box before orientating their ramp.
4. If any player needs assistance to go onto the court, they may ask the referee or the linesperson to assist them.

PENALTIES

1. General

In the case of violation there are three (3) different forms of penalties:

- a. penalty
- b. retraction
- c. warning and disqualification

2. Penalty

- a. A penalty is the award of two (2) extra balls to the opposing side and will be thrown at the conclusion of the end.

- b. Dead balls of the side awarded the penalty balls will be used. If there are not enough dead balls then the ball(s) of that side which are furthest from the jack will be used (whether in front or in back of the jack).
- c. If there is more than one ball competing to be a penalty ball then the side will choose which one shall be used.
- d. If any scoring balls are used as penalty balls, the referee should note the score before removing the balls. After the penalty balls have been thrown, any extra points will be added to the score. If, in the act of throwing the penalty balls, a player should alter the positioning of the balls so that an opponents ball lies nearer to the jack ball, then the referee shall score the end from the new position.
- e. If more than one violation occurs in the course of an end by one side, the two penalty balls that accompany each violation are thrown separately. Therefore, two penalty balls (for the first violation) are retrieved and then played, and then the two penalty balls (for the second violation) are retrieved and then played, and so on.
- f. Violations committed by both sides cancel each other out. For example, if during an end the red side has two violations and the blue side has only one violation, the blue side will receive penalty balls for one red violation only.
- g. If a violation which leads to the award of penalty balls is committed while penalty balls are being thrown, the referee will, in sequence:
 - 1). Retract any further sets of penalty balls from that side should they have been awarded more than one set of penalty balls, or
 - 2). Award penalty balls to the opposing side.

RETRACTION

- 1. The penalty involves the removal from the court, the ball which was thrown under a violation. The ball will be removed for the remainder of the end and placed in the dead ball container.
- 2. A retraction penalty can only be given for a violation which occurs during the act of throwing.
- 3. If a violation is committed which leads to a retraction, the referee will always try to stop the ball before it dislodges other balls.
- 4. If the referee fails to stop the ball before it dislodges other balls, the end will be deemed to be disrupted.
- 5. A violation which results in a retraction is deemed to have occurred at the point when the ball is released.

WARNING AND DISQUALIFICATION

- 1. When a warning is given to a player, the referee will note it on the score sheet.
- 2. If a second warning is given to a player, the player is disqualified.
- 3. If a player in an individual division is disqualified, the match is forfeited.
- 4. A disqualified player may be reinstated for future matches within the same tournament.
- 5. If a side forfeits a match, then the opposing side is awarded the match by a score of 6-0, unless the opposing has scored more than six, in which case, that

score will apply. The disqualified side's score will be zero, regardless of any scored points.

6. In the case of repeated disqualifications, the organizing committee, in consultation with the GUMBO rules committee, is obligated to consider and determine appropriate sanctions for future matches and tournaments.

VIOLATIONS

1. The following actions will lead to the award of penalty balls:
 - a. failing to ask permission before moving from the throwing box
 - b. a sport assistant in the B3 division turns into the court to view play during an end
 - c. if, in the opinion of the referee, there is inappropriate communication between players, their sport assistants, and/or coaches.
 - d. the sport assistant moves the wheelchair, the ramp or rolls the ball without the player asking.

2. The following actions lead to the award of penalty balls and retraction of the thrown ball:
 - a. releasing the ball when the sport assistant, the player or any of their equipment is touching the court marking or a part of the court surface not deemed part of the player's throwing box. For B3 players this includes while the ball is still in the ramp.
 - b. failing to move an assistive device to the left and to the right to break the plane of the previous shot.
 - c. releasing the ball when the assistive device is overhanging the throwing line.
 - d. releasing the ball without having at least one buttock in contact with the seat of the chair.
 - e. releasing the ball when the ball is touching a part of the court which is outside the player's throwing box.
 - f. Releasing the ball when the B3 sport assistant looks back into the court.

3. The following actions will lead to the award of penalty balls and a warning:
 - a. any deliberate interference with or distraction of another player in such a way that effects their concentration or their throwing action.
 - b. deliberately causing a disrupted end.

4. The following actions will lead to retraction of the thrown ball:
 - a. throwing a ball prior to the referee indicating which color to play. If it is the jack ball, it is fouled.
 - b. throwing a ball when it is the opposing sides turn to throw, unless the referee has made an error.
 - c. if a ball stops in a ramp after it has been released it will be retracted.
 - d. if a B3 sport assistant stops the ball in the ramp for any reason it will be retracted.
 - e. if the B3 player is not the person that releases the ball.
 - f. if a sport assistant and a player simultaneously release the ball.
 - g. if a colored ball is thrown before the jack ball.

5. The following actions will lead to a side receiving a warning:
 - a. unreasonably delaying a match.
 - b. a player not accepting a referee's decision and/or acting in a manner detrimental to their opponent or competition personnel.
6. The following actions will lead to the side receiving a disqualification:
when a player displays un-sportsman like behavior to the referee or the opposition players.
7. If a violation is committed when the jack is thrown, the jack is fouled.

DISRUPTED END

1. If an end is disrupted due to a referee's error or action of the referee, in consultation with the linesman, will return the disturbed balls to their previous position (the referee will always try to respect the previous score, even if the balls are not in their exact previous position/s). If in the opinion of the referee this is not possible then the end will be restarted. The referee will be the final arbiter.
2. If an end is disrupted due to a side's error or action, the referee will take action as stated above, but may consult with the disadvantaged side in order to avoid making any unfair decisions.
3. If a disrupted end is caused and penalty balls have been awarded, the penalty balls will be played at the completion of the re-played end. If the player or side that caused the disrupted end has been awarded penalty balls, they will not be able to play those balls.

COMMUNICATION

1. There will be no communication between a player, sport assistant, or coach during an end. The exceptions are:
 - a. when a player requests his/her sport assistant to carry out a specific action such as altering the positioning of the chair, moving the assistive device, rolling the ball or passing the ball to the player.
 - b. coaches may congratulate or offer encouragement to a player after the shot and between ends.
2. Between ends, players may communicate between themselves, their sport assistant and their coach. This must cease once the referee is ready to begin the end. The referee will not delay the game to allow for lengthy discussion. A player may not leave his/her box between ends, unless during a time-out or under permission of the referee.
3. One time-out per side is allowed during the match. This can be called by either the coach or the player between ends. Time-out will last for two (2) minutes. Players may leave their box for a time-out, but must return to the same playing box. If both sides return to their boxes, time-out will be considered to be over. Players cannot leave the court area during a time-out without the referee's permission. If they leave the court area for any reason they will be given a warning that will be recorded on the score sheet.
4. A player may ask another player to move if he/she is positioned in such a way as to be impinging upon the playing of a shot, but cannot ask them to go out of their box.

5. Any player may speak to the referee in their own time.

TIME

1. Each player shall have a one (1) minute time limit for each throw.
2. The time will start when the referee indicates which side should play (this includes propelling the jack ball).
3. The time will stop the moment each ball is released.
4. If a side has not released the ball when the time limit is reached, that ball becomes invalid and will be placed in the dead ball container.
5. If a side releases a ball after the time limit is reached then the referee will stop the ball and remove it from the court before it disturbs play. If the ball disturbs any other balls, the end will be disrupted.
6. During matters of dispute or confusion, the referee may stop the time clocks.

CRITERIA/RULES FOR ASSISTIVE DEVICES

1. Assistive devices should be small enough to fit into an area 2.5m x 1m when it is laid on its side.
2. Assistive devices should not contain any mechanical device that would aid propulsion, or speed up/slow down the ball, or the orientation of the ramp (like lasers, levels, brakes, sighting devices, scopes, springs, etc.). Once the ball is released by the player, nothing should obstruct the ball in any way.
3. A player must have direct physical contact with the ball immediately prior to its release into court. Direct physical contact also includes using an aid attached directly to the player's head, mouth, or arm. The maximum length of the aid is 50 cm. Simultaneous release of the ball by the sport assistant and the player is not allowed and if this happens the ball will be retracted.
4. Between shots the assistive device must be clearly moved to the left and to the right. If a ramp is fixed to a base, and cannot be moved independently from the base, the entire ramp including the base must be moved to the left and to the right.
5. A player may use more than one assistive device during a match. The player can make the change only after the referee has indicated it is their turn to throw. All devices must remain inside the player's box during the entire match.
6. If a ramp breaks during an end the time must be stopped and the player will be given ten (10) minutes to repair that ramp.

CLARIFICATION AND PROTEST

1. During a match, a side may feel that the referee has overlooked an event or made an incorrect decision which affects the results of the match. At that time, the player may draw the referee's attention to this situation and seek clarification. The time should be stopped.
2. During the match, a player may request a ruling from the Head Referee, whose decision is final.
3. If a side feels that the referee has not acted in accordance with the rules then they must not sign the referee's score sheet. Within a 30 minute period from the conclusion of that game, a written protest must be presented to the games organizer or head referee for consideration and actions. If no written protest is received, then the result stands.

WHEELCHAIRS (CHAIRS)

1. Competition wheelchairs (chairs) should be as standard as possible; however, alterations made for everyday life are eligible to be used in competition. Scooters may also be used.
2. The maximum seat height, which includes the cushion or supporting board, is 66 cms.
3. In case of dispute, the Head Referee in conjunction with the GUMBO Rules Committee shall make a determination. Any decision is final.

SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

1. If a player becomes ill during an end (a serious situation) it will be possible to interrupt the match for a maximum of ten (10) minutes so that they can receive medical attention.
2. If a player is unable to continue, the match will be forfeited.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

The ethics and spirit of the game are similar to that of tennis. Crowd participation is welcomed and encouraged; however, spectators are encouraged to remain quiet during the action of a player throwing the ball.

BOCCIA COURT LAYOUT

