

**Special  
Olympics**  
Ontario



**School Programs**

## **2023-2024 Season School Qualifiers**



**Bocce Technical Package**  
Unified & Traditional

# SOO School Qualifiers Bocce 4-on-4 Rules

## 1. Competition Format

### 1a. Game Points and Team Ranking

- Round Robin Format within your division.
- Game Points Scoring System:
  - 3 points for a win.
  - 2 points for a tie.
- There is NO overtime at qualifiers (ties will stand).
- Tie breakers at qualifiers to be determined in succession:
  - Highest game points (based on the scoring system outlined above)
  - Lowest points against average
  - Random Computerized Draw
- In the event of a three-way tie, once a team has been eliminated from the tie, the tie-breaking process for the remaining two teams will start at the beginning.
- For qualification for Provincial School Championships, all teams are placed in **a conference** with schools from the surrounding regions, **meaning that schools are competing against all other schools within their conference, not only teams at their local qualifier**. All tie-breaking processes remain the same. This model allows for equitable chances of qualification despite the size of the local qualifier. To learn more about the qualifying process, our quotas for the year and our conference model, please visit our resources page on our website: [School Programs Resources](#)

### 1b. Officials (Note: Officials Will Be Volunteers Provided By The Host School)

- Each court should have two officials: a main official and a line official. Their supplies include a coin and measuring tape. During play, the line official remains on the outside of the court; their role is to look for foot faults and illegal rolls. The main official's role is to measure who has the closest distance to the Ballina.
- **How to Officiate Bocce Video:** [Bocce Officials Training Video](#)  
Note: discrepancies between the video and our rules:
  - Our games are 20 minutes, not 30 minutes.
  - Uniform requirements in this video are not relevant.
  - No signatures are required at the end of the game.
  - There is no difference in Unified vs. traditional rules/gameplay.
  - Our Bocce Balls will be Red and Blue.
  - The winning score is 12, not 16 points.
  - We have the 3-attempt rule; however, the head official will place the ball at the center line after 3 attempts.
- Learn more about how to officiate by visiting our website [Resources Page](#)

### 1c. Uniforms

- All teams must supply their own uniforms. T-shirts or sports uniforms are permitted as long as all uniforms are identical for all players. Numbers on uniforms are not required. Religious and medical-related headwear is permitted. Jewelry, boots, bandanas, and beanies are not permitted.

### 1d. Equipment

- All equipment will be provided. Teams are not permitted to use their own equipment. Flag house beanbag balls will be used (<http://www.flaghouse.com/Recreation/Outdoor-Games/Bocce/FlagHouse-Soft-Boccia-Set.axd>).

### 1e. Game Forfeit

- Should a team forfeit a game, the following point allocation will be used:
  - Game not started: A score of 12-0 will be recorded.
  - Game started: The opponent's score will be recorded as 12, and the forfeit team score will be the current score when the forfeit occurred.

## 2. Rules of Play

### 2a. Divisioning

- The head coach must include a team ranking during online registration for each team.
  - A skills assessment form may also be filled out for reference to help with a more accurate divisioning process. Please find bocce skill assessments here: [Skill Assessments](#)
- Traditional
  - Recreational - Teams in the recreational category have athletes who are relatively new to the sport or are just there for fun and do not want to compete/advance to the 2024 School Championships.
  - Competitive - Competitive Traditional athletes intend to compete at the School Championships if selected or have a mid-high skill level.
- Unified
  - Recreational: Recreational Unified teams are where the Unified partners are there to support/facilitate SO Athletes new to the sport who are still working on developing their skills.
  - Competitive: Competitive teams are teams where the Unified partners are there to compete alongside higher-level SO Athletes. Unified Partners are **intended to score points, impact the game in a meaningful way** and compete in this category. **Note: Unified Partners are not permitted to take over games but are expected to contribute to winning.**
- \* Note: Competition streams are intended to provide better competition experiences for all. However, in smaller communities where there are fewer teams, competition streams may need to be combined. This will only be done if absolutely necessary.\*
- Teams are grouped in divisions according to their team ranking and selected classification. On the registration forms, schools will be asked to select **which competition stream** they would like to compete in:
- Each team will be required to play all team members in all games.

### 2b. Team and Players

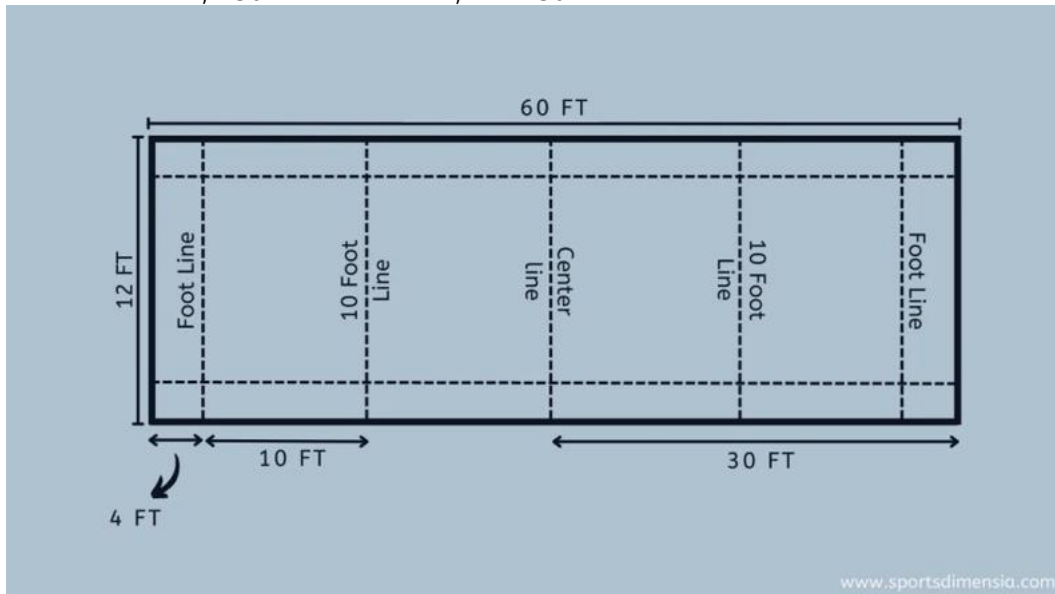
- Traditional teams: **minimum 4 and maximum 5 athletes** with an ID (4 players and 1 substitute)
- Unified teams: **minimum 4 and maximum 5 athletes** (maximum AND minimum of 2 mainstream Unified Partners plus 2-3 athletes with an ID). During the competition, the 4-person team on the court must be made up of 2 athletes with an ID, 2 Unified Partners, and potentially 1 substitute.
- Bocce is a game of 4-on-4. Each team must start the game with four players or forfeit the game. If a team falls below four players once the game has started due to injury, the team will be permitted to continue with three players on the court. If a team falls below three players due to player ejection, the team will forfeit that game.

### 2c. Unified Sport/Teams

- Unified Sports brings people with intellectual challenges and disabilities together on the same team as people without intellectual disabilities. This program is dedicated to promoting inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences.
- Unified Sports looks to develop **meaningful competition** where coaches work together to create a balanced competitive environment. **Coaches are responsible for ensuring the meaningful involvement of all players in the game.**
- Please review our principle of meaningful involvement to understand and apply the Unified Competition Model: [SO Unified Sports Principle of Meaningful Involvement](#)
- Also, see our Unified Coaching Guides and Training Resources
  - [Unified Sports Coach Guidelines](#)
  - [Unified Coaching Course](#)

### 2d. The Game

- Playing court – Each bocce court will be 60 feet in length and 12 feet wide. The court surface will be composed of grass, artificial turf, or on a gymnasium floor. There are 3 lines on the court: a 10-foot service line, a 30-foot center line, and a 50-foot foul line.



- Game time – 20 minutes in length. Should 20 minutes finish in the middle of a frame, teams will be allowed to finish the frame. Officials will run the clock continuously (i.e. the clock is not stopped in between frames or for measurements).
- Equipment—Bocce is played with eight balls and one smaller/different colour target or object ball called the Pallina (jack, cue, beebie etc.). There are four balls to a side or team, and they are made in two colours to distinguish the balls of one team from those of the opposing team.
- Pallina and Colour — A coin toss by the referee will determine which team gets to roll the Pallina to begin the game and their choice of ball colour. The colour choices are Blue or Red. The Ballina ball is White.
- Rotation of players—The players of any given team may elect to play their balls in any rotation, provided the one who tosses the Ballina delivers the first bocce ball. The rotation can vary from frame to frame; however, no player may deliver more than his/her allotted number of balls per frame.
- One 60-second time-out is allotted per team per game.
- 1 Frame- the time taken for both teams to throw all four of their balls.

## 2e. Competition

- Three-attempt rule — The team possessing the Ballina will have three attempts at throwing the Ballina to the opposite end. If these three attempts are unsuccessful (i.e. the Pallina does not stay in bounds or does not cross the center line), the referee will place the Pallina in the center of the court.
- Sequence of play — The Pallina is rolled or tossed by a member of the team having won the coin toss to start the game. The player tossing the Ballina must deliver the first bocce ball. The opposing team will then deliver their bocce balls until they have a ball closer to the Pallina than the team who threw the first bocce ball or they have exhausted their four balls. This "nearest ball" rule governs the sequence of played balls. The team whose ball is the closest to the Pallina is called the "in" ball, and the opposing team is the "out" ball. Whenever a team gets "in," it steps aside and allows the "out" team to deliver.
  - i.e. Team A wins the coin toss and therefore gets to throw the Ballina and one coloured ball. Team B throws their first ball too far, and their second ball makes it closer to the Pallina than Team A's ball. It is now Team A's turn to throw until they have a ball closer than Team B or until they are out of balls. The frame is over when each team is out of balls.

- Initial point—It is always incumbent upon the team with the Ballina advantage to establish the initial point, and they must keep tossing until the ball is in play (not out of bounds). Example: Team A tosses the Ballina and delivers the first ball. Team B elects to hit Team A's ball out of position. In doing so, both balls, Team A's, and Team B's, fly out of the court, leaving only the Ballina in the court. It is incumbent upon Team A to re-establish the initial point.
- Ball delivery—A team can roll, toss, bounce, bank, etc., its ball down the court, provided it does not go out of bounds, or the player does not violate the foul markers. A player can also "spock" or hit out any ball in play in trying to obtain a point or decrease the opposing team's points. A player can grip the ball by placing his/her hand over or under the ball as long as the ball is released in an underhand delivery. An underhand delivery is defined as releasing the ball below the waist.
- Each player will throw one ball.

## 2f. Scoring

- Scoring—At the end of each frame (when both teams have exhausted all balls), scoring will be determined as follows: points are awarded to the team whose balls are closer to the Pallina than the closest ball of the opposing team, which can be determined by viewing or by mechanical measurements. (i.e. if the blue team has 2 balls closer to the Pallina than red, blue gets 2 points.) A player may request a mechanical measurement. (Measurements will be taken from the bocce ball's centre side to the Ballina's centre side). At the end of a frame, when the referee announces the winning points and colour to the players outside the court at the Ballina end, the referee should look to the players for agreement before the balls are removed. The players have a right to request a measurement if the players disagree with the referee. When the players or team agrees with the points awarded, the court officials then remove the balls to start the next frame. The scoring team for each frame will also win the polling advantage for the subsequent frame. The referee will be responsible for the validity of the scoreboard and scorecard, so it is incumbent upon the team captain to verify the accuracy of the posted score at all times.
- Ties during frame—In the event that two opposing balls are equidistant from the Ballina (tied), the team that rolled last will continue to roll until the tie is broken. Example: Team A rolls a ball toward the Ballina and establishes the point. Then, Team B rolls its ball toward the Ballina, and the referee determines that they are both exactly the same distance from the Ballina. Team B must continue to roll until it has a point closer to Team A's ball. If Team A rolls a ball closer to break the tie, and Team A hits that ball out, re-establishing a tie, Team A must continue to roll until the tie is broken.
- Ties at the end of a frame—In the event that the two balls closest to the Pallina belong to opposing teams and are tied, no points will be awarded. The Ballina returns to the team that last delivered it. Play resumes from the end of the court from which the frame was last played.
- Winning score – the first team to **14 points** or the team with the highest score after 20 minutes of play.

## 2g. Outs

- Bocce is a game typically played on a court enclosed by walls, so outs are judged accordingly.
- If the Pallina is hit out of bounds by a player's coloured ball, the game is played as if the Ballina has hit a "wall." It is to be placed back within the bounds of the game at the point where it exited the court as if it had been stopped at that point.
- Any coloured ball thrown or knocked out of bounds will be considered a "dead ball" and will be excluded at the conclusion of the frame.