B O C C I A

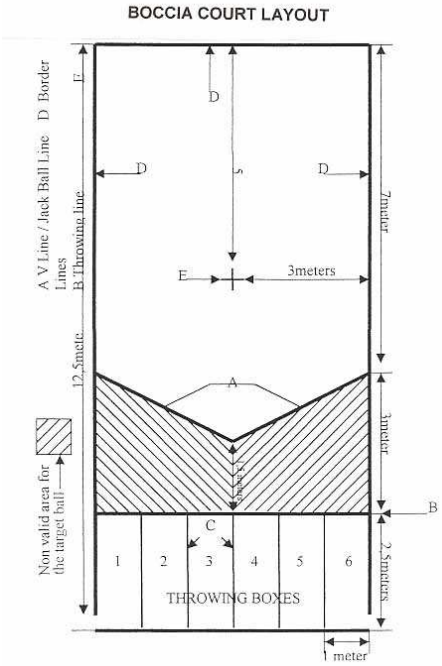
Boccia has been a part of the Paralympics since 1984. Although the game originated long ago in Italy, its popularity has spread worldwide. It is said to be one of the fastest growing Paralympic sports. Boccia was originally presented as a sport for athletes with cerebral palsy, but is now open to all athletes with significant physical disabilities. Boccia tests the athlete's coordination, accuracy, concentration, and ability to strategize.

The Game

Boccia can be played one-on-one, in pairs, or in teams of three. It is played on a specially marked court, on a gymnasium floor. The object of the game is to throw or roll game balls so that they land as close as possible to a target ball called the jack. The game begins with a player throwing the white target ball onto the court. The opponent then throws. The player or team that is not closest to the jack must then throw until they put a ball closer to the jack . This continues until all balls are thrown.

When all the game balls have been thrown, a referee determines the points awarded to individuals or teams. The closest team receives the number of points equal to the number of balls that they have closer to the jack than their opponent's closest ball. The game can be adapted to allow players with functional limitations to use chutes and ramps to place their game balls into play.

Equipment



A regulation boccia court is 6 Meters by 12.5 Meters. The playing boxes are on one end of the court. These boxes are 2.5 M X 1 M and each player must remain completely within his or her box during their throw. The jack/service ball must cross the V-line in order to be valid. If the jack is knocked out of the court during play, it is placed on the cross at mid court. The use of chutes and ramps enables many individuals to participate. A player may use an assistant when using a ramp. The athlete directs the sport assistant as to where he/she would like the ramp angled and ball placed on the ramp. The assistant may not look at the court so as not to influence the positioning of the ramp or ball.

A set of boccia balls consists of 6 red, 6 blue and 1 white. Good quality boccia balls are soft enough to grasp, but hard enough to roll well on the court surface. Official balls are hand-made of leather-like material and are approximately the size of a baseball.

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BlazeSports America is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that advances the lives of youth and adults with physical disability through sport and healthy lifestyles. BlazeSports programs and services encourage healthy lifestyles, foster independence and inclusion, and promote personal empowerment.