



BOCCE NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2018

Sherry Nogle, Editor and Janet Platteborze, Web Administrator

FIVE MORE MINUTES WITH STEVE MELLINGER

I hope everyone had an enjoyable Holiday with plenty of family, friends, and cheer. Our Bocce Club Holiday Party was a lot of fun with Anne Warnock and Kyle Nogle entertaining us with imitations of what members say when playing Bocce. We also revealed our traveling trophies for the Top Lady Player-Lin Vernier, Joyce Simanek-2nd Place, and Jill Wilson-3rd Place. Our League Winner-Stanley Payne, 2nd Place-George Ryppe, and 3rd Place-Paul Wiener. The trophies will be on display at the Texas Center.



My last comment is if your Neighborhood plays regularly, you need to give me your neighborhood's request of play time, day, and how often, and we'll get it on the calendar.

TREASURER'S REPORT-DOUG BRUMM

The Club is standing at 204 paid members for 2017. Be sure to renew your Club membership either through the SCTX web portal or going to the Sun City Community Association Center to pay your \$12.00 membership dues.

ADVANCED LEAGUE #1 NEWS-JOHN SHIDELER

The Advanced Bocce Club League #1 is scheduled to start on Thursday, January 18, 2018. We will have a 16-person league, playing under Sun City Rules. All the games will start at 1:00 PM.

The Advanced Bocce League #1 has its full complement of 16 players, but we need subs. Please email John Shideler, shadraski@yahoo.com if you would like to be on the "substitute list".

Thanks to all those of you who make our league play so successful. See YOU on the Courts.

LADIES LEAGUE NEWS-LIN VERNIER

Sign-up now for the Bocce Ladies League #1 January 8th!!

It is the start of a New Year and our first Ladies league will begin on Monday January 8th at 3pm.

Even if you've never played in a Bocce league before, we want you to join us.

The league will last 4 weeks, and we have a 5th week in reserve in case of bad weather. I will send an email out at 2:15 if we must cancel because it is raining or too cold (below 50 degrees).

Let's fill all four of our reserved courts for this first league.

Email Lin if you want to play at linvernier@gmail.com

If you cannot play in this first tournament, consider playing in the second League play scheduled to begin February 27th, March 6th, 13th, and 20th (and March 27th if needed). Put it on your calendar today!

Let's have some fun playing Bocce,
Lin Vernier

BOCCE TIPS Volume 2 By Sal Caravello

NEW MEMBER CORNER

New Training Starts: January 27th, February 23rd, May 18th, August 17th, and November 17th, come join us.....



Question from Volume 1: Don't understand why when I roll the bocce ball in the exact same place I rolled the Pallino, it goes right past? I know you all know the reason, but new players do not. Do you know why for sure?

We could have all kinds of answers to this question. First the Pallino is smaller than the Bocce ball. The Bocce ball is heavier than the Pallino. Rolled at the same speed the Bocce ball will outrun the Pallino. So, rolling the Bocce ball must be done with a little more skill and timing.

That first Bocce ball rolled is the most important, because it protects the Pallino from your opponent. Remember the purpose of the game is to get closer to the Pallino than your opponent.

Question: What is "Walk the Dog". Have you ever heard this phrase? It is used a lot by old Italians in Brooklyn especially during tournaments, but they say it in Italian. It is when the Bocce ball is rolled, and it hits the Pallino dead center and follows it down court. It normally rests dead against it. Great shot and always gets everyone's attention.

Question: How should I throw the ball? First and foremost, we do not throw the ball, we roll it. Lobbing the ball is not acceptable on most courts regardless of the surface. Don't draw attention to yourself by lobbing the ball down the court. It is not a bowling alley.

Question for the next issue. Why don't we have lines marking the players box and midcourt, so it is easier to see?

A Night in Naples

By Janet Platteborze

Tuesday, December 12, 2017, the Bocce Club celebrated the Holidays with "A Night in Naples". Sixty (60) members of the Bocce Club came together in the Activities Center Atrium to celebrate the holidays with delicious Italian food catered by Frankie's of Georgetown.

Each table was adorned with lovely Italian theme decorations, along with bread and dipping oils. Pictures of the many Bocce events throughout the year were displayed around the room and on the tables; everyone was encouraged to take whatever pictures they wanted with them when they left.

After a prayer from Larry Hunting, the male officers of the club served Salad, Lasagna, Ziti and a roll from Frankie's to those in attendance. There was white and chocolate cake for dessert provided by the club. Following the feast, Steve Mellinger thanked the board and social committee for their hard work. Doug Brumm introduced our 200th member, Val Sandham. John Shideler presented trophies to the League Championship winners. Ladies League first place winner was Lin Vernier and Advance League first place went to Stanley Payne. Each of the top three players in each league received a trophy. A "Traveling" Trophy with the first-place winners name on a plaque will be placed in the Bocce Club showcase in the Texas Drive lobby.







The evening was concluded with door prize drawings for the many fabulous items donated by various members of the club. A lot of fun, laughter, great food and friendship made for a wonderful time for all.

Richard Gambatese from Austin's ICA Bocce Club sent this New York Times article to Steve Mellinger. I think you will find it very interesting.

The Secret to a Long Life Is Bocce



William Girdi

SPORTING NOV. 17, 2017

New York Times



The author throwing a bocce ball after getting advice from Sammy Viscione, right. Credit M. Scott Brauer for The New York Times

“Against the ball, put the laser against the ball, kid! Madone.”

I was folded over on one knee at Boston's North End bocce courts, trying to get the guys a measurement. Eyeing the distance between a bocce ball and a pallino often doesn't work, so Sammy Viscione comes armed with both a tape and a laser measure, though his sciatica makes it impossible for him to bend. So he asked me to do the laser measurement. I'm inept with tools, and the guys kept hollering, "Against the ball, kid!" Someone else said, "Bocce, baby!" in that keyed-up way that meant he lives for this.

Bocce breathes in the oldest memories of Sammy and this clan of 40-plus men, most in their eighth decade, many of them veterans. My buddy Jimmy Pasto, who grew up in the North End, told me about these characters. There's no other word for them. I was eager to experience their bocce brotherhood, its out-of-time aura, its connection to a living Italian-American history. And as someone who's written much about the compensatory bluster of manhood, I was intensely interested in witnessing what their masculine camaraderie looked like in our post-masculine age.



Bocce is by some accounts the oldest sport on earth. Credit M. Scott Brauer for The New York Times

The guys call Sammy "the commissioner" because he presides over the bocce league through the Friends of the North End, a 45-year-old fraternity of paisanos with sacred memories. "This place is our rightful inheritance," Sammy told me. "Our fathers and grandfathers played here." Every Sunday morning, this ritual at the bocce court is their Mass.

"We play 95 percent by the rules," Sammy said. "We're really here just to be together." And for the artery-fouling doughnuts confectioned that morning in a bakery down the street.

These men are talented chop-busters engaged in a ceaseless badinage of brotherhood: "Don't listen to that guy, he don't know bocce"; "That guy's trouble, stay away from that one"; "What a liar, that S.O.B." Beneath the jibing and expletives there is palpable warmth here, shouts of "Thata boy, Willie!" and "Way to go, Richie!"

I recognize these men from my youth: My grandfather and his pals had an identical banter, salty and irreverent but brimming with affection for one another. When men have been friends for 70-odd years, ribbing is an expression of loyalty and love.

What you sense from Sammy and the others are gusts of pride: in this place, and in bocce, but also in the fact of their survival. Living to a moderately active, bocce-loving 75 might not seem like much of an accomplishment until you realize how hard it is to be alive. That was another reason I'd come here, because social scientists are forever highlighting the significance of social connections. I wanted to glimpse the trick to longevity, and it turns out to be nothing more complicated than having friends — and bocce.

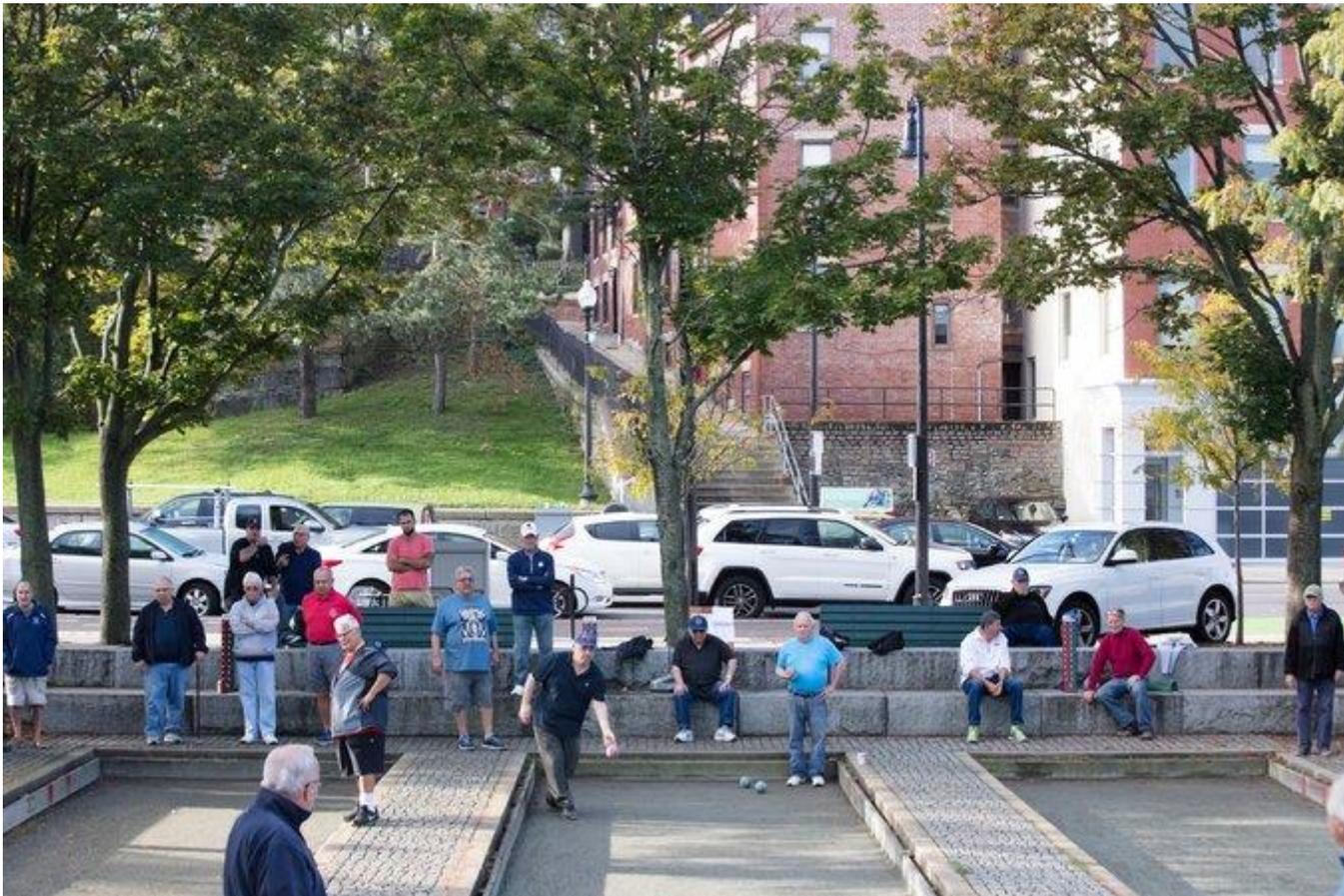
Fitting that the sport is pronounced “botch-ee,” because whenever I tried to play as a teen, on back lawns at picnics with once-a-year kin, I botched it. I had no finesse, no delicacy of pitch, and the game is harder than it looks. You hear a lot about the archer’s or sniper’s aim, but let me tell you: The bocce player needs an equal amount of it.

A typical game in the North End goes like this. First, pitch the pallino: It looks like a billiards cue ball and is tinier than a bocce ball. Your pitch of the pallino has to pass the center mark of the court, that vertical red line on the wood, or it’s no good. A court is the width and almost the length of a bowling lane. The North End has three, side by side.

Next, the player who pitches the pallino also gets the first shot, trying to roll his ball right up to the pallino: The pallino is the jack, the target — aim for it, hit it if you have to. The bocce ball is the size of a grapefruit, though denser: It feels like three pounds of clay or smooth concrete.

Next: after your opening pitch, your opponent tries to get his ball nearest the pallino, and whoever’s *not* nearest keeps trying. Points are awarded by tallying whose balls are nearest.

Is it a sport? You’ll have to decide how you want to define “sport,” how a sport differs from a game, and what degree of leisure is allowed to mingle with it. Look at Matisse’s [“Il Gioco Delle Bocce”](#) and you’ll get a sense of how contentedly languid you can be.



A typical Sunday on Boston’s North End bocce courts. CreditM. Scott Brauer for The New York Times
But bocce is by some accounts the oldest sport on earth. It’s simple to imagine a pair of Cro-Magnon slackers, banned from the mammoth hunt, rolling stones on a flat patch of their front yard.

An alloy of billiards and horseshoes, or shuffleboard and bowling, bocce can't decide what it wants to be, and so it's comfortably all four. Bocce was [invented](#) in Italy by way of the Romans, who, with Hellenistic know-how, robbed it from the Greeks, who themselves robbed it from the Egyptians. It was revived and popularized in the late 19th century by the Italian general and statesman Giuseppe Garibaldi.

An altar to bocce, this spot in the North End is also an incitation to memory, an off-ramp to the avenues of nostalgia. There in the harbor just beyond us, the U.S.S. Constitution floats out its retirement. To its left the granite obelisk commemorating Bunker Hill stabs skyward. The wooden docks are gone now; as kids, the bocce players dove from those docks into a harbor so filthy they emerged lacquered in oil.

When the league finished that morning, I was given a lesson by Natale DeMarco, the most skilled player among them, a low, wide maestro with a cushioned voice who's been at bocce, the guys said, *every day* since he was a boy in Italy. "Keep your wrist straight, your elbow in, just like bowling. Bank it off the red line, but not too hard. This court is slanted, so bank it, but not too *hard*." My first pitch was too soft, my second too hard, but my third was the Goldilocks: It touched the red center mark with the right velocity and then veered next to the pallino, close enough to kiss it. Behind me were shouts of "Thata boy, Billy!" and "Good shot, Billy!"

Before I left that morning, Sammy said, "Come any time. Most of this place ain't like it was when we were kids. Everything's condos now. All the good shops are gone."

But bocce isn't gone. This is the 11th year of their league; they're expecting to go 11 more.

New York Times

FUNNY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

In the spirit of the fun of the New Years, it is always nice to include the New Year's resolutions that are just for a bit of fun.

This New Year, I will no longer:

- Run while juggling knives
- Skateboard down a hill when my board has no wheels
- Play baseball with a hand grenade and a loaded rocket launcher
- Pillow fight with a bag of spare change
- Talk with my mouth full of nails
- Drink paint thinner while smoking a cigarette

- Play with matches at a gas station
- Set my hair on fire with hairspray and matches
- Shower while making toast on the edge of my bathtub
- Eat chocolates (I totally swear!!)
- Consider apple martinis part of my "daily fruit intake"
- Consider second and third breakfasts real meals

A dog's New Year's Resolution: I will not chase that stick unless I actually see it leave his hand!

Many of the funny New Year's resolutions are all about things that you will do rather than things you won't do.

This year, I will:

- Trim my nose and ear hairs
- Use a lot more deodorant and wash my clothes much less often
- Save water by not bathing
- Figure out exactly why I need to spend so much time checking my Gmail, Yahoo mail, Pop mail, AOL mail, Facebook mail, Facebook updates, Twitter account, and YouTube page
- Try to come up with a password more creative than "Password"
- Be a bit more imaginative
- Bench press 160, and if I can do that, be content with my accomplishment
- Exercise more self-control

All these resolutions have plenty of crazy in them, but don't be surprised if you find them on one of the lists of your friends.



ALL MEMBER *Ugly Sweater* SOCIAL EVENT

When: Wed. January 3, 2018

Time: 1:00 to 3:00 PM

International Rules

The Sweater that hurts the most eyes

Wins a very tacky Sweater Prize!

SOUP SWAP DAY



Each player is asked to bring three (3) cans of soup. The donations will be taken to *The Caring Place* after the event.

We will meet on the patio for a cup of **hot tomato soup after three games of Bocce. That should warm us up! Mark January 11th from 1:00-4:00 pm on your calendar. Don't forget your 3 cans of soup!**

January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Ugly Sweater Social Play 1-3 PM International Rules	4	5	6
7	8 Women's' League #1 3-5 PM Sun City Rules	9	10	11 Soup Swap Day for the Caring Place 1-3 PM Soup on the Patio	12	13
14	15 Women's' League #1 3-5 PM	16	17	18 Advance League #1 1-3 PM Bocce Board 3-4 PM	19	20
21	22 Women's' League #1 3-5 PM	23	24	25 Advance League #1 1-3 PM	26 Charter Club Fair 12 -3 PM Texas Dr. Ballroom	27 New Member Play 10 AM – 12 PM
28	29 Women's' League #1 3-5 PM	30	31			