
Boccia Rules Change: Advanced Boccia Ball Criteria (Rule 2.1)

On 5th December 2013, BISFed announced a review of the current ball testing procedures to ensure that the tests can determine the circumference of a ball and the degree to which a ball can distort more accurately. This announcement was as a result of a trend over recent years towards players using balls which have a greater circumference than allowed in the Boccia Rules (i.e. a maximum of 278mm.) Such balls are often so soft that they cannot properly be described as 'balls' because they deform so much when they are thrown and therefore give the thrower an unfair advantage. However, because these balls are so soft, they are able to pass the existing circumference test under Rule 2.1.

We are pleased to announce that a team consisting of members of both the Rules and Competition Committees, working with research specialists from universities and technical equipment manufacturers, have designed two simple prototype devices which will measure a ball's dimensions and softness much more accurately. **We now need to decide which of the two prototypes will be introduced for measuring balls used in BISFed-sanctioned competitions. The process we will follow is:**

- 1. At the first BISFed World Open Event in Montreal from 1 – 4 May 2014:**
 - a. The existing Rules for testing Boccia Balls will be applied.
 - b. During the Equipment Test prior to the Competition, all balls will also be tested using the two prototype measuring devices. Players will be notified of any balls which do not pass the revised test. We will use the experience gained in Montreal to decide which of the two devices is more effective for testing the balls.
- 2. No later than 9th May 2014, BISFed will announce which device will be introduced into the Rules.** The device selected will be endorsed by BISFed (who will also own the design copyright), and will be manufactured and offered for sale so that members can test any balls to be used in competition prior to an event.
- 3. At the BISFed World Open Event in Povoá 18 -22 June we will use the same process as for the competition in Montreal, i.e:**
 - a. The existing Rules for testing Boccia Balls will be applied.
 - b. During the Equipment Test prior to the Competition, all balls will also be tested using the approved measuring devices. Players will be notified of any balls which do not pass the revised test.
- 4. On 23 June 2014, (immediately after the Open competition in Povoá) the Boccia Rules will be modified as follows:**
 - a. A new rule will be introduced under clause 2.1 to specify the use of the BISFED-approved testing device.
 - b. In addition there will be a new rule which will allow random testing of any ball used in competition immediately after the completion of a match. If a ball used in competition fails such a test, the match will be forfeited by the athlete who has used the ball which has failed. Any athlete who forfeits a second match in a BISFed-sanctioned competition as a result of failing a ball test will be disqualified from the Event.

Please note that the BISFed Boccia Rules changes which will be announced on 23 June 2014 will be applied to test all balls used at the 2014 World Championships.