

LEOMINSTER BOCCE LEAGUE

2013 Official Rules

THE FIRST GAME STARTS AT 6:30 PM.

Please arrive BEFORE your game starts in order to start play at this time. If your team is not ready to play within 10 minutes of this time your team will forfeit the match.

The 2nd and 3rd games will start at their scheduled time or as soon as your court is ready and both competing teams have completed their preceding games. (whichever is later) If your team is not ready to play at this time your team will forfeit the match.

Games that are postponed will play at the same times on the next available night the league is not playing. The league does not play regular season or postponed games on Friday, Saturday & Sunday nights.

For purposes of position week and the playoffs, ties in the standings will be broken in the following order: Winning Percentage, Head to Head Record, Points Against in Head to Head matches, Coin Toss.

If two or more teams end the regular season in a tie and prizes are involved, a tie breaker game will be played in order to resolve the tie. Prizes will be given to the top three finishers in the league and playoffs.

League Directors:

- Commissioner: Joe Fraticelli - Hawks
- Treasurer: Joe Siciliano - Quality Color
- Secretary: Sal Perla – World Tour

Rules Committee:

- Chairman: Fred Grasso - La Famiglia
- Bill Deery - JDA
- Ray Mazzio – Levenworth SCUBA
- Mark Delle Chiaie – Delle Chiaie's
- Joe Pellegrini – Caspian AC

Revised 5/24/2013

The Leominster Bocce League has adapted and revised these rules from several existing sets of regulations including those of the World Bocce League, the International Bocce Association, the United States Bocce Federation, and the Word Series of Bocce.

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Table of Contents

RULE 1: DEFINITIONS.....	1
1-1 - Ball: Live and Dead	1
1- 2 - Bocce Ball and Pallino.....	1
1- 3 - Other Terms	1
1- 4 - Fouls	2
RULE 2: THE COURT AND EQUIPMENT	2
2-1 - The Court and Markings.....	2
2- 2 - Court Grooming.....	2
2- 3 - The Equipment	2
RULE 3: PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS	3
3-1 - Players	3
3-2 - Substitution	3
3-3 - Uniforms.....	3
RULE 4: PLAY OF THE GAME	4
4-1 – Playing the Match.....	4
RULE 5: TIME-OUTS, DELAYS-OF-GAME and CHECKING POSITION OF POINTS	6
5-1 - Circumstances	6
RULE 6: PENALTIES	6
6-1 - Enforcement of Penalties.....	6
6-2 - Specific Fouls	6
6-3 - Accidental or Premature Movement of Balls or Pallino by Referee	7
6-4 - Interference with a Ball in Motion	7
6-5 - Wrong Color Delivery	7
6-6 - Wrong Rotation of Play	8
RULE 7: OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.....	8
7-1 - Broken Ball	8
7-2 – Unsportsmanlike Conduct	8
RULE 8: THE REFEREE	8
8-1 Definition of Referee	8
8-2 - Responsibilities.....	8
8-3 - Objections	8
8-4 - Substitution of Officials.....	8

RULE 1: DEFINITIONS

1-1 - Ball: Live and Dead

(a) - A Live Ball is any ball that has been legally delivered and is in play.

(b) - A Dead Ball is any ball that has been disqualified. A ball may be disqualified if it:

- is the result of a penalty
- has gone out of the court
- has come into contact with a person or object that is out of the court
- hits the covering or support of the courts

1-2 - Bocce Ball and Pallino

(a) - The Pallino is the small ball that serves as the object or target toward which the bocce balls are rolled. It is sometimes known as the palli, cue ball, jack or pill.

(b) - The Bocce Ball is the larger of the playing balls. There are four matched balls to a set. Bocce balls are used to score points or to displace an opponent's ball or the pallino.

1-3 - Other Terms

(a) - Pointing refers to the act of delivering a ball to gain a position closest to the pallino in order to score a point.

(b) - The Pointing Line is one of three foul lines on each end of the court. (the Pointing Line is usually painted red) A player who intends to deliver the ball to score a point must release it somewhere between the backboards and the pointing line (located four feet from the backboard).

(c) - Hitting also known as spocking, shooting, popping, and bombing, refers to a delivery that is thrown with sufficient velocity that the ball would hit the backboard if it missed its target. Hitting is usually used to move another ball out of position.

(d) - The Hitting Line is one of the three foul lines on each end of the court. (the Hitting Line is usually painted red) A player who is hitting or spocking may deliver the bocce ball anywhere between the backboard and the hitting line; (located nine feet from the backboard).

(e) - The Inbounds Line is one of the three foul lines on each end of the court. (the Inbounds Line is usually painted green) A player who is tossing the pallino must deliver the pallino to come to rest no further than the inbounds line (located six and one half feet from the backboard).

(f) - A Bank or Rebound Shot refers to playing a ball off either the side boards or the backboards.

(g) - The Initial Point refers to the first ball that is rolled toward the pallino at the start of a frame. Since this is the first ball, it is the closest to the pallino, and represents the initial point. The player that tosses the pallino at the start of a frame must always establish the initial point.

(h) - The Initial Roll is the first delivery after the pallino is tossed to start a new frame. The player tossing the pallino is always responsible for making the initial roll.

(i) - The In Team is the team whose ball is closest to the pallino. When a team is designated the "In Team," its players step aside and allow the opponents to play their balls.

(j) - The Out Team is the team that is not closest to pallino. The Out Team must deliver the next ball.

(k) - A Frame is the period in a game when both teams deliver their bocce balls from one side of the court to the other and points are awarded. There is no set number of frames in a game, as a point total determines the winner.

(l) - Pallino Advantage refers to possessing the right to start a frame by tossing the pallino and the first ball. Pallino advantage is determined at the start of a game by a coin toss. Subsequently, the team that wins each frame by scoring a point (or points) also wins pallino advantage for the next frame.

(m) - A Coach is any member of a team's roster that is not playing in the match that the team is competing in.

(n) - A Spectator is anyone who is not a player, coach or referee of a match.

1- 4 - Fouls

(a) - A Foul is an infraction of the rules which carries a penalty.

(b) - A Foul Line Foul (or Foot Foul) is a situation during a delivery, in which a player oversteps the foul line before releasing the ball.

(c) - A Moving Ball or Pallino Foul occurs when a player delivers his/her ball before the previous player's ball or the pallino has come to rest.

(d) - An Illegal Movement Foul occurs when a player moves a ball or the pallino by means other than the normal play. Touching or kicking a ball before the frame is completed are examples of illegal movement.

(see RULE 6-2 for application of specific penalties)

RULE 2: THE COURT AND EQUIPMENT

2-1 - The Court and Markings

(a) - The Court shall be a rectangular surface measuring at least 60 feet in length and 10 to 12 feet in width.

(b) - The Court Surface may be composed of stone-dust, dirt, clay or artificial surface providing there are no obstructions on the court that may interfere with the straight-line delivery of a ball from any direction. Variations in grade or consistency of terrain are not considered obstructions.

(c) - The Walls of the Court may be composed of wood or any rigid material which withstands the ball's impact and which allows the balls to rebound off the surface. The height must be at least eight inches from the finish surface at all points.

(d) - Court Markings must be clearly visible. They should be marked at the proper positions on the sideboards. Each marked line should be at least one and a half inches wide and should run from the court surface to the top of the sideboard.

(e) - Foul Lines shall be marked:

i. For Pointing - four feet from the backboards on each side of the court so that an imaginary line is formed across the court perpendicular to the sideboards and parallel to the end boards.

ii. For Hitting - nine feet from the backboards on each side of the court so that an imaginary line is formed across the court perpendicular to the sideboards and parallel to the end boards.

(f) - In-Bounds Lines shall be marked for the first toss of the pallino. The pallino must come to rest at least 12 inches from the sideboards and cannot go past the inbound line.

(g) - Center-Court Line shall be marked at mid-court so that an imaginary line is formed across the center of the court and perpendicular to the side boards. The initial toss of pallino must come to rest beyond this line. If, during play, the pallino is subsequently hit and it comes to rest in front of this line, the frame is dead and play starts over from the same end unless all bocce balls have been delivered. In this case, the dead frame will start over from the opposite end.

2- 2 - Court Grooming

(a) - Prior to Play all courts must be groomed to the satisfaction of the league directors. If the court surface is composed of stone-dust, dirt, or clay, a broom or rug at least four feet in width should be used to drag the surface.

(b) - Court Grooming after play has begun is not permitted. However, obstacles or objects such as stones, cups, or other debris which would affect play may be removed or repaired.

(c) - Unusual court conditions which League Directors feel negatively affect play, can result in the game being halted and rescheduled on another court.

2- 3 - The Equipment

(a) - The Bocce Ball may be of composition, wood or metal. The size of the balls may vary from 107mm to 114mm in diameter and between 920 and 1180 grams in weight. The

balls being used in a match, however, must be exactly the same size and of the same material. Bocce balls may be any color provided that a team's set of balls matches and are of a different color than that of their opponents. Only balls provided by League Directors are allowed for use in league matches.

(b) - The Pallino or target ball may not be larger than 63mm (2 1/2") or smaller than 53mm (2 1/8"). The pallino may be of any color as long as it is in sharp contrast to the colors of the bocce balls in a game.

(c) - The Measuring Device is a steel tape that has the capacity to reach at least 12 feet. League Directors may approve other devices for measuring distances which are too small to be measured accurately by the steel tape.

(d) - The Scoreboard may be free standing or be posted at the end of the court in a manner that does not disturb play. Two sets of numbers shall be displayed on each board and shall be numbered consecutively from 0 to 16. The boards may be electronic or manual. There should be some means of differentiating between teams either by posting home vs. away status, team names, or assigning different colored numbers to each team.

(e) - Artificial Devices and Unusual Equipment Except as provided in the rules, during a match a team, player or coach must not use any artificial device or unusual equipment:

- 1) That might assist a player in delivering the ball.
- 2) Measure the slope or speed of the court.
- 3) Determine the distances between the pallino or balls when the rules do not permit a legal measurement.

The penalty for a breach of this rule will be the loss of the frame and four points will be awarded to the fouled team.

RULE 3: PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

3-1 - Players

(a) - Teams may consist of three or four players plus one substitute at game time. If only three players start a game a fourth player may enter the game at any time.

(b) - Rosters Teams must submit a roster of all players that will be competing on their team during the season. The roster may be updated during the regular season but only players that have played a minimum of nine games on a team's roster are eligible for playoff competition.

(c) - Temporary Players Teams are allowed to use substitute players not on their official roster as long as they are not on the roster of another team. If a player competes in any part of nine games for one particular team during the season, that player will then be added to that team's roster and will not be allowed to compete for any other team during that season.

3-2 - Substitution

(a) - Number of Substitutions Only one substitute is allowed per team per game.

(b) - Timing of Substitution A substitution may take place at the start of a frame and the opposing team's captain must be notified of the substitution. Once a player has been removed from a game for a substitution, the removed player cannot re-enter that same game.

(c) - Illegal Substitute If an illegal substitute is used, the offending team shall forfeit the game.

3-3 - Uniforms

(a) - Clothing should be worn as to not offend other players and spectators.

(b) - Footwear Sneakers should be worn by all players. The soles of the sneakers should allow maximum traction for the player without causing undue damage to the court. Work boots, shoes with cleats or any other footwear that would cause undue damage to the court are not allowed.

RULE 4: PLAY OF THE GAME

4-1 - Playing the Match

(a) - Equipment Bocce is played with eight large balls and one smaller target or object ball called the pallino. The bocce balls are divided into two units of four balls each. Each unit is a different color. A side or team is designated a particular color at the start of the game and is given the appropriate color balls to use.

(b) - Pallino & Color A coin toss by the referee will determine which side will toss the pallino to begin the game and which team rolls which color ball. The team winning the toss gets both options. In the absence of a referee, the team coaches and captains shall execute the coin toss.

(c) - Start of the game To start the game, a member of the team who has won the coin toss rolls the pallino into play. After the pallino comes to rest in a legal position (beyond mid-court, at least 12 inches from the sideboard, and not passing the inbound line), the player delivering the pallino must then deliver the first ball to establish the initial point.

(d) - Sequence of Play The team with the pallino advantage (the team that won the previous frame) starts each frame by legally delivering the pallino and the first ball. As in the start of the game, the player delivering the pallino must be the one to deliver the first ball. That team will become the "In Team" because their ball is closest to the pallino.

After the pallino and first ball are delivered, the opposing team or "Out Team" delivers a ball in an attempt to position their ball closest to the pallino. If they are successful, they step aside and allow the other team to deliver. If they are unsuccessful, they remain the "Out Team" and continue to deliver until they become the "In Team" or they have exhausted their four balls.

The "nearest ball" rule governs the sequence of played balls. The side whose ball is closest to the pallino is called the "in" ball and the opposing side the "out" ball. Whenever a team gets "in", it steps aside and allows the "out" team to deliver.

(e) Pallino Delivery Legal delivery of the pallino can be accomplished by rolling, tossing, bouncing, or banking the pallino down the court so that it comes to rest in-bounds. In-bounds refers to any area beyond the center-court line and at least 12 inches from the sideboards, but not passing the inbound line. The pallino must be released by an *underhand* delivery and before the player crosses the pointing line to be legal.

(f) - Three Attempt Rule The team possessing the pallino will have three attempts at placing the pallino in-bounds at the start of the frame. If they are unsuccessful after three attempts, the opposing team will have one opportunity to legally place the pallino. If both teams are unsuccessful, the team that originally delivered the pallino will have one opportunity to place the pallino in-bounds. Delivery will alternate between teams in this manner until the pallino comes to rest in-bounds.

(g) - Initial Point It is always incumbent upon the team with the pallino advantage to establish the initial point. EXAMPLE: Team A tosses the pallino and delivers their first ball to establish the initial point. Team B elects to hit and then Team A's and Team B's flies out of the court leaving only the pallino in the court. Team A must then deliver the next ball to re-establish the initial point maintaining the pallino advantage.

(h) - Ball Delivery A team has the option of rolling, tossing, bouncing, banking, etc. their ball down the court provided it does not go out-of-bounds or the player does not violate the foul markers. A player also has the option of hitting out any ball in play in trying to obtain a point, or decreasing the opposing team's points. All ball delivery must be *underhand* style.

To legally deliver the ball, the player may stay behind the pointing line when delivering a pointing shot and behind the hitting line when delivering a hitting shot. The players may legally step over the foul lines during follow-through if they have already released the ball.

(i) - Scoring At the end of each frame (when both teams have exhausted all four of their balls) points will be determined as follows: One point shall be awarded to each of the balls of one team that are closer to the pallino than the closest ball of the opposing team.

This will be determined by the referee or captains either by direct viewing or mechanical measuring. If a referee is not assigned to monitor the game and the captains cannot determine the outcome of the frame then the captains must call for an outside measurement. If a referee is not available then the captains may ask any spectator that is agreeable to both team captains. This person shall act as referee for the call.

(j) - Measuring When the pallino advantage or scoring cannot be accomplished easily by direct viewing, a mechanical means of measuring must be used. Team captains may request measurement of any ball at any time unless the opposing team has delivered all of their balls.

When using a steel tape measure, the zero end of the tape should be placed at the widest surface of the ball being measured. The tape then should be stretched so that it extends across the top of the pallino. The tape should be read at the top-center of the pallino. For closer measurements, tournament officials may approve an inside measure device (Reference Rule 2, Article 3, (c)).

(k) - Ties During Frame In the event that two opposing balls are equidistant from the pallino (tied), the team that rolled last will continue to roll until the tie is broken. EXAMPLE: If Team A rolls a ball for the pallino, then Team B rolls its ball for the pallino and it is determined that both are exactly 13" away from the pallino, Team B must roll until it has a ball closer to the pallino or has exhausted its balls. If Team B does gain the pallino advantage and Team A hits their ball away, re-establishing a tie, Team A must continue to roll until the tie is broken.

(l) - Dead Pallino If during the course of play the pallino becomes a dead ball, this will result in a dead frame. Play will start over from the same end unless all bocce balls have been delivered. In this case, the dead frame will start over from the opposite end. The team that started the frame with pallino advantage will keep pallino advantage.

(m) - Ties at the End of Frame In the event that the two closest balls to the pallino belong to opposing teams and they are tied, no points shall be awarded, and the pallino shall

be returned to the team that delivered it originally. The new frame shall be played from the opposite side of the court on which the previous frame was played.

(n) - Winning Score The team that reaches a score of 16 points first, wins the match.

(o) - Scorecard It is the responsibility of both captains to sign the scorecard after a game and the signatures will indicate the indisputability of the final score. If a protest will be filed, the captains disagreeing with the validity of the score should not sign the scorecard.

(p) - Scorekeeping The referee or team captain that was awarded points is responsible for recording the score on the scoreboard at the end of every frame.

(q) - Rotation of Players The players of any given team may elect to play their ball in any rotation provided the player who tosses the pallino delivers the first ball. The rotation may vary from frame to frame; however, no player may deliver more than one ball per frame.

(r) - Position of Players Only the player delivering a ball is allowed on the court. Other players must stay off the court until it is their turn to play. Only after a player has delivered his or her ball may that player cross the center-court line unless that team is the Out Team and has not delivered a ball. In this case a single player may cross the center-court line to quickly assess the distance of the initial point (Refer to RULE 6,-2, (b))

(s) - Forfeiture Teams with less than the prescribed number of players will forfeit the game. Also, when league officials inform a team that their court is ready for play, said team must be ready to start their game within a prescribed amount of time or they shall forfeit the match.

- i. First Match – Teams must be ready to start their match within ten minutes of being informed their court is ready.
- ii. Subsequent Matches - Teams must be ready to start their match at their scheduled time or as soon as their court is ready and both competing teams have completed their preceding game, whichever is later.

If neither team is ready or able to start play then both teams will forfeit the match.

(t) - Rescheduling of Matches Teams are not allowed to reschedule their match to a different time, court or location without prior consent from League Directors. The league will not recognize matches that are rescheduled without prior consent.

(u) - Refusal to Comply with a Rule Teams that refuse to comply with a rule affecting the rights of another team will forfeit the match.

RULE 5: TIME-OUTS, DELAYS-OF-GAME and CHECKING POSITION OF POINTS

5-1 - Circumstances

(a) - Time-out The captain may request a time-out whenever the circumstances explained by the requesting team appear to be valid. The time-out period will be limited to two minutes. A team may only request a time-out if they are the "Out-Team", unless there is an emergency. Only one time out per team per frame is allowed.

(b) - Intentional Delay of Game The game shall be played without undue delay. If, in the opinion of League Directors or a rules committee official, the game is intentionally delayed without sufficient or valid reason, the official will give a warning. If the game is not resumed within one minute of notification by the official, the delaying team will forfeit the game.

(c) - Unusual Circumstances In the case of delays caused by weather, acts of God, civil disorder or other unforeseen reasons, the League Directors will rule and govern the final decision.

RULE 6: PENALTIES

6-1 - Enforcement of Penalties

(a) - Foul Determination Immediately upon determination by a League Director or rules committee official that a foul has been committed, he/she will notify the captains of

both teams and inform them of the penalty imposed. The ruling of the official is final, except as otherwise provided hereafter.

(b) - Conditions Not Covered For conditions not specifically covered in the rules, the rules committee will convene to render a decision. If a decision can not be reached by the rules committee then the matter will be decided by the commissioner. This decision shall be final.

(c) - Protests Any protest of a decision of a referee, rules committee officials or league director must be made by a team before that team plays its next ball or the decision will be considered as accepted.

(d) - Protest to Forfeiture If a team must forfeit a game as a result of not being present or on time for a scheduled game; or as a result of violations hereunder prescribed, no official protest will be acknowledged. Protests will be acknowledged and judged on the basis of merit in circumstances not specifically provided for hereunder.

6-2 - Specific Fouls

(a) - Foul-Line Fouls In both pointing and hitting, the foremost part of the specific foul-line will not be surpassed by any part of the foot before the ball leaves the player's hand. All fouls must be called by a referee as a result of witnessing the foul.

An official warning will be granted a player after which penalties will be prescribed. The penalty for committing a second foul-line foul will be removal of the ball from play. In addition, all balls displaced by this illegal toss must be returned to their approximate positions before the foul.

(b) - Center-Court Line Fouls The foremost part of the center-court line will not be surpassed by any part of the foot before the ball has been delivered from that player. The penalty for committing a center-court line foul will be removal of that players ball from play.

(c) - Illegal Movement of a Ball Belonging to Your Own Team If a player or coach moves one or more of his/her team's balls, the opposing team has two options on how to proceed:

- i. The ball or balls that were moved are removed from the court and considered dead and play continues.
- ii. The team that was fouled may have the option of declining the penalty, replacing the ball(s) as close as possible to its original location and completing the frame.

(d) - Illegal Movement of an Opponent's Ball If a player or coach moves one or more of his/her opponent's balls, the opposing team has two options on how to proceed:

- i. The ball or balls that were moved are removed from the court and awarded one point each and play continues. Only the team fouled against can be awarded points for that frame.
- ii. The team that was fouled may have the option of declining the penalty, replacing the ball(s) as close as possible to its original location and completing the frame.

(e) - Illegal Movement of the Pallino by a Player If the pallino is moved by a player or coach, the opposing team has two options on how to proceed:

- i. The team that is fouled will be awarded as many points as the number of live balls that have already played and the frame will end.
- ii. The team that was fouled may have the option of declining the penalty, replacing the pallino as close as possible to its original location and completing the frame.

6-3 - Accidental or Premature Movement of Balls or Pallino by Referee

(a) - Accidental Movement of a Ball or Pallino During Play (when more balls are yet to be played) If a referee, either in the course of measuring or otherwise moves the pallino or a ball "in contention," the frame is dead and started over at the same end play started from.

(b) - Accidental or Premature Movement of a Ball or Pallino by a Referee (after all balls have been played) If the point or points were obvious to the referee, they will be awarded. All uncertain points will not be awarded.

6-4 - Interference with a Ball in Motion

(a) - By One's Own Team If a player interferes with his/her team's ball in motion, that ball is removed from the court and considered dead and play continues. If balls in play are disrupted as a result, it will be considered an illegal movement of the ball. The rules for illegal movement will apply.

(b) - By Opponent's Team If a player interferes with an opponent's ball in motion, the team that is fouled has the option of

- i. playing the ball over
- ii. declaring the frame dead
- iii. declining the penalty, accepting the position of the ball and continue to play.

(c) - With No Disruption of Position If a spectator, animal or object, such as a stick or stone (not considered part of the court surface) interferes with a ball in motion and it does not touch another ball already in play, it must be played over by the same player.

(d) - With Disruption of Position If a spectator, animal or object such as a stick or stone interferes with a ball in motion and that ball touches another ball already in play, the frame is dead.

(e) - Other Disruption of Play Any action which interferes with the position of the ball(s) in play renders the frame dead. Such action may be the result of, for example: a dead ball, foreign objects, spectators or animals entering the court and changing the position of the ball(s) in play.

6-5 - Wrong Color Delivery

(a) - Replaceable If a player delivers a wrong color ball, the ball may not be stopped by another player or the referee. The ball must be allowed to come to rest and be replaced with the proper ball by the referee.

(b) - Non Replaceable If a player delivers a wrong color ball that cannot be replaced without disturbing another ball already in play, the points of the play will be recorded at that time, with the wrong color ball counting for team which rolled it, and play will continue.

(c) - Unidentifiable If a player delivers a wrong color ball which cannot be identified by the referee as a result of hitting or scattering

of balls, the frame will be considered dead and no points awarded.

6-6 - Wrong Rotation of Play

(a) - Initial Roll If a team wrongly delivers the pallino and its first ball, the referee will return both pallino and ball and begin frame over again.

(b) - If a player rolls out of turn, the opposing team may leave everything, including the thrown ball, exactly as is, or may return any moved balls to their approximate positions and remove the thrown ball.

(c) - If an individual delivers more than his/her allotted number of balls, the opposing team may accept the result of the illegal roll, or remove the illegal ball and return any scattered balls to their original positions.

RULE 7: OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

7-1 - Broken Ball

(a) - During Play If during the course of play of a frame, a ball or pallino breaks, the frame will be considered dead. Replacement of ball or pallino will be the responsibility of league directors.

(b) - Ball Pickup To avoid wrong ball delivery, the court should be cleared of balls at the end of every frame. The balls should be given to the appropriate players and a quiet, visual inspection be made before the next frame begins again. The balls should be held by the players until it is their turn to deliver them.

7-2 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct

(a) - Disqualifications Players shall act in a sportsman like conduct at all times. Rude behavior will not be tolerated and disciplinary action will be the responsibility of league directors.

RULE 8: THE REFEREE

8-1 Definition of Referee

(a) - Referee is defined as an official determined by the league directors or by the

rules committee to act in the capacity of overseeing rule infractions and administering warnings and penalties in the case of fouls during the course of a match. In the case where no referee has been assigned to a match, a referee can also be any spectator that both captains agree, will act in the capacity of referee for any part of the duration of a match.

(b) - A referee cannot be any player, coach or substitute player of any team competing in the match.

8-2 - Responsibilities

(a) The Referee is responsible for:

- i. Inspect the court before each game to insure proper grooming and safety.
- ii. Check the scoreboard and scorecard for accuracy.
- iii. Determine the In and Out balls and perform measurements when requested.
- iv. Call all fouls and determine all penalties according to the rules.

(b) - Ethics A referee will:

- i. Know the rules of the game.
- ii. Be fair and unbiased.

8-3 - Objections

(a) - Objections to Officials Each team has the right to object to a designated official for any reason prior to the start of a game. This objection shall be considered and decided upon by the League Directors.

8-4 - Substitution of Officials

(a) - During A Game Substitutions of officials may occur during a game only with the permission of League Directors and both captains.

(b) - Additional Officials may be assigned to any games during the course of play provided permission is granted by League Directors.