

World Boccia Rules 2025-2028 – important updates December 2024

The objective of this document is to provide members and officials with an overview of the most important changes in the boccia rules for the 2025-2028 quadrennial. It provides an explanation and rationale for the changes.

This document is not a comprehensive overview of all changes that have been made and anyone is encouraged to read the new rules completely.

4.1.9 *If an Athlete's ball(s) or equipment is damaged because of an (unintentional) action of the opposing Side and the Athlete can therefore not continue to functionally use the equipment, that opponent forfeits the match*

This rule was added to prevent sides from gaining an advantage by damaging (intentionally or not) their opponent's balls or equipment (for instance driving over a ball and breaking it while seeing a situation on court). The consequence is a direct forfeit of that match, regardless of the moment in the match where it happens or the actual score.

Broken wheelchairs/equipment (several rules)

Equipment may now be changed during a technical time-out, as well as in the one minute between ends. Replacement ramps need to have been checked and stickered during the equipment check. Wheelchairs may be checked on court when they need to be replaced.

7.4.1 *For all divisions, all Athletes must be registered between thirty-five (35) and twenty (20) minutes before the scheduled start time of a match in which they are scheduled to participate.*

Call room times have been standardised for all classes and Warm up area times have been adjusted accordingly.

7.4.2 *Each Side (Individual, Team or Pair, including any SA/RO and the Coach) must register together An exception may be made for Coaches who are on court in back-to-back matches and are not able to register in time at the Call Room entrance for a consecutive match.*

If a coach cannot register at the call room desk together with the athlete because the coach is still on court in a previous round of matches, but wants to go on court with the athlete, the athlete notifies the call room desk. The coach may then enter later (before the start of the parade) or remain on the FOP and join the parade there.

10.2.1 *Each Side will have a time limit for the playing of each End and is monitored by a timekeeper. The times are:*

- BC1: 4:30 minutes per Athlete per End
- BC2: 3:30 minutes per Athlete per End

- *BC3: 6 minutes per Athlete per End*
- *BC4: 3:30 minutes per Athlete per End*
- *Teams: 5 minutes per Team per End*
- *Pair BC3: 7 minutes per Pair per End*
- *Pair BC4: 4 minutes per Pair per End*

The time per end for all throwing classes has been shortened (30s for individual BC1, BC2, BC4, 60s for Team BC1/2 and Pair BC4). This should result in a more similar experience of time pressure, when compared to the BC3 events.

15.10 *Coaches who are not on the FOP, as well as other spectators may offer encouragement and/or express brief Coaching instructions in the one minute between ends. This includes brief verbal instructions and/or gestures. There should be no dialogues between Athletes on the FOP and anyone not on the FOP. Any form of Coaching during an end is not allowed.*

This is a new rule that illustrates how coaches who are not on court may interact with an athlete. This is more or less similar to what a coach could generally do on court. This can be policed according to rules 16.8.2 and 16.11.

Violations & penalties (several rules)

Any side (individual, team, pair + sport assistants and ramp operators) will be considered a single unit. This means that any card is received by the side. For example: if one athlete in a team receives a yellow card in a match and another athlete from that team receives a yellow in the following match, this is considered a 2nd yellow card and that team forfeits the match (rule 16).

The violations that lead to a yellow card and/or a penalty ball have been evaluated and in some cases modified. There are now fewer violations that lead to a yellow card and more that lead to a penalty ball.

Should you have any further questions regarding these rule changes or anything else, please contact Joep Pelsser, chair of the Competition & Rules Committee – comp.rules@worldboccia.com