



**About Sport:** Bocce is an Italian game. The basic principle of the sport is to roll a bocce ball closest to the target ball, which is called a pallina. Bocce as a Special Olympics sport provides people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to have social contact, develop physically and to gain self-confidence. Next to soccer and golf, bocce in Special Olympics is the third most participated sport in the world.

**Established:** Bocce was first introduced to Special Olympics Ireland following the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer games held in Dublin.

**Differences of Special Olympics Bocce:** The International Federation for Bocce is Special Olympics International and therefore the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Bocce shall govern all Special Olympics competitions.

### **By The Numbers:**

In 2019, there were 1,260 Special Olympics Ireland athletes that participated in Bocce

The surface of a bocce court can be composed of stone dust, dirt, clay, grass or artificial surface

The *pallina* is the small object ball used and it is also known as the “cue” ball or the “jack.”

Bocce was first developed in Italy

### **Events for Competition:**

Singles

Doubles

Team Competition (4 players/team)

### **Associations/Federations/Supporters:**

Special Olympics Ireland [www.specialolympics.com](http://www.specialolympics.com)

Special Olympics international [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)

**Divisioning at Special Olympics:** Athletes in every sport and event are grouped by age, gender, and ability, giving everyone a reasonable chance to win. At Special Olympics there are no World Records because each athlete, whether in the fastest or the slowest division is valued and recognized equally. In every division, all athletes receive an award, from gold, silver, and bronze medals, to fourth through eighth place ribbons. This idea of equal ability groupings is the foundation for competition in Special Olympics and can be witnessed at all events, whether it's athletics, aquatics, table tennis, football, skiing, or gymnastics. All athletes are given an equal chance to participate, perform, and be recognized for doing their best by their teammates, family, friends, and fans.