

## **A little history of Bocce Ball in Collinsville**

By Clifton K. Dellamano

Some spell it boccie, bocci and bocce, depending on which part of the state you're from. Around these parts, it's bocce.



Bocce ball games were played originally by Trojans and later by ancient Greeks and Romans. The Italians have played bocce for centuries and it's one of the oldest games known to mankind. The size of the bocce is 3 ½" to 5". The boccino is about 2 ½". No lead-filled or metal ball is allowed in a tournament.

In Italy, they play in a court, here in Collinsville, we play cross country. The first tournament held in the United States was held at Springfield, IL in August 1939.

The first Italian Fest in Collinsville, was on Columbus Day, October 1984. Joe Ashmann came up with the idea and ramrodded the whole thing.

We played bocce where the library parking lot is today. The teams going for first and second place got caught in a thunder storm, but continued to play. It turned cold that October, and everyone was on the porch of Ciuferi's Funeral Home. Joe Ashmann brought a big pot of chili down, which went over well.

We played there for two years. The third year was at Jung Brothers Pontiac lot. We got rained out the fourth year, and ended up at that American Legion the following week. From there, we went to the high rise home, located on Aurora Street, until we ran out of room. From there, we went to Woodland Park for a couple of years, and ended up at where we still play now at Glidden Park in Collinsville, off Lebanon Road.

We held the Italian Fest on Columbus Day until 1989, but then moved to September to take advantage of better weather.

### **Bocci Rules (Illinois State Rules)**

- 1) Winner of coin toss throws the Boccino (small ball) within 20-30 yards (60-90 feet).
- 2) If ball does not reach 20 yards, or goes past 30 yards, the Boccino is thrown again.
- 3) If this happens a second time in a row, the Boccino goes to the other team.
- 4) You are allowed two steps in any direction from where the Boccino was thrown.
- 5) First team to 12 wins!

**Collinsville Italian Fest -- Bocce Ball Tournament Winners**  
**Sponsored by: Dellamano Distributing Co., Inc (Clif Dellamano)**

- 1) 1984: Lou Bazzello and Frank Vivod
- 2) 1985: Buster Barbaris and Fritz Zamboldi
- 3) 1986: Tony Baima and Lou Bazzello
- 4) 1987: Dennis Pace and Gene Catalpa
- 5) 1988: Clif Dellamano Sr and Dennis Carroll
- 6) 1989: Crevits and Merritt
- 7) 1990: Pat Chiarottino and Art Shad
- 8) 1991: Pete LaFrank and Jim Bordoni
- 9) 1992: Bill Thomas and Ford
- 10) 1993: Locopo and Locopo
- 11) 1994: George Cavaletti and Frank Hann
- 12) 1995: Crevits and Morris
- 13) 1996: Frank Italiano and Ben Mansfield
- 14) 1997: Paul Benvenuto and Jim Rocca
- 15) 1998: Frank Finazzo and J. R. Pool
- 16) 1999: Nessel and Nessel (Father and 12 year old son)
- 17) 2000: Jerry Soelke and Tony Arro
- 18) 2001: Joe Ossola and Hilderbrandt
- 19) 2002: Craig Dellamano and Mark Isenberg
- 20) 2003: Tom Viviano and Jim Chartrand
- 21) 2004: Frank Finazzo and Chuck White
- 22) 2005: Scott Giacoletto and Tim Pace
- 23) 2006: Scott Giacoletto and Tim Pace
- 24) 2007: Justin Broyles and Jody Chiapelli
- 25) 2008: Pat Dellamano and Jay Albertina
- 26) 2009: Frank Finazzo and Mike Handfelder
- 27) 2010: Frank Finazzo and Mike Handfelder

