

OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES
FOR
HAWAIIAN RULES BOCCE



COMPOSED BY THE FOUNDERS

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Hawaiian Rules Bocce: A new sport with traditional roots.

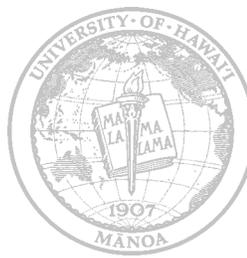
Introduction

The traditional game of Bocce is fundamentally a bilateral sport. Two teams of one two or four players compete against each other on a rectangular court with raised boundaries or in an open area across any type of surface. Hawaiian Rules Bocce (H.R. Bocce) is fundamentally a multilateral sport where two or more players compete against each other in much the same way golfers do. H.R. Bocce can be played in a court based fashion with distinct non-raised boundaries or through a series of links, also with non-raised boundaries. The H.R. Bocce playing surface can incorporate obstacles in the form of landscape plants or bunkers filled with sand or some other non-grass fill. H.R. Bocce can be considered a unique sport that incorporates elements of the traditional game of Bocce with play progression similar to golf.

The official H.R. Bocce court resembles a putting green with regards to design of slopes, undulations and obstacles to play. The H.R. Bocce court should be designed to induce a wide variety of left and right hand breaks as well as up and down hill play. The in bound playing surface may contain turf grass of different textures and/or height. A raised turf apron can provide a breaking feature to the court boundary. In links based H.R. Bocce, courts are linked together to form a series of mini fairways. The links playing surface incorporates the same design aspects of the court based game applied to a larger area. In court based play, there is no prescribed starting point for the initiation of tournament play. In links play, however, course design dictates where players start and the general direction of play through the course and looping around again if needed to declare a winning score.

The official H.R. Bocce ball set contain 8 balls with 4 distinct combinations of color and design. The individual nature of H.R. Bocce competition justifies the design and marketing of 2-ball pairs with easily distinguishable colors and designs. Customizable 2-ball pairs can be solid or translucent with individuality expressed as embedding (translucent balls) of team/corporate/school logos, colors, images or patterns.

. The H.R. Bocce rules described here were patterned after a set of rules for traditional Bocce as viewed on the Internet on 04/18/02 ([http:// www.nyso.org/new/rules/Bocce.pdf](http://www.nyso.org/new/rules/Bocce.pdf), Website of the Special Olympics of New York). The primary defining feature of H.R. Bocce is the multilateral nature of competition and the rules composed to define play. Just as tennis is a bilateral competition, so too are **all** previous descriptions of rules for traditional Bocce. The official tournament rules of H.R. Bocce are described here for the first time and represent a starting point for the evolution of a new game



Article I. Official Events.

Section 1.01 H.R. Bocce cut throat competition, singles on a single court with defined boundaries.

Section 1.02 H.R. Bocce cut throat competition, singles on a series of links with defined boundaries.

Article II. Types of H.R. Bocce playing surfaces and equipment.

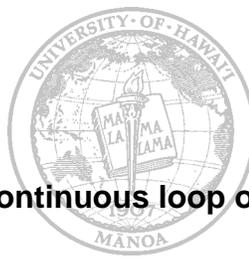
Section 2.01 Court based play

(a) The H.R. Bocce court.

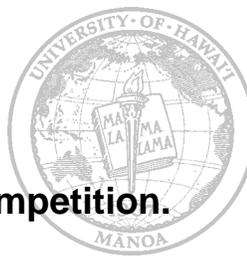
- (i) **An outdoor tournament court will consist of a surface of closely mowed grass, maintained at a height and evenness consistent to those used on a commercial golf course green or tee box. An apron of higher cut grass is also allowed and considered in play.**
- (ii) **The court can be designed to accommodate any pitch or undulations that allow for reasonable accessibility and ball retention on the court.**
- (iii) **Obstacles can be incorporated into the in bound playing surface and may include but are limited to trees, bushes, stones and recessed or raised bunkers.**
- (iv) **The boundaries of the court may be designated by a series of stakes or poles that form an imaginary line around the court. The boundary may also be designated by the intersection of the established playing surface and non-playing surface (grass/non-grass for out door courts or playing surface/flooring for indoor courts).**
- (v) **A H.R. Bocce court will not be restricted in total area designated as “the court”.**

(b) The H.R. Bocce links.

- (i) **An outdoor tournament links will consist of a surface of closely mowed grass, maintained at a height and evenness consistent to those used on a commercial golf course green or tee box. An apron of higher cut grass is also allowed and considered in play.**
- (ii) **The links will essentially be a series of courts juxtaposition to allow for directional play as designated by the designers of the links and collectively called a H.R. Bocce course.**
- (iii) **Links will have boundaries as described above but will also require players to move in predetermined direction as indicated by markers with arrows.**



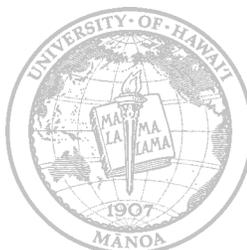
- (iv) A links course may either be a continuous loop or composed of distinct areas with non-contiguous boundaries.**
 - (v) A H.R. Bocce links course will not be restricted in total area designated as “the links”.**
- (c) Indoor H.R. Bocce courts.
- (i) An official indoor version of both the court and links playing surfaces are allowable.**
 - (ii) Indoors playing surfaces must allow for ball placement that is not altered as players move about the in bound area.**
- (d) Equipment.
- (i) The balls used for either court or links H.R. Bocce will be composed of wood, metal, compressed plastic or any solid or translucent material of equal size. Official tournament balls may be from 107 mm (4.25 “) to 113 mm (4.5”). All balls used in a tournament must be the same size and weight. Since H.R. Bocce is fundamentally a singles game, balls may be of any color or design as long as each player can clearly distinguish their balls from the other players.**
 - (ii) The pallino or target ball must not be larger than 63 mm (2.5”) or smaller than 48 mm (1.875”). The pallino can be any color and contain any marking or design that is visibly distinct from the other Bocce balls.**
 - (iii) The Pohaku (rock in Hawaiian) can be any object that all players agree upon. Since the Pohaku represents the middle of the 1 meter release circle, it should be composed of materials that allow for the outer edge of the circle to be identified by the players. A suggested Pohaku could simply be a flat stone affixed with a string with meter markings.**
 - (iv) Measuring device may be any device that can accurately determine the distance between two objects and acceptable to tournament officials.**



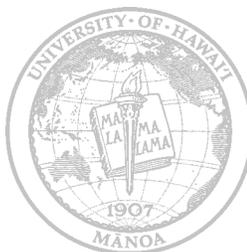
Article III. Rules of H.R. Bocce competition.

Section 3.01 The Court based game (CBG).

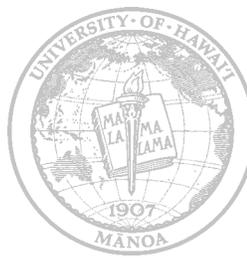
- (a) Equipment - H.R. Bocce is played with each player using two balls with distinct color and/or design and a smaller ball called the pallino (target ball). The tournament referee will determine if balls of each player are similar enough for competition. The referee has sole discretion in accepting balls for play.
- (b) Designating the release circle - The Pohaku may be any object that is used to mark the center of a 1 meter circle from which all players must release their balls. At the moment a ball is released from a player's hand, some portion of their body must be in contact with the ground contained by the 1 meter circle that the Pohaku sets the center of.
- (c) Initiation of play - The tournament begins with a non-scoring "order of play" round. The referee sets the location of the Pohaku and then may either throw or place the pallino anywhere within the scoring boundaries. To determine the order of play in the first scoring round, each player will deliver one ball and try to get as close as possible to the pallino. The players, in a spirit of Aloha and good sportsmanship decide upon the order play in this non-scoring round. The player getting the closest to the pallino will have the "Pohaku advantage" in the subsequent scoring round. The next closest player will be second with the order of the remaining players determined in a similar manner. In the event that two or more players are equal distance from the pallino, a referee mediated coin toss (see part (i) below for breaking ties) will break the tie or players (in a tie) may agree to an "order of play".
- (d) Pohaku advantage/1-kick rule - The player with the "Pohaku advantage" begins the first scoring round by placing the Pohaku in any location that allows for play to proceed within the established boundaries. The player with the "Pohaku advantage" delivers the pallino in bounds by rolling or tossing it. There is no rule to limit the distance that the pallino can be tossed for the scoring round. The pallino can be set anywhere in bound regardless of obstacles to scoring rolls. The pallino may also be out of sight as long as it is still within the court boundaries. If the player is not satisfied with the initial location of the pallino, they may evoke the 1-kick rule. The 1-kick rule allows the player throwing the pallino to kick it to any other location within the boundaries. The pallino cannot be pushed or rolled with the foot or any other part of the body. If the pallino lands out-of-bounds (OB), the "Pohaku advantage" passes to the next player in order and the original player that lost the "Pohaku advantage" throws last. This process continues until an in bound pallino is delivered.
- (e) Pallino knocked out of bound – Once the pallino is set, scoring balls may dislodge it to any other in bound location. If the pallino is knocked OB, the entire scoring round is replayed with the "Pohaku Advantage" retained by the player that initiated the scoring round. The Pohaku location can remain the same or be set in any other location.



- (f) Suspension of boundaries - Once the Pohaku is set, the player with the “Pohaku advantage” may declare that the established boundaries of the court or link are suspended. Suspension of the boundaries must be verbally declared and acknowledged by the referee before the pallino is delivered. Boundaries are automatically reestablished in the next scoring round.
- (g) Establishing the Initial point of a scoring round - The player with the “Pohaku advantage” attempts the initial point after the pallino comes to rest. An underhand throw must be used for all ball delivery attempts. A ball may be delivered by rolling, tossing or bouncing off of any in bound surface or obstacle. Players do not have to state the intention of a scoring throw nor describe the path or contact with other balls or parts of the playing surface. Once the first ball stops rolling, the player steps aside and allows the second player to release a ball from within the circle established by the Pohaku. Each player will deliver a single ball in the order established in the initial non-scoring “order of play” round.
- (h) Second scoring attempt - After the deliver of each player’s first ball, the referee will determine which player is farthest (“far out player”) from the pallino. Any player with an OB ball” must throw next. If more than one player is OB then the first player to go OB rolls first followed in order by any other OB players. After all of the OB players deliver their second ball the remaining far out player must roll. The “far out” rule determines the order of play until all balls are delivered. If two or more players are an equal distance from the pallino, the most forward player in the original order of play must roll again.
- (i) Scoring – After all balls come to rest, the round is scored by the referee. The player with their ball closest to the pallino is the only player that can score in that round. The closest ball is identified by determining the shortest distance between outer edge of the pallino and the outer edge of next nearest ball. If the closest ball is touching the pallino 2 points are awarded. If the closest ball is not touching the pallino, 1 point is awarded. If a single player has two balls closer to the pallino (but not touching it) than any other player does, 2 points are awarded. The scoring player will have the “Pohaku advantage” in the next scoring round. The second closest to the pallino will be second in the next scoring round. If the Pohaku advantage cannot be awarded (i.e. two or more players are equal distance from the pallino) the round must be replayed with the “Pohaku advantage” going to the player that started the round, the order of play for the other players remains the same.



- (j) Breaking a tie for scoring position - If there tie between two players for determining the order of play after the “Pohaku advantage” is established, the referee will toss a coin and the player with more forward placement in the current order of play will make the call. The winner of the coin toss will be more forward in the subsequent order of play than the loser. If there is a tie between more than two players, the two most forward in the current order of play will enter the coin toss. The most forward in order of play of the two will make the call. The winner is the more forward of the two in order of play in the next scoring round. The loser of the first coin toss enters another referee mediated coin toss with the next player most forward in order of play with the loser of the first toss making the call. The winner is the more forward of the two in order of play in the next scoring round. The loser proceeds with subsequent tosses until the order of play for all players in the next scoring round is determined. Two-way ties in any other position will be broken in a similar manner.
- (k) Continuing Play after the initial scoring round – The player with the “Pohaku advantage” may establish the next release circle at any location around or within the court. There is no rule to require the location of subsequent release circles to be in bounds. Release circles can be established behind obstacles and out of bound.
- (l) Winning a match - The winning score is determined before the game begins and can range from 3 to 7 depending on the tournament rules or player’s preference, with a margin of two points required for victory. Winning scores can vary for different stages of the tournament. For example in a tournament with 16 singles players, 4 players will play a qualifying game to 3, two point margin not required. After 4 games there are 4 winners. The 4 winners play a final game to 5, a margin of 2 points required to declare a victory. The traditional winning score, established by the founders of H.R. Bocce, is 5 points with a margin of 2 points required to declare a victory.
- (m) Final Score - A single score card is used to keep track of each players score during the game. It is the responsibility of each player to sign the score card at the end of each match. The signatures indicate that the scores are final and indisputable. Any player disagreeing with the score or its validity should not sign the score card of the match in which a protest will be filed. The tournament director (s) will consider the protest and make a determination. The referee’s judgements are not subject to protest. The basis of any valid protest is the misinterpretation or misapplication of these official rules.
- (i) A player must declare that the game is under protest before the next scoring round is initiated. The protest must be recognized and recorded by the referee.**
- 1) A scoring round is “initiated” after the Pohaku is set and the pallino is delivered in play and comes to rest. A protest declared after the pallino comes to rest cannot be found to be valid.



- (l) Winning a match – same as CBG with the following additions. In LBG the design of the course may impose a required winning score to compliment the lay out of the course. For example, if the course provides 5 distinct scoring areas, a score of 15 would insure an opportunity to score in all of these areas. Players will continue around the course until a winning score is obtained. This may require several rotations through the course.
- (m) Final Score – same as CBG.

Section 3.03 Time-Outs, Delays-of-Game, and Checking the Position of Points.

- (a) Circumstances.
 - (i) **Time Out – The referee or tournament official may grant a time-out whenever a valid reason is given. The time-out will be limited to 5 minutes.**
 - (ii) **Delayed caused by Weather, Acts of God, and any other unforeseen reason will be approved by the referee and ruling of the League or Tournament Director(s) will be final.**
 - (iii) **Checking the pallino position and points – Players may proceed to the location of the pallino and adjacent scoring balls. Objects not part of the playing surface may be removed as long as the pallino and any previously played balls are not moved. Player should refrain from walking across the line of play between the pallino and the Pohaku.**
 - (iv) **The referee may suspend play to make their determination of the “far out player” using either visual observation or any sort of measuring device.**

Section 3.04 Penalties.

- (a) Specific fouls.
 - (i) **Violation of the release circle – At the time a player releases their ball, some portion of their body (most likely a foot) must be in contact with the ground within the 1 meter release circle (the center identified by the Pohaku). The referee, as a result of witnessing the foot foul, will immediately call this foul and may suspend play to make a physical measurement. An official warning may be issued to the player committing the foul after which penalties will be prescribed.**
 - 1) The ball released by the player committing this foul will be considered dead and removed from the in bound playing area. Any balls moved by the foul ball will be returned to their original location, that location is a matter of the referee’s judgement.
 - 2) If the foot foul occurs on the first throw, that player must release their second and final ball.



- (ii) Illegal movements of balls belonging to a player – If a player moves one or more of their own balls “within scoring range” the balls are removed from the court and are considered dead. Balls not within scoring range may be placed as close as possible to their original position. Within scoring range is defined as balls close enough to the pallino to require measurement to determine whether a point may be awarded.**

- (iii) Illegal movement of an opponent’s ball – If a player moves one or more of an opponents ball within scoring range all balls (whether moved or not) within scoring range will be awarded one point each and the scoring round is replayed with the Pohaku advantage awarded to the player that started the scoring round in which the illegal movement occurred. If the player committing the illegal ball movement had the Pohaku advantage, the advantage will pass the second player in order of play at the start of the round.**

- (iv) Illegal movement of the pallino by a player – If the pallino is move by a player, all players with balls within scoring range will be awarded a point and the round replayed. Any balls not yet in play will be awarded a point, except balls belonging to the player moving the pallino. Pohaku advantage will be awarded to the player that started the scoring round in which the pallino was moved. If the player moving the pallino had the Pohaku advantage, the advantage will pass to the second player in order of play at the start of the round.**

- (v) Accidental movement of balls or pallino by referee.**
 - 1) Accidental movement of a ball or pallino when more balls are yet to be played – If a referee, either in the course of measuring or otherwise moves a ball “within scoring range” or the pallino, the round is considered dead and the “Pohaku advantage” returns to the player that started the round.

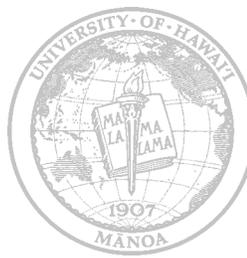
 - 2) Accidental movement of a ball or pallino after all balls are played – If a point or points were obvious to the referee they will be awarded. All uncertain points will not be awarded.

(vi) Interference with a ball in motion.

- 1) If any player interferes with an opponent’s ball in motion, the player fouled has one of the following options:
 - a) *Replay the ball.*

 - b) *Require the entire scoring round be replayed.*

 - c) *Decline any penalty and accept the final location of the contacted ball.*



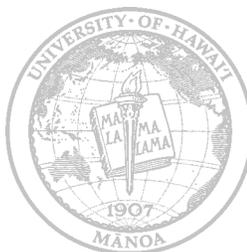
- 2) When no other balls are touched:
 - a) *If a spectator or stray animal touches a ball in motion and no other balls are touched it must be replayed. Contact with any objects that constitute the playing area are allowed and the final location of the players ball must be accepted.*
- 3) When other balls are touched.
 - a) *If a spectator or stray animal touches a ball in motion and other balls are touched the scoring frame must be replayed.*
- 4) Other interference with balls in play – Actions that interfere with the pallino or any player's balls will require the replay of the scoring round.

(vii) Delivery of wrong ball.

- 1) Replaceable – When a player delivers the wrong ball, it cannot be stopped by another player or the referee. The ball must be allowed to come to rest and replaced with the proper ball by the referee.
- 2) Not replaceable – When a player delivers the wrong ball and it cannot be replaced without disturbing another ball already in play, the entire scoring round must be replayed. If the referee, due to hitting or scattering of balls, cannot identify the wrong ball then scoring round must be replayed.

(viii) Wrong rotation of play.

- 1) Initial roll – If a player wrongly delivers the pallino and their first ball, the referee will return both pallino and ball and allow the player with the Pohaku advantage to begin the scoring round.
- 2) Subsequent rolls of proper ball in improper sequence – If a player delivers a ball when they have established a point (i.e. their ball is closest to the pallino) or roll in the improper sequence of play and the other players still have balls left, the ball in question remains where it comes to rest, is considered live and play continues. This ruling holds true regardless of who indicated which ball was closest to the pallino since it is the responsibility of each player to request a measurement when a scoring ball is questionable.



Section 3.05 Officials.

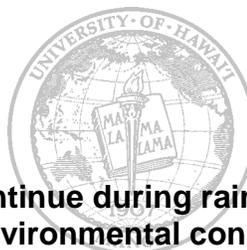
- (a) Objections.
 - (i) Objection to officials – Each player has the right to object to a designated official for any reason prior to the start of a game. The Tournament Director(s), whose ruling is absolute and final, will decide upon this objection.**

Section 3.06 Official Code of H.R. Bocce ethics.

- (a) Embrace the Aloha Spirit when playing the game and encourage other to do the same.
- (b) Know the rules of the game and enforce them.
- (c) Show respect for the playing surface and the associated landscape plants. Avoid damage by not dropping balls, standing on balls or altering the natural turf playing surface.
- (d) Do not offer unsolicited advice on line of play to other players.
- (e) Do not disrupt the concentration of other players with verbal or motion distractions.
- (f) Be courteous to observers and new comers to the sport. Make use of teachable moments to share H.R. Bocce with all people that show interest.
- (g) Consider the Aloha Spirit when representing and demonstrating H.R. Bocce.

Section 3.07 Miscellaneous circumstances.

- (a) Broken ball.
 - (i) During play – If during the course of a scoring round a ball or pallino breaks, the round will be replayed. Replacement of the ball or pallino will be the responsibility of the Tournament Director(s).**
- (b) Court Grooming.
 - (i) All playing surfaces must be groomed to the satisfaction of the Tournament Director(s) before the start of each game.**
 - (ii) The mowing height of natural turf surfaces will be set at a level that allows for optimum expression of the architect's original design and intent.**
 - (iii) Obstacles that do not represent the original intent of the playing surface design, such as cups, leaves, twigs and wildlife droppings may be removed from the court before the start of the game and at any time during the game.**



(iv) The game may be allowed to continue during rain or other natural conditions such as wind and darkness. When environmental conditions (such as lightening or high winds) exists that pose a physical threat to the safety of players and spectators, the referee can suspend play. Play may resume when safe playing conditions return. A winner cannot be declared due to the loss of unsafe weather conditions.

(c) Player behavior.

(i) Unsportsmanlike conduct.

- 1) Disqualification – Players shall act in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. Any action that is deemed by the referee or Tournament Director(s) to be poor sportsmanship such as insulting language, gestures, actions or words which incite ill will, if flagrant, may result in disqualification.

(ii) Attire.

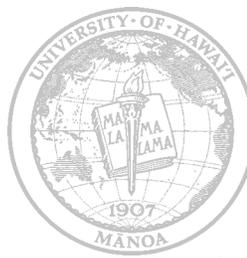
- 1) Proper attire – H.R. Bocce welcomes the free expression of all forms of good will as represented by shirts, dresses, pants and hats. Attire that shows disrespect for H.R. Bocce, other players or the player themselves will not be allowed in sanctioned tournaments. The decision to not allow offensive attire will rest solely and finally with the Tournament Director(s).
- 2) Footwear – Players will not be allowed to wear shoes that may damage or disrupt the playing surface. Barefoot play is allowed.

Section 3.08 Definition of playing terms.

(a) Aloha Spirit - The Aloha Spirit is defined in the *Hawaii Revised Statutes*: [§5-7.5].

(i) "Aloha Spirit" is the coordination of mind and heart within each person. It brings each person to the self. Each person must think and emote good feelings to others. In the contemplation and presence of the life force, "Aloha", the following unuhi laula loa may be used:

- 1) "Akahai", meaning kindness to be expressed with tenderness;
- 2) "Lokahi", meaning unity, to be expressed with harmony;
- 3) "Oluolu", meaning agreeable, to be expressed with pleasantness;
- 4) "Haahaa", meaning humility, to be expressed with modesty;
- 5) "Ahonui", meaning patience, to be expressed with perseverance.



(ii) These are traits of character that express the charm, warmth and sincerity of Hawaii's people. It was the working philosophy of native Hawaiians and was presented as a gift to the people of Hawaii. "Aloha" is more than a word of greeting or farewell or a salutation. "Aloha" means mutual regard and affection and extends warmth in caring with no obligation in return. "Aloha" is the essence of relationships in which each person is important to every other person for collective existence. "Aloha" means to hear what is not said, to see what cannot be seen and to know the unknowable.

(b) Ball: Live and dead.

(i) A live ball is any ball that has been delivered.

(ii) A dead ball is any ball that has been disqualified, out of bound or forfeited. A ball is disqualified if:

- 1) It is the result of a penalty.
- 2) Has gone out of bounds if out of bounds has not been suspended.
- 3) Hits an overhead covering of the playing surface.

(c) Bocce ball and pallino.

(i) The pallino or target ball is a smaller ball than the ones used for scoring.

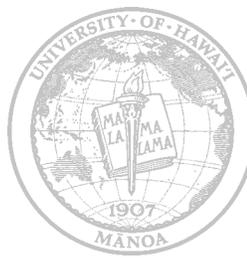
(ii) Bocce ball is the larger playing ball.

(d) Direction markers – In links play H.R. Bocce, course markers designate the direction of play. The markers include pointing arrows to indicate the general direction of play.

(e) Foul – A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed.

(f) In play – The pallino or balls come to rest within the boundaries of play.

(g) Measuring device – Any object that allows for the accurate determination of the space between the outer edges of the pallino and the other scoring balls.



- (h) Order of play round – Refers to a non-scoring round that occurs prior to the first scoring round. This round will set the order of play in the subsequent first scoring round. In tournament play, the referee will set the Pohaku and pallino location. The players in a spirit of Aloha and good sportsmanship agree upon order of player release in this non-scoring round. Each player delivers 1 ball in an attempt to get as close to the pallino as possible. Order of play in the next scoring round is determined by closeness to the pallino. The closest player goes first, the next closest goes second and so on for all the remaining players.
- (i) Out of bounds (OB) – The area outside of the in-play boundaries. A ball on the edge of a boundary can be declared in play if any part of the ball lies within the imaginary plane formed by sighting the ball between two adjacent out of bound markers.
- (j) Pohaku – The Pohaku can be any object used to mark the center of a 1 meter release circle. Some portion of the player's body must be in contact with the playing surface contained by the 1 meter circle that the Pohaku sets the center of when a ball is released from the player's hand. The Pohaku may also be affixed with a string to indicate the edge of the 1 meter release circle.
- (k) Pohaku advantage – Refers to the choice a player has in locating the Pohaku anywhere to initiate a scoring round and first chance in setting the in play pallino. In links play the Pohaku must be located within a 3 meter circle, centered by the pallino in the previous scoring round.
- (l) Round – the time period in the game in which balls are played from the release circle toward the pallino and points are awarded.