



## **Appendix: Skill Development Tips**

### **The Grip**

In order to be able to roll or toss a bocce ball, an athlete must first understand what the feeling is like to grip the bocce ball correctly.

#### Athlete Readiness

- Athlete is able to hold bocce ball snugly in the hand.
- Athlete is able to have full control of the bocce ball while it is in the hand.

### **Teaching the Grip**

#### **Holding a Bocce Ball**

- ◆ Pick up and bring to waist level.
- ◆ Ensure ball is sitting in the palm of your hand.
- ◆ Ensure fingers are spread evenly across bottom of ball.
- ◆ Thumb is used to hold ball in place, not as a pressure point.
- ◆ Slightly close all fingers evenly around ball.

Please note that the ball can also be held in inverted position, although this is not entirely suitable for players with small hands.

#### Teaching Points

- ◆ Make sure the player identifies his/her ball by the color.
- ◆ Make sure the player has control over the weight/size of ball.
- ◆ While the athlete is holding the ball, look at spread of fingers underneath the bocce ball.
- ◆ Ensure ball is sitting on front portion of hand rather than nearly the back, by wrist.

As a test to see if an athlete is ready to play with an inverted grip, ask the athlete to invert his/her hand, with a ball held in it, to ensure the ball is sitting securely and doesn't drop from hand.

### **Coaching Tips**

- Emphasize that the hand controls the ball's direction, speed and distance, so it is important that the ball is held correctly to ensure a good result.
- You may have to help the athlete who has smaller hands and may not be able to grip the ball correctly and therefore has little/no control of the bocce ball.



**The Grip – Faults & Fixes Chart**

<b>Error</b>	<b>Correction</b>	<b>Drill/Test Reference</b>
Ball is sitting too far back in hand.	Have athlete pick up the ball with the fingertips and then invert the hand, without letting the ball roll to the back of the hand.	Have athlete practice picking up ball and holding in correct forward position; otherwise change to smaller sized balls.
Ball is falling out of athlete’s hand when the hand is inverted.	Suggest the athlete does not use this type of delivery.	Encourage the use of smaller sized balls for all types of delivery.

**Coaches’ Tips: The Grip – At-A-Glance**

**Tips for Practice**

1. The non-rolling hand is used to assist the athlete to hold the ball by providing support while the athlete prepares to play the shot.
2. Avoid progression too quickly to an inverted held shot.
3. The key is control over the bocce ball.
4. Use the thumb as a guide, not a pressure point.