

World Boccia returns to the US for the first time since 2017

Selects Birmingham, Alabama and Lakeshore Foundation for International Competition in 2026

BIRMINGHAM, AL, UNITED STATES, July 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Boccia International Sports Federation (BISFed) today announced Birmingham, Alabama has been chosen as the host city for the 2026 World Boccia Challenger, scheduled for June 16–23, 2026. The competition will be held at Lakeshore Foundation, which serves as home for Boccia United States through the Lakeshore National Adapted Sports Organization (LNASO).



Boccia athletes Cassie Mitchell and Nick Taylor discuss strategy at Lakeshore Foundation

"Lakeshore's selection to host an international event on our home soil gives us an opportunity to highlight the outstanding facilities at Lakeshore and it gives us a great opportunity to work with city leaders to show off Birmingham as a vibrant and accessible host city," said Jen Allred, Chief Program Officer at Lakeshore. "As the home for Boccia United States, we are excited for the opportunity."

The Birmingham 2026 World Boccia Challenger event will bring together elite athletes from around the globe and will mark the first time since 2017 that the United States has hosted a world event for Boccia. The event is one of 11 scheduled for 2026 and will provide a critical opportunity for competitors to earn ranking points toward qualification for the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

"It is our great honor to welcome the global boccia community to Birmingham, Alabama," said Dan Williams, President & CEO of the Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau. "Hosting this important and impactful event reinforces Birmingham's reputation as a premier sports destination, and provides an incredible opportunity to showcase our city's signature

hospitality, world-class venues and vibrant culture. We're grateful for our partners at Lakeshore Foundation and for our shared commitment to the unifying spirit of sport—bringing people together across borders and abilities."

The competition places Birmingham alongside other major cities such as Ryad, Saudi Arabia, Montreal, Canada and Seoul, South Korea hosting Boccia competitions in 2026.

"We can't wait to welcome the world to Lakeshore and Birmingham in June 2026 as we continue to grow the sport, support our athletes, and advance the global Boccia community," said Kathy Brinker, High-performance consultant for Boccia United States.

Boccia, an adapted version of Bocce, became a Paralympic sport in 1984 and is one of only two Paralympic sports without a parallel Olympic counterpart. Originally designed for athletes with Cerebral Palsy, Boccia has become one of the fastest-growing Paralympic sports practiced in more than 50 countries worldwide.

The full list of 2026 World Boccia sanctioned events includes:

Ryad 2026 World Boccia Challenger, Saudi Arabia

Montreal 2026 World Boccia Cup, Canada

Birmingham 2026 World Boccia Challenger, USA

South American Para Games – Valledupar, Columbia

Povoa 2026 World Boccia Cup – Portugal

Astana 2026 World Boccia Cup, Kazakhstan

Poznan 2026 World Boccia Challenger, Poland

Seoul 2026 World Boccia Championships, Korea

Pilsen 2026 World Boccia Challenger, Czech Republic

Asian Para Games – Nagoya, Japan

Foz do Iguaçu 2026 World Boccia Cup, Brazil

For more information on Lakeshore Foundation and Boccia United States, visit

www.lakeshore.org. For information on travel to Birmingham, including world-class hotels and James Beard Award-winning dining, visit The Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau at www.inbirmingham.com.

About Lakeshore Foundation

With roots dating back to 1925, Lakeshore Foundation, a Birmingham, Ala. nonprofit organization, has emerged as a world leader in health promotion, research, fitness, recreation, sports, and advocacy for people with a disability, veterans, seniors and parasport activities. As a U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Training Site, Lakeshore is home to the Lakeshore National Adapted Sports Organization (LNASO) which serves as the National Governing Body for USA Wheelchair Rugby, US Para Powerlifting and Boccia United States. For more information on Lakeshore Foundation, visit www.lakeshore.org.

About the Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau (GBCVB) is the official tourism and marketing organization for Birmingham and Jefferson County. Established in 1969, the non-profit agency generates positive economic impact by positioning the Greater Birmingham Region as a premier destination for conventions, sporting events, and domestic and international leisure travel. Birmingham and its neighboring municipalities welcome more than 4.04 million visitors each year, generating \$2.57 billion in economic impact. Learn more at inbirmingham.com.

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