

Having a ball with bocce

Westhill High School's Brittany Longo lines up a shot as teammates Katie Mellon, left, and Annie Giannattasio hold their breath during a bocce tournament yesterday at Greenwich High School. See story, Page A7.

Keelin Daly/Staff photo



Westhill bocce squad hopes for better luck next time

Plans for a rematch with Greenwich club

By Hoa Nguyen
Staff Writer

GREENWICH — Members of Greenwich High School's Italian Club lined the sides of the gravel alleyway, pressing forward as if to will their team's large red bocce balls closer to a smaller white pallino ball.

"All right, Franco," Nabeel Kurji, 17, of Greenwich, yelled. "There you go, warm it up. Beautiful."

Frank Ceci, 17, of Greenwich, threw the ball, landing it close to the pallino, but the force of the landing knocked it farther away.

Despite the temporary setback in a game in which the goal is to

get as many bocce balls closer to the pallino than the other team's, the Greenwich team managed to stay ahead, beating visiting Westhill High School.

It was Greenwich High School's first bocce tournament. The team played two games, winning 11-2 in the first game and 11-4 in the second one.

Shouts of "good game, good game" rang out among the players as they shook hands. Italian music provided by a Greenwich student blared in the background.

Westhill doesn't have a bocce court of its own, so Italian Club members accepted Greenwich's invitation to play in the tournament, said Pier Magnifico, adviser to the Westhill club, whose

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John Agostino, Frank Ceci and Sal Di Blasi of the Greenwich High School Italian Club watch as Anthony Cantavero tosses a bocce ball in yesterday's tournament at Greenwich High School.

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members don't formally play as a group.

Yesterday's match won't be the last, he said.

"There's going to be a rematch when the weather gets better," Magnifico said.

The bocce court near the tennis courts at Greenwich High School was built in October, the

brainchild of John Agostino, 18, a senior at the school and president of its Italian Club.

He and fellow club member Kaylee Frano, a junior, helped organize the tournament.

After many delays, members scrambled to put together a team.

"We just threw the team together in a week," said club member Mike Parelli, 17.

After the tournament, team members each grabbed a piece of a large Italian flag and ran about the school, regaling in their win.

Members were coy about how they picked up their bocce skills.

"It comes natural," said 18-year-old Phil Catalano III, who also plays on the school's football team. "We're Italian."