

# Italianfest starts with bocce

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**NEWPORT** - Leaders from seven Northern Kentucky cities met on a bocce court in Newport on Wednesday to compete and kick off this year's Newport Italianfest.

Dayton Mayor Ken Rankle and City Administrator Dennis Redmond were the last ones standing on the bocce court at Pompilio's restaurant and won the third annual mayoral bocce tournament.

"I'm glad we didn't practice," Redmond said.

The tournament featured leaders from Covington, Newport, Ludlow, Bellevue, Dayton, Alexandria and Wilder.

"This was created as an opportunity for all cities to come together to create an interest in the region and the festival," said Newport City Commissioner and former Mayor Tom Guidugli. Guidugli and Newport Mayor Jerry Peluso failed to recapture the championship they won two years ago at the inaugural tournament. Bellevue Mayor Jack Meyer and City Administrator Keith Spoelker won last year.

Many played for the first time. Wilder City Administrator Terry Vance studied bocce videos online before the tournament.

"Apparently I didn't do enough," Vance said after losing his first match.

Bocce originated in Italy and involves throwing a small stone ball, then throwing larger stone balls as close as possible to the small stone.

Italianfest begins on Newport's riverfront at 5 tonight. It lasts through Sunday.