



## Bocce babe

San Francisco's Benji Tosi is breaking records in speed shooting—without a gun.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY  
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"I need a sponsor," says bocce superstar Benji Tosi, flashing a Wheaties-worthy smile. Only one problem: is bocce, the Italian version of lawn bowling, sexy enough to attract one? "People in the U.S. still think only old people play bocce," admits Tosi. "I'm a lone wolf." So for now, he's funding his bocce training with part-time modeling and valet gigs.

Since his first encounter with a brass ball four years ago at the city's Aquatic Park Bocce Ball Club, Tosi has twice represented America at the world championships, and at a recent competition in Tunisia he broke our national record in speed shooting—a bocce event on the run. Yet while Tosi was busy putting San Francisco on the global bocce map, our own bocce community was dwindling, and his club was in danger of being displaced by an extension of the streetcar railway. Tosi joined forces with club president Marco Cuneo to rescue the 50-year-old institution, and Tosi's plea at a hearing about the planned extension not only saved the club from possible extinction but helped garner support for a new clubhouse. Now that's what they call brass balls.

**\$0** 1 **100+** **7,000**

**AMOUNT**  
30-year-old Tosi has received in sponsorship.

**NUMBER OF CLUBS** in the United States showcasing "volo," the competitive form of bocce played with brass balls: San Francisco's Aquatic Park Bocce Ball Club on Beach Street.

**NUMBER OF CLUBS** in Torino, Italy, alone that feature volo.

**NUMBER OF YEARS** the sport of bocce has been in existence.