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Soccer Pre-Season Webinar

July 27, 2023

Today's Agenda

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- Welcome/Introductions
- Reminders
- Athlete Performance Training
- 2023 Sectional & State Events
- Training
- Rule Updates
- Questions



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PRE-SEASON REMINDERS

SEASONS AT A GLANCE



	SPRING	FALL	WINTER
Coach Site Registration	Nov. 1 - Dec. 1	April 1 - May 1	August 1 - Sept. 1
Athlete, Unified Partner, Volunteer Signup	Dec. 15 - Jan. 15	May 15 - June 15	Sept. 15 - Oct. 15
Season Length	March - June	August - November	December - March
Sports Offered	Athletics (Track & Field), Basketball, Equestrian, Golf, Gymnastics, Softball, Swimming, Tennis	Bocce, Bowling, Flag Football, Long Distance Running/Walking, Powerlifting, Soccer, Volleyball	Alpine Skiing, Bowling, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Snowboard, Snowshoe, Speed Skating

Access Sign Ups on the

- **SOPA website:**

[https://specialolympicspa.org/
get-involved/sports-sign-ups](https://specialolympicspa.org/get-involved/sports-sign-ups)

Sports Season Prep

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Important Fall Dates:

- Fall Season Calendar: [Central](#), [East](#), [West](#)
 - Since due dates are different for each Sectional, there is one calendar per section of the state.
- **REGISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES**: Who does what and when??
- Eligibility Deadline: August 25
- Season Dates: August – November

Air Quality – For Outside Training

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If air quality levels are in an Unhealthy Zone (151) or above, no outdoor activities should occur (social or active); as indicated within the documents these activities should be rescheduled or moved indoors.

You can monitor Air Quality levels at <https://www.airnow.gov/> enter your location and the current status will be provided.

You can use this [Air Quality Guide](#) document as an overall reference.

Athlete & Volunteer Requirements

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Athlete Requirements: Medical on file WITH signature + expiration dates

- **Local Programs:** Athlete Medical under Certifications
- **Regions:** Athlete Registration Form & Health History under Certifications
- Valid for 3 years.
- Save attachments under "Attachments" within a person's profile vs. anywhere else in the profile.

Class A Volunteer Requirements: Class A Trainings+ Background Check on file

- Background Results under Background Checks, Valid for 5 years.
- General Orientation under Training, Valid for life.
- Protective Behaviors, under Training, Valid for 3 years.
- Concussion Training, under Training, Valid for 3 years.

UCS: PIAA Medical

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A Unified Champion School athlete or Unified Partner may participate in a local program with their PIAA Medical. The participant must request a copy of the medical from their school.

The PIAA physical exam must be inputted into Vsys as an "athlete medical" and the medical form must be uploaded as an attachment.

The PIAA physical exam form is good for one year from the Dr's Signature date. If the date is 3/22/22 the exam expires on 3/22/23.

Attendance Tracker Updates

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Age Calculator (Team Grouping) **6/15/2023**

Eligibility Tab: Deadline identified **8/25/2023**

- Athlete Medical
- Volunteer: Background Check, Gen Orientation, Protective Behavior, Concussion Protocol

Sport Specific Rosters:

- To better identify Teams and allow for storing scores/assessments
- Team Age groups

Missing volunteer/athlete

- If No, ask to complete Sport Sign-up Form
- If Yes, contact RSD

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL SPORT DIRECTOR

Attendance Trackers

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Coach will receive tracker when they submit Site Registration Form

Site Attendance Tracker has 5 tabs: Directions, Attendance, Eligibility, Competition, Rating

- **Tab 1: Directions: How to complete the form**
- **Tab 2 Attendance:**
 - Lists all participants that have signed up
 - Includes phone, email, DOB and age
 - Attendance should be tracked after each practice
 - Interest in attending Sectionals & State Games will be used to advance for competitions
 - Data will be used to collect training numbers and ultimately future allocations

Attendance Trackers

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Tab 3: Eligibility – If participant is NOT eligible...they cannot participate

- Athletes: Must have current medical
- Volunteer: General Orientation, Concussion Protocol, Protective Behaviors, 18 and over current background check
- Highlighted **RED** out of date
- Highlighted **YELLOW** will expire prior to state competition
 - Updated weekly by SOPA
 - **IMPORTANT: Fall deadline August 25, 2023**

Tab 4: Competition – sport specific

- Tracker for athlete attendance, registration times for competitions
- Allows you to track everything in once place – ability to copy and paste from here into event Google registration forms

Tab 5: Player Competency Team Rating Form

- Allows you to enter your Team Rating forms that are used for competition

[SAMPLE TRACKER](#)

Unified Partners Eligibility

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NEW in 2023 – Unified Sports Partners do not need an athlete medicals.

- All Partners – Must have a VSys database record
- Ages 16 and up – must have General Orientation and Protective Behaviors Training
- Ages 18 and up - Must have General Orientation, Protective Behaviors and a Background check.

Athlete & Volunteer Eligibility

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- The ELIGIBILITY tab on each of your attendance trackers are updated on a weekly basis by your Regional Sports Director. **PLEASE encourage and assist your athletes and volunteers in meeting our eligibility requirements.**
- **The deadline to make sure athletes and volunteers meet eligibility requirements for the Fall is August 25th**
- In the roster, if you see **RED highlight**, that person is not in compliance with eligibility requirements to participate and should NOT be training.
- In the roster, if they are **yellow highlight**, they will expire during the season in advance of state games and will not be eligible unless they update the identified requirement.

Team Sport Age Groups

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Team Sport Age Groups will be effective starting with the Fall 2023 season.

SOPA sponsored Team Sports include:

- Fall Season: soccer, flag football, volleyball
- Winter Season: floor hockey;
- Spring Season: softball, basketball

[Team Sport Age Group Resource](#) outlines the guidelines.

- This document includes links to two supporting documents: [Why Age Groups are Important](#) and [Exemption Process](#).
- Please review all documents for a full understanding of the age groups and how to submit exemptions. This [video](#) will explain these documents and how to submit exemption in more detail.

If you have questions, please contact your Regional Sport Director or Michelle Boone (mboone@specialolympicspa.org).

Qualifiers

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MUST attend Sectional event to be considered for Fall Fest.

Games Advancement slots per Sectional will be dependent on total number of slots at Summer Games and % of interest in advancing from each Sectional

Qualifiers

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Fall

- LDR-W
- Powerlifting
- Bocce
- **Soccer: 5v5, 7v7, skills**
- Volleyball: Team and skills
- Flag Football Team and skills

- [Allocation Process](#)
- Allocations will be placed on the SOPA Website under Games & Competition then State & Sectional Events
- [State & Sectional Events](#)

Allocations

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- Fall Allocations can be found on the SOPA Website, State Games tab
 - [SOPA State Games Paperwork Webpage](#)
- As always, please remember that you can request additional allocations through the LOI process.
- Previous Lunch & Learn about the allocation process. This riveting presentation can be found here: [Allocation L&L](#)



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ATHLETE
PERFORMANCE
TRAINING

Athlete Performance Training

Coaches Introduction





What is Athlete Performance Training (APT)?



- Designed to elevate the fitness levels of athletes and improve their sports outcomes, Athlete Performance Training consists of a combination of coach-facilitated sports practices and at-home fitness programs.



- During practices, coaches will apply an approach that includes education, exertion and evaluation.
 - **Education:** Time is taken during each sports practice to discuss physical activity, nutrition, and hydration as a team.
 - **Exertion:** A practice plan is followed that engages athletes in physical activity throughout the entire practice.
 - **Evaluation:** Athletes' health and fitness metrics are collected at the start and end of the season.



- At home, athletes and their families/caregivers are provided a fitness program to complement the in-person practices.



Key Aspects of APT:

- A minimum of 8 weeks of training are required to fully complete APT.
- Any size team and any sport can participate.
- No paperwork is required by coaches. Health metrics of athletes are collected; however, they are recorded electronically on a Google sheet provided to you by SOPA.
- Health metrics: Height, weight and blood pressure can be collected from athlete's previous doctor visits.
- Fitness metrics: Determined by coaches setting up a modified Coopers Test for athletes to complete at the start and end of training.





Registering for APT:



- Coaches interested should visit the Online Portal to complete the necessary online training.
- The training can be found under the “**Training Schools, Webinar and More**” tab, labeled as “**Athlete Performance Training.**” You will only be able to access the training if you’ve taken your other required trainings (Concussion Training, General Orientation and Protective Behaviors).
- You will need to complete a short quiz after the training
- Once video and quiz are completed you will be directed to the registration form to sign up your team and request materials
- You will be contacted by SOPA, after with additional information regarding mailings of materials as well as a link to the Athlete Performance Training Tracking.

To find more information on APT visit the SOPA website under **More Than Sports**

Why Participate in APT?



- **Athletes are at greater risk for being obese, suffering from long term health conditions, and dying 20 years younger.**
- **Incorporate APT and provide tools for athletes to make changes to their health and fitness and lower their risk of these health disparities.**
- **APT will become the standard in trainings**





Coaches Training and Progression Plan

By implementing Athlete Performance Training for a minimum of 8 weeks during training AND completing the “Athlete Performance Training Tracking” at the start and end of the season, you are eligible for the **Bronze Level** specifically the Athlete Performance Training component of the Coaches Training and Progression Plan.

Questions?

Contact Healthy Communities

Coordinator, Charla Stein

cstein@specialolympicspa.org

610-630-9450 ext. 254

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COMPETITION

Fall Sectionals

Western Fall Sectional:

- Slippery Rock University
- September 24

Central Fall Sectional:

- Juniata College
- October 1

Eastern Fall Sectional

- DeSales University
- October 1



Fall Fest: Nov. 3 -5

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Villanova University

Important Dates:

- Reg Info: Will be out by 9/8
- LOI: Due 9/28
- Final Allocations: 9/29
- Rosters: Due 10/2
- Google links sent: 10/5
- Registration: Due 10/12
- Scratch/Activation: Due 10/26





TRAINING

Be Prepared for the Season!

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- Get everyone eligible
- Understand and be aware of Air Quality levels
- Keep a pulse on illness/disease outbreaks within your community – remind athletes not to attend training if they are sick and to practice healthy habits and good hygiene.
- Know your facilities Emergency Action Plan and Evacuation route
- Updated yourself on sport rules and work with assistant coaches on a seasonal plan – identify who will manage each task during practice. Recruit additional assistance if needed.

Job Description and Levels of Responsibility

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HEAD COACH:

- Certified in the sport
- Supervises all coaches and athletes
- Responsible for equipment, transportation, and lodging
- Develops **practice plans** and assigns duties to Assistant Coaches
- Check athlete medical and volunteer Class A
- Completes all required paperwork (competition, training numbers)

ASSISTANT COACH:

- Assist head coach/help supervise athletes (1:4)
- Performs duties assigned by head coach
- Assist in evaluating training
- Arrives on time for practice/stays throughout practice
- Assists with uniforms, collection of medicals and taking attendance

Full position descriptions for both head and assistant coaches can be found here: **SOPA Website on the Resources/Training**

<https://specialolympicspa.org/resources>

Athlete as Coach

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Do you have an athlete who would like to be a coach?

- SOPA will host seasonal training webinars to review the responsibilities and steps for any athletes who would like to be part of our Athletes as Coaches Program.
- The Fall training was held on July 11th.
- If you do have an athlete and you don't want to wait for the Winter Webinar – Here is the recording of the Fall Webinar -
<https://www.facebook.com/specialolympicspa/videos/1327389408157502?idorvanity=128859894386473>
- Athlete as Coach Request form to be completed by athletes who wish to apply to be trained as a coach: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WZC14Ssl1IsilbBO_93WDmsaQq9-wmK3/view

Coaching Requirements

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As of January 2021, Coach requirements for **training and competition:**

- **Team Sports:**
 - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per team
- Individual Sports and **Team Individual Skills:**
 - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per 25 athletes



Continuing Education Update

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Protective Behavior and Concussion Training has been removed from the list of approved courses for Continuing Education and from the Continuing Education Request form.

Effective February 1, 2023, these two courses will not be accepted for continuing education

There are plenty of Continuing Education options available on the [SOPA website](#).



Expired Sport Certifications

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- If your sport certification expired between 2020 and 2022 you have until December of 2023 to complete your continuing education course to update your certifications.
- As noted above - Protective Behaviors and Concussion training will not be accepted as of February 1, 2023.
- **This extension expires on December 31, 2023.**
- On January 1, 2024, you will need to retake the Sport that has not been updated.

Webinar Series



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- Every other month (Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct, Dec)
- Lunch & Learn - will be RECORDED and posted to SOPA website, on toolbar - Volunteer Resources, Trainings
- Entire listing and registrations links can also be found here:
<https://specialolympicspa.org/lunch-learn-webinar-series>
- Several qualify as continuing education

NEXT Lunch & Learn

August 9, 2023 – How To: Build Flexibility!

[August Lunch & Learn Registration](#)

Coaching Progression

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Certified Coach

- Class A volunteer with at least 1 sport certification



Bronze

- Adds: Athlete Performance Training activation, personal best performance goals, **Coaching Special Olympics Athletes** course



Silver

- Adds: Athlete goal setting, training minimum of 10 weeks, **Principles of Coaching** course, **Coaching Unified Sports**



Gold

- Adds: advanced sport skills course, training at least twice a week for minimum of 10 weeks, develop year-round training/wellness plan for athletes

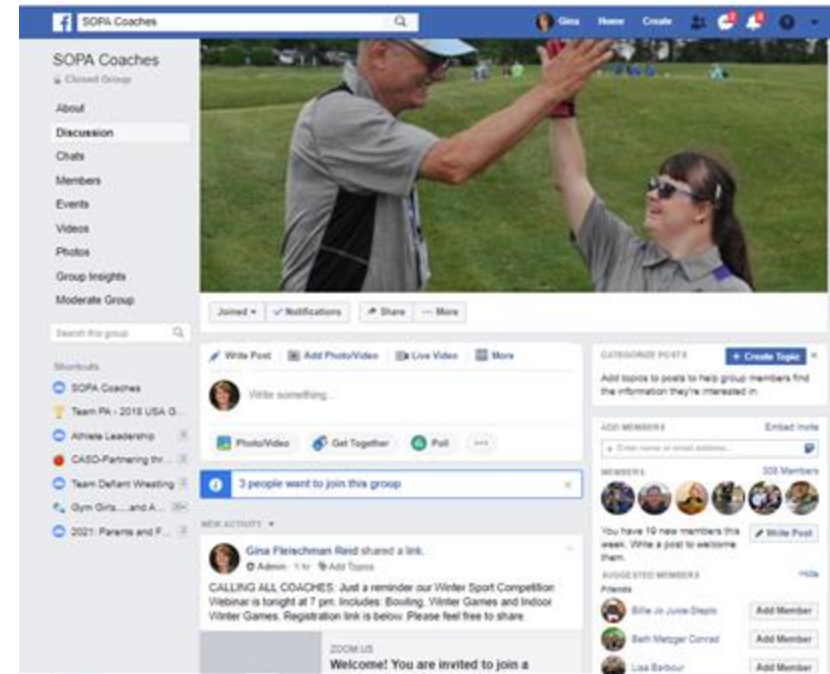
Improving Communication

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Closed Facebook Group for Coaches:

- 100% Optional
- Direct connection to coaches
- Share Competition Information/Reminders
- Share Training/Coaching Tips
- Encourage sharing of best practices between coaches
- Q&A
- [Coach Page](#)



☞ Which SOPA local program to you coach for?

☞ What sport/sports do you coach?



Soccer

Sport Management Team

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Technical Director: Henry Lawley

Interested in joining the Sport Management Team, let me know

Soccer Rules Book & Coaches Guide

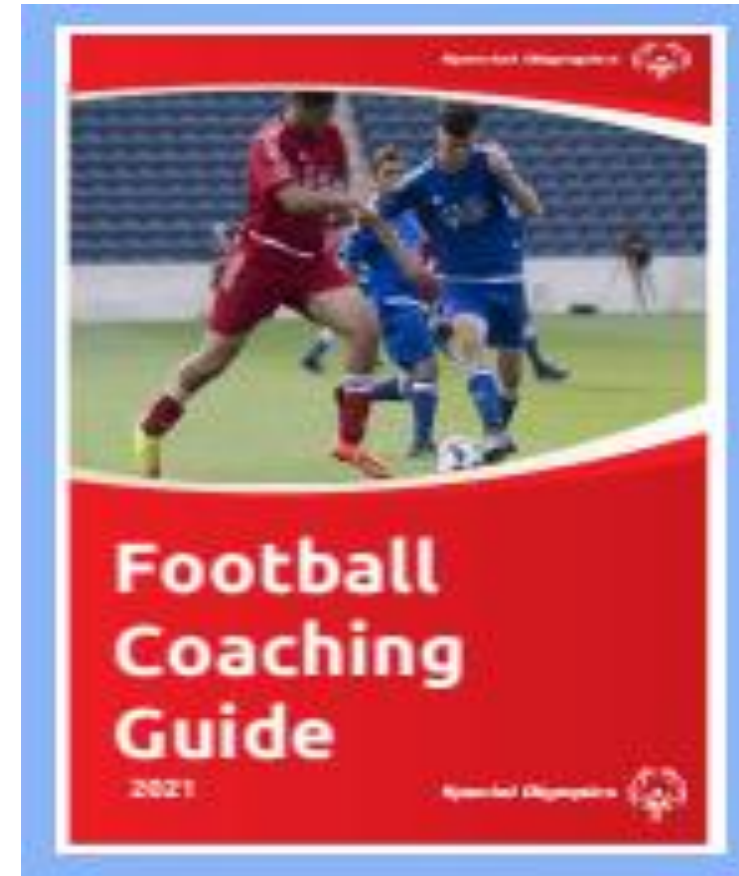
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Soccer Rules



Soccer Coaches Guide



SOPA Website - Sports Offered Page

- Links to all the sport pages
- Sports Offered

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Soccer Coaching Resources

- [Soccer Resources](#) – rules, coaching guides, fact sheets, etc.
- [Players Mimic Coaches Article](#)
- [11 Tips for Coaching Little Ones](#)

Soccer Individual Skills

- [Soccer Skills Prelim Scorecard](#)
- [Soccer Skills Final Scorecard](#)

Soccer Advanced Individual Skills

- [Advanced Skills Competition](#)
- [Advanced Individual Skills Prelims](#)
- [Advanced Soccer Skills Final Scorecard](#)

5-a-side and 7-a-side Soccer

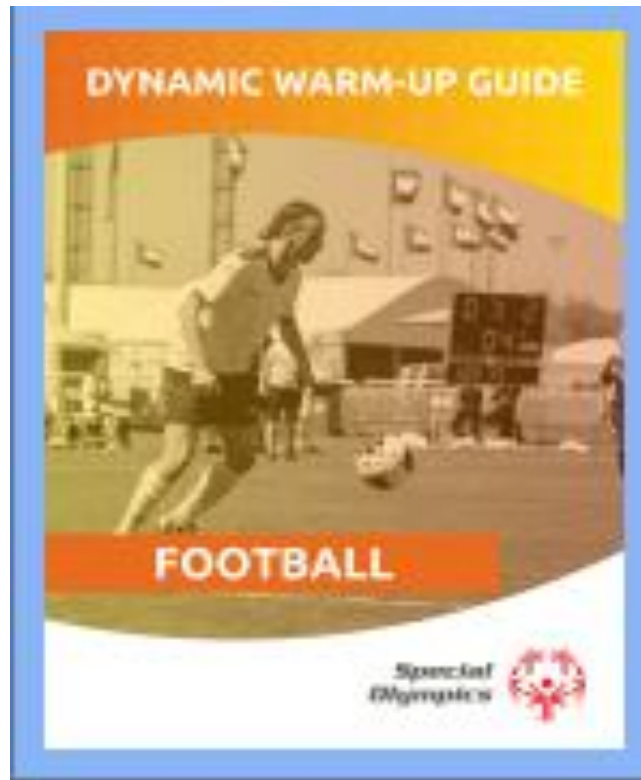
- [Soccer Team Competency Rating Form](#)
- [NEW Player Rating Explained \(Video\)](#)
- [Everybody Plays](#)
- [Soccer Score Sheet 5 and 7](#)

Warm-ups and Cool Downs

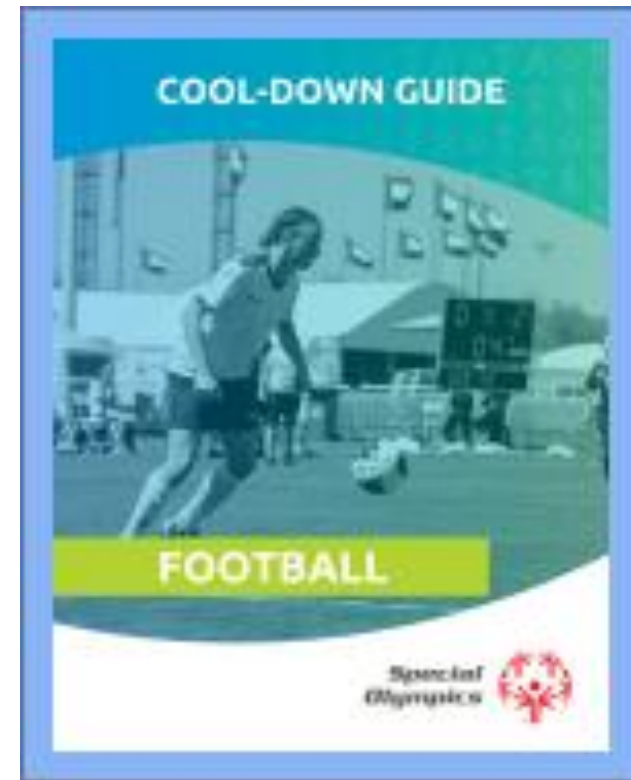
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Warm-Up Guide



Cool-Down Guide



Events Offered



- Individual Skills
- Advanced Individual Skills
- 5v5
- 7v7
- Unified 7vs7



Individual Skills

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- Dribbling
 - Shooting
 - Run & Kick
-
- Athletes must be dressed like your team members
 - Individual Skills athletes may not sit on team bench.








Advanced Individual Skills

- 12-meter Salom Dribble
 - Control and Pass
 - Gather, Dribble, Shoot
-
- Athletes must be dress like your team members
 - Individual Skills athletes may not sit on team bench.

Attire

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Equipment	Image	Description
Jersey		Must have identifiable player number on the back of the jersey. All team jerseys must be the same with exception of the goalkeeper jersey which must be distinguishable from all other players on the pitch.
Shorts		Shorts should be slightly above knee length to reduce the restriction of movement.
Socks/ Stockings		Socks/Stockings should reach the knee and cover the player's shinguards.
Footwear		Footwear will depend on the surface used. For grass or artificial turf – moulded studs/cleats are recommended. For indoor surfaces gum/rubber soles are recommended.
Shinguards		Must be worn by all players (incl. goalkeepers) on both legs, placed between the ankles and knees, and covered by socks/stockings. 46

Everybody Plays

- Everyone on the roster must play in each game and pre-limes



Everybody Plays

Article 1.03F of the Special Olympics General Rules States:

- *Special Olympics celebrates and strives to promote the spirit of sportsmanship and a love of participation in sports for its own sake. To that end, Special Olympics aims to provide every athlete with an opportunity to participate in training and competition events which challenge that athlete to his or her fullest potential, regardless of the athlete's level of ability. Special Olympics therefore requires that Special Olympics Games and Tournaments offer sports and events which are appropriate for athletes of all levels of ability, and in the case of team sports, provide every athlete with an opportunity to play in every game.*
- Special Olympics Pennsylvania supports Article 1.03F as the guiding principle for participation of athletes registered as members of a team for competition at any SOPA Sectional or State Competition. As such, each athlete on a team roster must be given an opportunity to play in every game for which their team is scheduled. Special Olympics Pennsylvania will not dictate the amount of time that each athlete must play during a game, but the goal is to provide a meaningful competition experience for every athlete on every team.
- The only exceptions to this requirement will be in cases of illness or injury, where an athlete is not physically able to play, or behavioral issues, where a coach chooses not to play an athlete in order to address inappropriate behaviors. In situations where an athlete will not be playing due to illness or injury or behavior issues, the athlete shall not dress in their competition uniform for the game and if appropriate supervision is available, will not be seated on the bench with the team for that game.
- If the illness or injury or the behavior issue is such that an incident report or misconduct report is completed this report should be provided to the programs HOD who should then forward to the Program Manager and if appropriate, a representative of the Games Organizing Committee (GOC) or a SOPA staff person. The coach should also be prepared to provide an explanation to the GOC or SOPA staff, if requested, as to the reason why an athlete is not dressed and playing in a particular game. As a reminder, athletes who do not participate in preliminary games may not participate in pool play or medal round games.

At Events:

- Teams must complete lineup cards, with numbers & names
- Bottom of the card – those who are not playing and why
- Scorekeeper will check the players as they enter the game
- Code of conduct will be filed on the coach if all players are not played

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Team Competency

Please enter the player's initials in the boxes below the point value that most closely matches their skill competency.

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Team Level		Level 1 - Novice					Level 2 - Intermediate					Level 3 - Advanced														
Player Competency Point Values		1					2					3					4					5				
Player Competency - Offense	Ball Skills	Has difficulty dribbling and trapping ball; possesses limited ball handling skills					Shows some ball handling skill, but can control ball with dominant foot only					Can control ball with both feet; average ball handling skills; can dribble in either direction with token pressure					Has ability to beat defender (while dribbling) regularly with dominant foot					Has ability to beat defender (while dribbling) regularly with either foot				
	Passing	Has difficulty completing a pass to a teammate; limited to making short passes only					Can only complete a pass to teammate after looking directly at him/her or with prompting					Has ability to choose best type of pass (to feet or to space) without prompting					Has ability to consistently complete a one touch or two touch pass to an open teammate					Controls game with ability and decision-making to complete a pass to open player when they are in good position				
	Shooting	Can periodically strike ball on goal from close range of 7 yards or less					Can make shots inside of close range and occasionally attempts a mid range shot of 8 to 12 yards					Can put mid range shots of 8 to 12 yards on goal with moderate pace					Can consistently make close and mid range shots and will attempt shots beyond 12 yards					Has excellent shooting form, can strike the ball with pace and makes shots from any range 15 yards and closer				

Team Roster Sizes

	Minimum Team Roster	Maximum Team Roster	On the Field - Minimum
5-a-Side	5 athletes	10 athletes	5 athletes (includes Goalie)
7-a-Side	7 athletes	12 athletes	7 athletes (included Goalie)
Unified 7-a-Side	4 athletes 3 partners	6 athletes 6 partners	4 athletes 3 partners



Playing Area

	Field Min	Field Max	Goal Size	Goal Area	Penalty Mark
5-A-Side	40M by 30M	50M by 35M	3M by 2M - Min 4M by 2M - Max	8M x 12 M	Min - 6M Max - 7M
7-A-Side & Unified	50M by 35M	70M by 50M	5M by 2M	8M by 20 M	7M



Team Play

- Size 5 ball
- Substitutions – Unlimited
- Over the sideline - Kick In
- Over the endline - Goal Clearance (goalkeeper throw) or Corner Kick
- Ball must be completely over the line to be considered out of play
- Free Kick – Opposing players must retire five meters from the ball

Game Time



	Duration of Game	Halftime	Overtime
5-A-Side	2 - 15 Minute Periods	5	2 - 5 Minute periods then Penalty kicks
7-A-Side & Unified	2 - 20 Minute periods	5	2 - 5 Minute periods then Penalty kicks



Outside Safety

Along with Air Quality checks make sure you check the following:

- ✓ Know the address of the location you are training at
- ✓ Remind athletes to have water bottles with them and have water coolers available for refills
- ✓ Walk the venue prior to practice to ensure there is no glass or trash on the fields
- ✓ If practicing outside: Sunscreen, bug spray, and ball caps!
- ✓ Predetermined safety zone! Where is it, make sure everyone is aware

Thunder & Lightning

- Every time you see lightning or hear thunder:

**Stop practice and
seek shelter for 30 minutes.**

**Remember this is every time you see
lightning or hear thunder**



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THANK YOU

