

Swimming

2023

Pre-season Webinar

Special Olympics
Pennsylvania



Today's Agenda



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



Reminders

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Spring Season Updates

- Coaches should begin training at least 10 weeks prior to the state culminating event.
 - 10 weeks from Summer Games: March 30
- Athletes must be trained according to the minimum standards acceptable, for at least eight (8) weeks in the appropriate sport and must have several opportunities to compete during that period.
 - Athlete Attendance will be tracked in the Attendance Tracker
 - Early Season practice, Team workouts indoors, Athlete Performance Training activities, virtual training, fitness training, team walk/run, etc.



Attendance Trackers

- Coach will receive tracker when they submit Site Registration Form
- Site Attendance Tracker has 3 tabs: Directions, Attendance, Eligibility
 - Tab 1: Directions: How to complete the form
 - Tab 2 Attendance:
 - Lists all participants that have signed up
 - Includes phone & Email
 - 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
 - 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 - Highlighted RED out of date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: Spring deadline March 1, 2023**
- [SAMPLE TRACKER](#)



Athlete & Volunteer Eligibility

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: Trainings + Background Check on file

- **Local Programs + Regions**
 - 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.**

Athlete & Volunteer Eligibility



- 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 spring is March 1.**
- 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.



Unified Sport Partners

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.



Google Registration

Google Registration Sheets are populated with the rosters in VSys for your spring competitors.

On the Coaches and Athletes tab, you will assign each role to their respective sport. That individual will then appear on the corresponding sport tab.

On the sport specific tab, you will add athletes' events and times.

❖ **Important:** Time entries should appear in the format **MM.SS.00**

❖ Example: **12.14.05** = 12 minutes 14 seconds and 5 hundredths of a second.

❖ Example: 00.15.08 = 15 seconds and 8 hundredths of a second

Google Registration Cont.



Athlete Tab

Alternate - Y/N	1:1 Name	Sport	Updates to Athlete Information	Interest in Summer Games Drawing	Vaccine received	Date of last dose	Dietary Restrictions
		Swimming ▾		Summer Gar ▾	▾		
		▾		▾	▾		
		▾		▾	▾		
		▾		▾	▾		

Sport Specific Tab

Event 1	Event 1 - Time	Personal Best - Time	Event 2	Event 2 - Time	Personal Best - Time	Event 3	Event 3 - Time	Personal Best - Time	Non Diving/Outer Lane
25 Yard Freestyle - Traditional ▾	12.05.05		25 Yard Backstroke - Tradition ▾	12.05.05		25 Yard Breaststroke - Traditic ▾	12.05.05		ND ▾
▾			▾			▾			▾
▾			▾			▾			▾
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Summary Seasonal Registration Responsibilities



Task	Responsible	Notes
Site Registration	Coach	Used to populate Attendance Trackers
Monitor Attendance Tracker	Coach	Update after <u>each</u> training session and add interest in attending competitions
VSys rosters	RSD/RED	Coaches no longer need to complete.
Letter of Intent	LP Manager/Team Leader	
Google Registration	HOD/Coach	Update athlete and coach information
Scratch & Activation and Score Updates	HOD/Coach	



Qualifiers

- Basketball (3v3, 5v5, individual skills)
- Golf (all levels including individual skills)
- Tennis (all levels including individual skills)
- Softball (team and individual skills)

MUST attend Sectional event to be considered for Summer Games Advancement slots per Sectional will be dependent on total number of slots at Summer Games and % of interest in advancing from each Sectional



Allocations

- Spring Allocations can be found on the SOPA Website, State Games tab
 - [SOPA State Games Paperwork Webpage](#)
- Fall Allocations will be posted by the end of this week.
- 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](#)



Athlete Performance Training

Coaches Introduction

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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



2023 Sectional & State Events

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Spring Sectionals



- West: Carnegie Mellon University
 - Saturday April 29th
- Central: Saint Francis University
 - Sunday, April 30th
 - Athletics will be held at Central Cambria HS
- East: Kutztown University
 - Saturday May 6th

[2023 Competition Calendar: Important Dates](#)

Summer Games: June 8 - 10th



- Penn State University
- Important Dates:
 - Reg Info: Will be out by **4/14**
 - LOI: Due **5/4**
 - Final Allocations: **5/5**
 - VSys Rosters: Due **5/8**
 - Google links sent: **5/9**
 - Registration: Due **5/18**
 - Scratch/Activation: Due **6/1**



Sport Director & Rule Updates

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Sport Directors



Alice Moat & Kathryn McKeone **Swimming Sports Directors**



New Rule Book!



<https://resources.specialolympics.org/sports-essentials/sports-and-coaching/swimming>





Updated Rules

Fundamental Events

15M Walk

15M Floatation

15M Kick Board

15M Assisted Swim

15M Unassisted Swim

25M Assisted Swim

25M Floatation

25M Kick Board





15M, 25M-Kick Board Rules

Event Start - The swimmer must be in the water with one hand placed touching the pool deck edge, or, with both hands holding the kick board with the swimmers back against the pool edge.

Race - Both hands should remain on the kick board at all times.

- The swimmer may swim in a Prone or Supine position.
- Arm stroking is not permissible.
- Standing on the bottom of the pool for the purpose of resting is permissible but no walking or jumping is permitted.



15M, 25M-Kick Board Rules

Finish—the finish will take place when the kick board touched the pool edge at the finish line, or when some part of the swimmer's body touches the pool edge at the finish point.

The swimmer must have one hand on the board at the finish.

Type of Kick Board permitted:

- Length – maximum length is 470 mm
- Width – maximum width is 330 mm
- Thickness – maximum thickness is 45 mm
- Material – A material that provides appropriate floatation



Honest Effort Rule (HER)

25%

HER does not include entry level events.
These are the 15M events along with the 25-kick
board, floatation, and assisted swim.

Coaches Guide



Table of Content Includes:



Basics of Swimming

Getting Started

In the Water

Learn to Swim Skills

Stroke Development

Drills

Planning a Swim Season

Example: Stroke Development –
Freestyle
Coming Up!

Stroke Development



Freestyle

Freestyle is regarded as the fastest of all competitive swim strokes and one of the first taught to the beginning swimmer. The stroke action involves the arms moving forward alternately with the legs kicking continuously throughout the stroke. The swimmer's body remains horizontal, streamlined and balanced in the water with the swimmer's head turning to one side to breathe after each full arm cycle. The teaching and development of the stroke can be achieved by breaking down the skill into its various components.

Stroke Coaching Points

Body Position

The body position is horizontal and streamlined in the water.

Key Points

- Horizontal with a slight slope down to hips. The waterline is between the eyebrows and hairline.
- Slight head adjustments change the position of the legs. If the head is held high out of the water, the legs will drop and if submerged, the legs will rise out of the water.
- Eyes look downward.
- Shoulders rotate into the stroke.

Leg Action

The freestyle leg action helps the body stay in the horizontal position and balances the arm action. It contributes to the propulsion within the stroke.

Note: A common fault is when a swimmer during the pull phase will cross over the centerline of their body, thus causing over-rotation.

Key Points

- Leg action starts at the hips.
- The legs work almost within the body depth. This creates the least resistance to forward motion.
- Alternating action is required.
- There is a slight bend in the knees.
- Ankles are relaxed to allow toes to point and give a natural in-toeing effect.
- The number of leg kicks may vary for each arm cycle.
- Usually there are six leg kicks in one arm cycle.

Arm Action

The continuous, alternating arm action is the strength within the stroke and enables constant propulsion.

Key Points – Entry

- Hand entry is fingertip first.
- Hand enters gently between the head and shoulder line with a slight bend in the arm.
- Hand then reaches forward under the surface. Note: this is a natural stretch, not overreaching.

Pull

After entering the water, the arms should perform a 3 sweep motion. With your elbow slightly bent, sweep forward, then back towards the centre of the body then out towards the thighs, imitating an hourglass shape.

Recovery

- This movement is relaxed and uses the momentum from the pull.
- Elbow will exit first and is kept higher than the hand.
- Hand passes as close to body as possible. Once the hand passes shoulder level, the arm will reach forwards to the entry position.

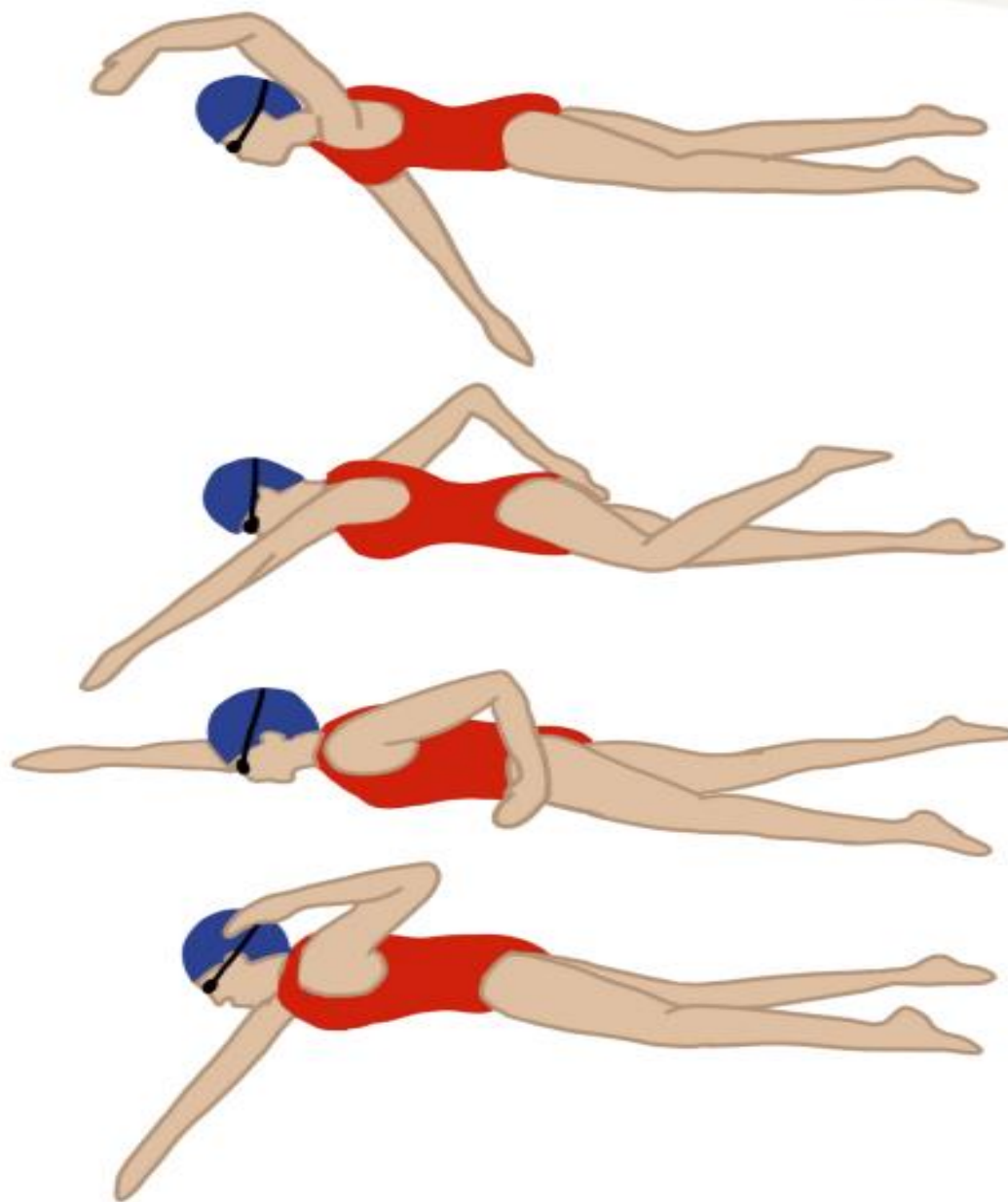
Breathing

Integrating a relaxed, side-breathing pattern is one of the most important elements of the freestyle stroke. It not only ensures the swimmer's body can provide adequate oxygen to the active muscles but also allows the swimmer to maintain an efficient body position.

- Head is turned smoothly (not lifted) in time with the natural roll of the body.
- The breath is taken when the breathing arm is completing the pull phase.
- The non-breathing arm enters the water when the breath is taken.
- Head is turned back to the center in a smooth action as soon as the breath is taken.
- The breath is released gradually.
- Breathing occurs every two arm pulls (one stroke cycle). This is called unilateral breathing. It may also be taken after every three arm pulls. This is called bilateral breathing.

Note: When teaching breathing in freestyle, it is recommended to start with the swimmer breathing to their preferred side.







Progressions

- Practice breathing to one side:
 - Holding onto edge
 - With Kickboard using kick action
 - With kickboard- introduce arm action/breathing
 - Full stroke (no kickboard) using catch up- breathing to side short distance – could use fins to assist stroke and breathing short distance
 - Full stroke with/without fins short distance then extend

Drills

- With fins- Right side lateral breathing every 6 kicks- swimmers right arm should be extended, left shoulder should be pointing to ceiling- left arm/hand should be placed on swimmers thigh, head relaxed and laying on extended right arm. Swimmer will do 6 kicks then gently place face in water with eyes looking to bottom of pool. Swimmers should be encouraged not to roll onto their front and the only movement (apart from the leg kick) will be moving the head from breathing to side to exhaling with face in.
- With fins- Left side lateral breathing every 6 kicks
- Same as above but the swimmer will have their left arm extended.

Training

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Be Prepared for the Season!



Instead of feeling like this...



...we want you to feel like this!

Athlete as 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.

All webinars will take place from 6-7 PM:

- **Tuesday, February 21st (Spring)** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91234567890>
- Tuesday, July 11th (Fall)- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91234567890>
- Tuesday, November 14th
(Winter) <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91234567890>

Team Leaders, Local Program, and SOPA staff are welcome to attend.

Coaching Requirements



- **As of January 2021, Coach requirements for **training and competition**:**
 - **Team Sports:**
 - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per team
 - **Individual Sport (and Skills):**
 - Must have at least one (1) certified coach per 25 athletes



Continuing Education Update



- **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**

Expired Sport Certifications



- 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.

Coaching Practicum Hours



- If a coach needs to complete hours from sport training courses, that were taken in 2019, 2020, 2021 they have until December 2023 to submit these hours.
- **Hours must be submitted on their VSys Portal.**



Get Certified!



SUMMER SPORTS

Associated Sports: Athletics, Basketball, Golf, Gymnastics, Equestrian, Softball, Swimming, and Tennis

- **All Trainings will be in-person.**
- **Training are currently being scheduled – watch the SOPA Website and Face book page for announcements**
- **All registration will be handled through the VSys Portal.**
- **Registration will close Thursday at 5:00pm prior to Saturday or Sunday trainings.**

Job Description and Levels of Responsibility



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>

Webinar Series



- **NEW** - 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

February 8, 2023, at 12:00 pm

Meaningful Participation – What is it? *

[Lunch & Learn - February 8th - Registration](#)

* This Lunch and Learn is a non-sport specific continuing ed. Credit will be given for all sports currently certified in.

Watch the SOPA Website for the date, time and title of April's Lunch & Learn

Coaching Progression



Certified Coach

- Class A volunteer with at least 1 sport certification

Bronze

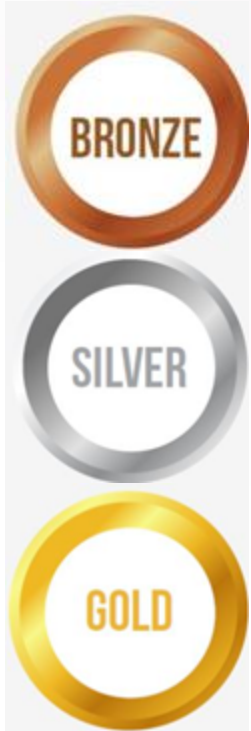
- Adds: Athlete Performance Training activation, personal best performance goals, **Coaching Special Olympics Athletes** course

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

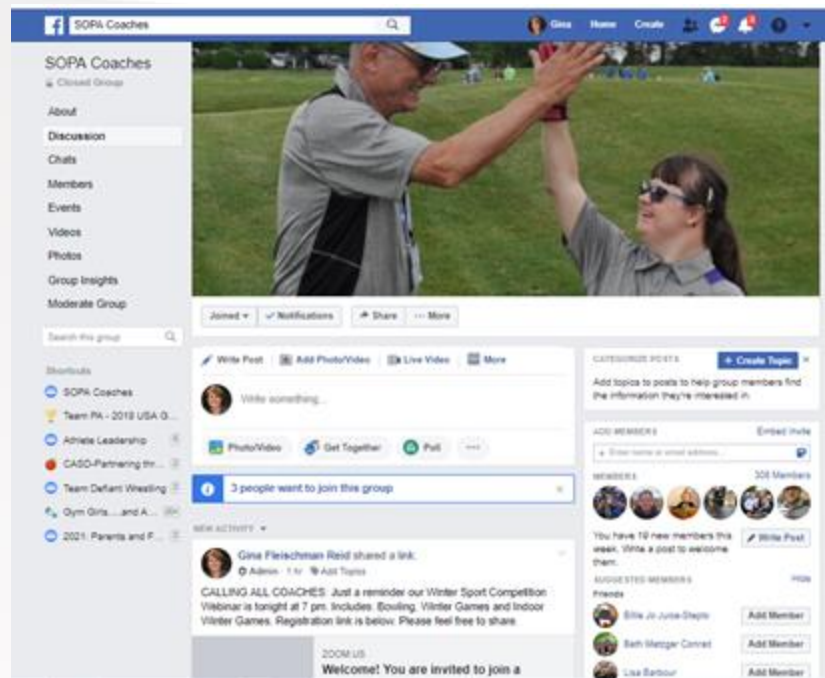


Improving Communication



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?

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

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