**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

# SOFTBALL

# PRE-SEASON
# WEBINAR

# Today's Agenda

- Pre-Season Reminders
- Softball Rules Update
- Training
- SOPA Softball Championship
- Questions

# Season at a Glance

**SEASONS AT A GLANCE**

| | FALL | WINTER | SPRING | SUMMER |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Training Site Registration** (see link below) | April 1 - May 1 | August 1 - Sept. 1 | Nov. 1 - Dec. 1 | March 1 - April 1 |
| **Athlete, Unified Partner, Volunteer Signup** | May 15 - July 15 | Sept. 15 - October 15 | Dec. 15 - March 1 | April 15 - May 15 |
| **Season Length** | August 9 - Nov. 3 | Nov. 1 - March 8 | March 14 - June 7 | June 1 - Sept. 15 |
| **Eligibility Deadline** | August 23 | December 20 | March 28 | June 20 |
| **Sports Offered** | Bocce, Bowling, Flag Football, Long Distance Running/Walking, Powerlifting, Soccer, Volleyball, Walking Clubs | Alpine Skiing, Bowling, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Snowboard, Snowshoe, Speed Skating, Walking Clubs | Athletics (Track & Field), Basketball, Equestrian, Gymnastics, Swimming, Tennis, Walking Clubs | Golf Softball, Walking Clubs |

**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

- **Sign-ups Athletes and Volunteers** - April 15
- After this deadline anyone interested in signing-up must contact the Regional Sport Director.
  - Season officially begins June 1
  - Seasonal Eligibility/Age Group Exemption deadline – June 20
- Summer Sports Calendar

# Athlete Eligibility

**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

**Athlete Requirements:** Medical Form on file

- We will continue to use the existing "Medical Form."
- Athletes will have the option to submit the form with or without a doctor's signature.
- However, there will still be specific health conditions requiring a doctor's signature from Special Olympics Pennsylvania.

**What to expect in the coming weeks:**

- We will be updating the medical form on our website to clearly indicate which health conditions require a doctor's signature.
- The Regional Administrative Managers will directly inform athletes and families participating in spring/summer sports who don't currently have a medical form on file.

**Coaches are to use the trackers to ensure athletes and volunteers have completed their eligibility requirements.**

# Volunteer Eligibility

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

- Background Results under Background Checks, Valid for 5 years (18+ volunteers).
- General Orientation under Training, Valid for life (16+ volunteers).
- Protective Behaviors, under Training, Valid for 3 years (16+ volunteers).
- Concussion Training, under Training, Valid for 3 years (16+ volunteers).

**Coaches are to use the trackers to ensure athletes and volunteers have completed their eligibility requirements.**

# Volunteer Eligibility: Volunteer Classifications

**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

## Volunteers who CANNOT supervise athletes and volunteers:

- **Unified Partner:** Volunteer that is 8-years-old and older who trains and competes alongside an athlete. **(*Class A*)**
- **General Volunteer:** Volunteer who assist **only** at local training site and has limited contact with athletes and only under the supervision of coaches. General Volunteers **do not** supervise, chaperone, or travel with the team to any competitions. **(Class B)**

## Head Coaches are expected to enforce these classifications.

# Volunteer Eligibility: Volunteer Classifications

**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

**Coach:** Head or Assistant coach creates, organizes, and runs a comprehensive sport training program that enables athletes to build sport specific skills. _**(Class A) (Must be 16 & Older for Assistant Coach; 18+ for Head Coach)**_

**Chaperone/Training Site Volunteer:** Volunteer who supports a training site/team to cover the 1:4 ratio. Chaperones do not always help with sports training but may support a sport team through supervision and administrative support. _**(Class A)**_ _**(Must be 16 & Older)**_

## Head Coaches are expected to enforce these classifications.

# New: Certified Coach Thank-you boxes

We are pleased to announce that we will begin to send a thank you box to volunteers who complete or renew a coach certification!

- If you recently renewed your certification, don't worry! We hope to get a box to all existing certified coaches by 2026.
- Volunteers who are certified in multiple sports will receive just one box.

We hope that you find the items useful in your coaching. Questions? Reach out to us at volunteer@specialolympicspa.org.

# In-Season Communication

## SOPA Communication

- SOPA has recently begun a new communication plan, here is what you can expect:
  - All seasonal participants will get a Welcome to the Summer Season
  - After season start date, Bi-weekly communications will go out on regional level to ALL coaches with important deadlines, dates, updates and more
  - All participants who qualify for a statewide competition event will get a "Welcome to Softball Championship" email which will highlight important updates and features for the games
  - Text Messaging – SOPA will be utilizing Text Message notifications at all Statewide competition events and to promote sports sign ups; please don't unsubscribe and add this number to your contacts: **1-267-341-0663**

## Head Coach Communication Reminders

- Please be sure that you are communicating with all your assistant coaches going into the season and during – *especially any new coaches!*

- Please be sure that you are using the most to up to date contact information for your athletes and their guardians, this can be found in the trackers

# New Portal
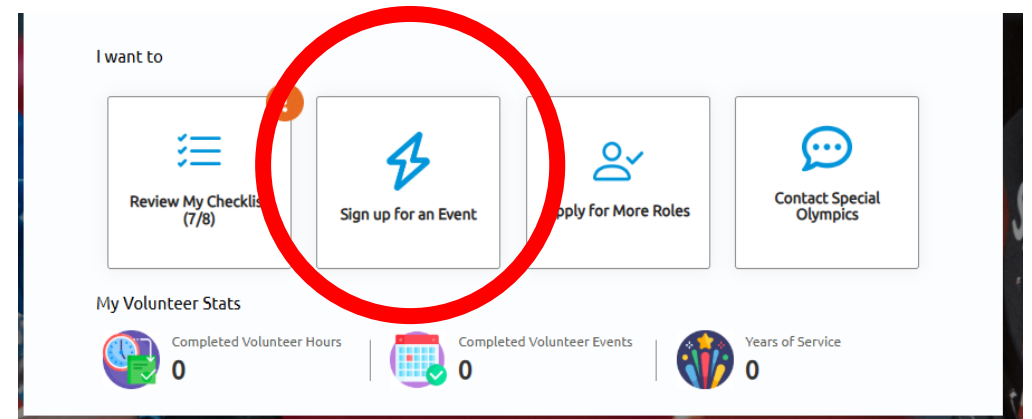
- Volunteers can log into our new [Online Portal](portals.specialolympics.org) (portals.specialolympics.org) to check and update their eligibility requirements.

- Any volunteer who has not logged into the new portal and needs support with claiming their profile can reach out to us at [portalsupport@specialolympicspa.org](portalsupport@specialolympicspa.org).

- **New volunteers**: When a new volunteer registers in the portal, they will need to click on "Apply For More Roles" to sign up for the role of their choice (coach, chaperone, Unified Partner, etc.).
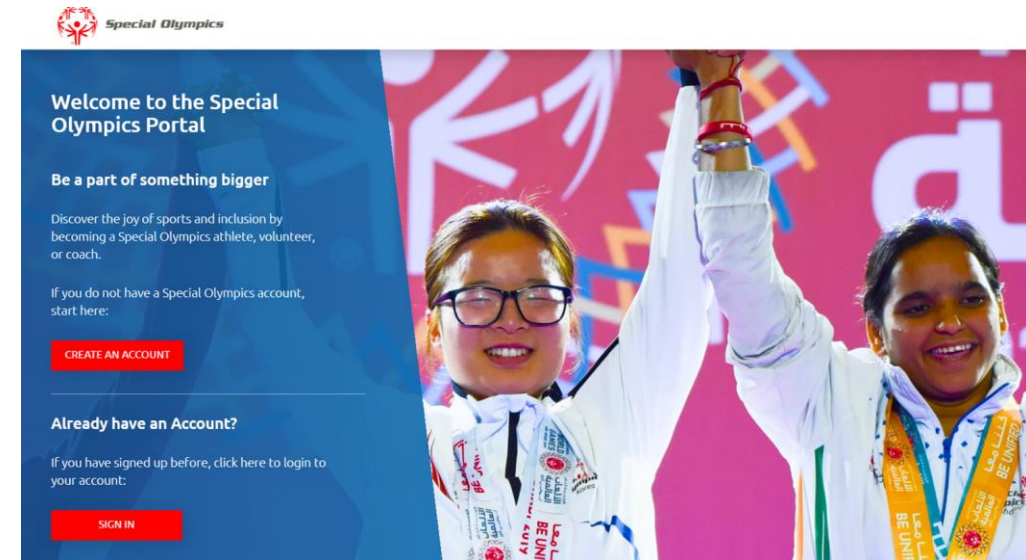
# Portal = Coach Training Schools

- From Portal home screen - Sign up for event – Training School Registration
- In-person Training Schools will need to be scheduled for Softball
  - **May 17th Softball coach training at In the Net will result in a certification certificate or continuing education**
- Please contact your Regional Sports Direction ASAP if you need an in-person training scheduled in your Region

# Tracker Updates

**TRACKER**- is now the ONE place to manage your team: Attendance, eligibility and event registration.

**Every individual that signed-up for your training site via the Sign-Up form will appear on your Tracker. If you don't already have your Softball Tracker, please contact your RSD. The Trackers will be locked for editing until end of sign-up period on May 15th. After that time you are able to populate the sport specific data columns.**

**TABS:**

**Instruction:**
- Explains what is contained on each tab and what needs to be completed by the coach during the season.
- Includes total people count and verifies 1:4 ratio is being met.

- **Athlete/Volunteer:**
  - View Sign-ups, pull contact information, check eligibility
  - Actions to take here - complete LOI, track attendance

- **Sport Specific Roster:**
  - Manage roster, track athlete data throughout the season
  - Actions to take here: assign roles for events, enter sport specific data required for events

- **Rating Form (Team Sports):**
  - We have added a roster to this page, please complete along with jersey number
  - Enter player initials into appropriate box under each evaluation category.
  **APT Tracker**

# Tracker (Tab 1) - Instruction Tab

**Training Site Info and Data**

| ROSTER STATUS | ACTIVE ▼ | | Team Name | | | Training Site | | | | Sport | SOFTBALL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Traditional/Unified | ▼ | | Training Site Lead Name | | | Email | | | | Cell Phone | |
| Meets 4:1 Ratio | YES | | # Athletes | 1 | | # Unified Partners (Class A) | 10 | | # General Volunteer | 0 | |
| | | | # Coaches (Class A) | 17 | | # Chaperone/Training Site Volunteers (Class | 4 | | # Certified Coaches | 0 | |

## TRACKER COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS:
### Attendance & Competition Event Registration

*Special Olympics Pennsylvania*

**TRACKER:**
This tracker is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** and the **ONE** place the Head/Assistant Coach/Site Coordinator will enter all KEY information for the season for each training site participant. Event Letter of Intent (LOI) and registration will now be pulled directly from this form.

**POPULATING YOUR TRACKER:**
Participants will automatically populate to your tracker when a SIGN UP form is completed for your site. Athletes and volunteers **MUST** complete the online sign up form. The participant data (**Columns C - L**) are **locked and cannot be modified**. If you need someone removed from your roster or something is incorrect, you must reach out to your Regional Sport Director - they will be happy to update the form.

**ATHLETE/VOLUNTEER TAB:**   *Columns C - L will populate automatically from the SIGN-UP Responses:*

**WAITING LIST:** *(Column A)* - If your training site should become full to compacity while sign-ups are still open, we ask that you utilize this column to number the athletes in the order in which they are waitlisted. (i.e 1, 2, 3 etc.) You should only use this for waitlisted athletes.

**CERTIFIED COACH:** *(Column B)* - You will find 4 drop down options within this column. Please select one of the following drop down options for all coaches at your training site/team(s). YES, NO, Not Sure, or No, not certified but would like to be. This will help us to gauge the need and interest in hosting local Coaches Sport Certification Trainings within your sport. **As a reminder there must be 1 certified coach per team or per 25 athletes for individual sports.**

**ELIGIBILITY:** *(Column K)* will indicate Eligibility for participation as an athlete, unified, coach or volunteer.
   * **RED** - indicates that an athlete, assistant/head coach is either missing or has an expired **Required** item(s), these are listed in **Column L** and are **INELIGIBLE** to participate until required missing or expired item(s) are up to date. Your Regional Administrative Manager (RAM) will update Eligibility every Monday until the Seasonal Eligibility deadline.
   * **YELLOW** - indicates that the a participants has a Required item(s) that will expiring during the current season. These Required item(s) **(listed in Column L)** **MUST** be renewed in advance of expiration date in order to remain eligible to participate as an athlete, unified partner, coach or supervise athletes within 1:4
   * **ORANGE** - this person is considered a General Volunteer (Class B) and **CANNOT** supervise athletes within 1:4
   * **GREEN** - This indicates the participant has met all Requirements and is eligible to participate as an athlete, unified partner, assistant coach or head coach.

**LOI DATA:** *(Columns M and N)* will collect interest so that Team Leaders(formely known as Managers) can complete the Letter of Intent data for Local, Invitationals, Regionals, Sectionals and State Games events. If athletes are interested in going to events it should be indicated with an "X" by the deadline listed. **After this time people cannot be added.**

**ATTENDANCE** At the completion of your season you will need to complete **Column P**, noting if the athlete/Unified Partner has participated in 8 or more weeks of training. This is required by Special Olympics International as part of our

# Tracker - Instruction Tab – APT instructions

<table>
<tr><td colspan="1" align="center">**TRACKER COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS:**<br>Athlete Performance Training</td></tr>
</table>

**Below are the instructions on how collect and report your athletes health and fitness metrics if your team is participating in Athlete Performance Training. See tab labelled 'AF Tracker'. For more information on Athlete Performance Training and to sign up, visit https://specialolympicspa.org/apt.**

Reporting Instruction includes:
· Instructions for data collection
· Instructions for data reporting

Key includes:
· Color- coded key to indicate ranges that athlete data falls into for: 6 Minute Run/Walk, BMI, and Blood Pressure (OPTIONAL)

Final Pre & Post Data Collection includes:
· Report athlete information
· **Athlete Number:** Automatically filled
· **First Name:** Enter athletes first name
· **Last Name:** Enter athletes last name
· **Age:** Enter athletes age in years
· **Gender:** Enter athletes gender, M for male, F for female
· **Height:** Enter the height in inches (i.e. a 5 foot 6 inch tall athletes= 65 inches)
· **Weight:** Enter weight in pounds
· **Systolic Blood Pressure (OPTIONAL):** Enter the systolic bp number (top number)
· **Diastolic Blood Pressure (OPTIONAL):** Enter the diastolic bp number (bottom number)
· **6 Minute Run/Walk:** Enter the 6 Minute run/walk test score
·**BMI:** Automatically calculated (based on the height and weight)
·**Nutrition:** Enter the athletes answer from the nutrition question from the lifestyle survey
·**Hydration:** Enter the athletes answer from the hydration question from the lifestyle survey
·**Physical Activity:** Enter the athletes answer from the physical activity question from the lifestyle survey
· Compare pre and post data using color coded key

INSTRUCTIONS | Athletes / Volunteers Attendance ▾ | Alpine Roster (Event Registration) ▾ | APT Tracker ▾

# Tracker (Tab 2) - Athlete/Volunteer Tab Eligibility, LOI, Attendance

Eligibility  - Red
Event Interest - Yellow
Attendance – Blue

A, B, C are frozen and will remain as you scroll over

| WAITING LIST | Coaches Certification | WAITING LIST (Column A) - If you have a waitlist, please be sure to utilize column A to number your athletes in the order in which they are waitlisted. (i.e 1, 2, 3 etc. You should only use this for waitlisted athletes. | | | PARTICIPANT TYPE EXPLAINED  ATHLETE:  Must have valid SO Medical Form to participate in training & competition  UNIFIED PARTNER: (Class A)  COACH: (Class A)  CHAPERONE/TRAINING SITE VOLUNTEER: (Class A)  GENERAL VOLUNTEER: (Class B) | | | | | AGE EXEMPTION REQUEST FORM | ELIGIBILITY:  GREEN – Eligible to participate and all requirements have been met.  YELLOW – Expiring Requirements (See Column J) These item(s) must be renewed | BC - Background Clearances  GO - General Orientation  PB - Protective Behavior  CT - Concussion Training  Expired Medical Form | Interest in Attending Local/ Invitational | Interested in Attending SOPA Softball Championship |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Please Indicate order of waitlisted athletes ONLY! (1,2,3etc) | Please be sure to indicate if Coaches at your site are certified in this sport. | PARTICIPANT TYPE | FIRST NAME | LAST NAME | GENDER | DOB | AGE | EMAIL | PHONE # | In advance of expiration date in order to remain eligible to participate, coach or supervise athletes within 1:4  RED = INELIGIBLE unitl required missing or expired items are met. (See Column J)  ORANGE = General Vol CANNOT supervise athletes within 1:4 | REQUIRED  Missing or Expired Items | DEADLINE:  (Mark with X) | DEADLINE:  (Mark with X) |
| | | Athlete | Patrick | Bonilla-Garcia | Male | 2/20/2008 | 17 | drbrjg@gmail.com | 215-802-8336 | Eligible - Can Participate | | | |
| | | Athlete | John | Brzezicki | Male | 2/4/2007 | 18 | brzez@comcast.net | 267-772-1843 | Eligible - Can Participate | | | |

Specific Column instructions can be found in first 2 rows

| K | L | M | N | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ELIGIBILITY:  GREEN – Eligible to participate and all requirements have been met.  YELLOW – Expiring Requirements (See Column J) These item(s) must be renewed | BC - Background Clearances  GO - General Orientation  PB - Protective Behavior  CT - Concussion Training  Expired Medical Form | Interest in Attending Local/ Invitational | Interested in Attending SOPA Softball Championship | At end of the season Head Coach will need to mark which athletes have and have not attended 8 weeks of practice.  Attendance tracking is required and MUST be tracked here.  Please list practice dates in the boxes below and mark attendance with an "X" in each box | | | | | | | | | | |
| In advance of expiration date in order to remain eligible to participate, coach or supervise athletes within 1:4  RED = INELIGIBLE unitl required missing or expired items are met. (See Column J)  ORANGE = General Vol CANNOT supervise athletes within 1:4 | REQUIRED  Missing or Expired Items | DEADLINE:  (Mark with X) | DEADLINE:  (Mark with X) | Athlete Trained for 8 weeks | 10/ | 10/ | 10/ | | | | | | | |
| Eligible - Can Participate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Eligible - Can Participate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Eligible - Can Participate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

RSDs will sort alphabetically, if you would like a specific sort just ASK them!

# Tracker - Athlete/Volunteer Tab (cont) Eligibility

- The ELIGIBILITY tab on each of your attendance trackers will be updated on a weekly basis from April15- June 20 by your Regional Team. **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 Summer season is June 20**

- Athletes and Volunteer CANNOT participate in trainings if they have not met all eligibility requirements - it is **<u>YOUR</u>** responsibility to track this.

# Tracker - Athlete/Volunteer Tab (cont)

| Interest in Attending Local/ Invitational | Interested in Attending SOPA Softball Championship | At end of the season H Attendance tracking is Please list practice dat | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DEADLINE: | DEADLINE: | Athlete Trained for 8 weeks | 10/ |
| (Mark with X) | (Mark with X) | | |

Here is where you will complete your INTENT to participate in an event – indicating with an "X" for both athletes and volunteers

- LOIs will be collected in the same way these always have, this is just a place for you to keep track of who is interested in attending events.

- LOI request will come from your Regional team or Program Leadership

# Tracker - Athlete/Volunteer Tab (cont) Attendance

At end of the season Head Coach will need to mark which athletes have and have not attended 8 weeks of practice.
**Attendance tracking is required and MUST be tracked here.**
Please list practice dates in the boxes below and mark attendance with an "X" in each box

| Athlete Trained for 8 weeks | 10/ | 10/ | 10/ | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

Please list practice dates in the boxes below

| Athlete Trained for 8 weeks | 10/ | 10/ | 10/ |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| YES | | | |
| NO | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Tracking attendance is required BUT tracking attendance week by week in this document is not required; this can be a good tool to keep everything in one place.

**At the end of the season the Head Coach must be able to come back into this document and for every athlete/UP indicate if they attended training for the minimum of 8 weeks.**

# Tracker (Tab 3) - SPORT Roster Tab
# Event Commitment and Registration

| INSTRUCTIONS: | PARTICIPANT TYPE EXPLAINED | | EVENT ROSTER | | EVENT REGISTRATION | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **STEP 1:** Complete Yellow Box - **Event Roster** for each event by selecting role for each individual.<br><br>**STEP 2:** Complete Blue boxes - **Event Registration** - Team Players only enter team level & team name. *Indvidual Skills* - Select skills level and enter total score. | **Athlete:** Must have a valid SO Medical Form to participate in training & competition<br>**Unified Partner:** (Class A)<br>**Coach:** (Class A)<br>**Chaperone/Training Site Vol:** (Class A)<br>**General Volunteer:** (Class B) | | Local or Invitational<br><br>DEADLINE: | SOPA SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP<br><br>DEADLINE: | **SOFTBALL - TEAM**<br>Select Type of team for each athlete & coach<br>**TEAM NAME:** Each Team should have a unique name that begins with the County/School<br>(i.e. Berks Lions, Delco Cats)<br>**EVENT REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**<br>XX/XX/XX | | **SOFTBALL INDIVIDUAL SKILLS**<br><br>Select Skill Level & Update all scores by<br>**EVENT REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**<br>XX/XX/XX | | RSD'S INTERNAL USE |
| **Participant Type:**<br>Athlete, Unified Partner, Head Coach, Assistant Coach, General Volunteer | FIRST NAME | LAST NAME | T-SHIRT SIZE | GENDER | DOB | AGE | **Attending Local Event - MARK Role** | **Attending SG - MARK Role** | **Team Athletes & Coaches** Select level | **Team Name** | **Individual Skills** Select Level | **Individual Skills Total Score** | **COACH CERTIFIED IN THIS SPORT?** |
| Athlete | Patrick | Bonilla-Garcia | Adult XL | Male | 2/20/2008 | 17 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | | ▼ | | |
| Athlete | John | Brzezicki | Youth Large | Male | 2/4/2007 | 18 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | | ▼ | | |
| Athlete | Destiny | Moore | Adult 3XL | Female | 9/16/1998 | 28 | ▼ | ▼ | ▼ | | ▼ | | |

Event Commitment and Role          Event – Sport specific Registration

# Tracker - SPORT Roster Tab (cont)
# Event Commitment



Select role for each individual attending the event (can not exceed the total # of your final allocations)

Once a selection is made you can pull down on the blue circle in lower right corner to copy that selection to cells below.

# Tracker - SPORT Roster Tab
# Event Registration

| EVENT REGISTRATION | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **SOFTBALL - TEAM**<br>Select Type of team for each athlete & coach<br>**TEAM NAME:** Each Team should have a unique name that begins with the County/School<br>(i.e. Berks Lions, Delco Cats)<br>**EVENT REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**<br>XX/XX/XX | | **SOFTBALL<br>INDIVIDUAL SKILLS**<br><br>Select Skill Level & Update all scores by<br><br>**EVENT REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**<br>XX/XX/XX | |
| **Team Athletes & Coaches**<br>Select level | **Team Name** | **Individual Skills**<br>Select Level | **Individual Skills Total Score** |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |

| **SOFTBALL - TEAM**<br>Select Type of team for each athlete & coach<br>**TEAM NAME:** Each Team should have a unique name that begins with the County/School<br>(i.e. Berks Lions, Delco Cats)<br>**EVENT REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**<br>XX/XX/XX | | **SOFTBALL<br>INDIVIDUAL SKILLS**<br><br>Select Skill Level & Update all scores by<br><br>**EVENT REGISTRATION DEADLINE:**<br>XX/XX/XX | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Team Athletes & Coaches**<br>Select level | **Team Name** | **Individual Skills**<br>Select Level | **Individual Skills Total Score** |
| Traditional ⌄ | Bucks Panther | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | Ind Skills ⌄ | 23 |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |
| ⌄ | | ⌄ | |

# Tracker - Team Sport – Rating Form Tab

- DUE with REGISTRATION

## SOFTBALL - TEAM RATING FORM

### TEAM RATING FORM / ROSTER - *Must Complete 1 Form per Team*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DELEGATION: | GPR - Bucks | TEAM NAME: | Panthers |
| HEAD COACH: | Katie Detweiler | TEAM UNIFORM COLORS: | |
| CELL PHONE: | 301-367-5115 | (Use drop down) EVENT TYPE: | ▼ |
| EMAIL: | CoachKatieSO@gmail.com | (Use drop down) Team Age Group: | ▼ |

**Rate Your Team's Level:** Developing (lowest div); Low (lower divisions); Average (middle divisions); High (top division ▼

Please list all Team Players and their Jersey #'s ----->

START WITH YOUR TOP 6 PLAYERS!
(Your best player in #1, second best player in #2 etc.)

| | Athlete's First & Last Name | A - Athlete UP - Partner | Jersey # | | Athlete's First & Last Name | A - Athlete UP - Partner | Jersey # | | ALTERNATE ATHLETES | A - Athlete UP - Partner | Jersey # |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | 9 | | | | ALT 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | | 10 | | | | ALT 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | | 11 | | | | ALT 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | | 12 | | | | ALT 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | | 13 | | | | ALT 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | | 14 | | | | ALT 5 | | | |
| 7 | | | | 15 | | | | ALT 6 | | | |
| 8 | | | | 16 | | | | ALT 7 | | | |

Please note sections below that will ask a series of sport-specific competency questions for each player on the team. The objective is for the evaluator to provide a point value rating for each of the players on the team based upon the listed competency. For some competencies, a player may not exactly meet the competency and/or be rated in between two competencies; therefore, please indicate the competency rating that would most closely be aligned to the player. Please enter the player's initials in the boxes below the point value that most closely matches their skill competency. For the three Levels shown across the top, these correspond to the Team Level information that was previously provided. All information will be input into SmartSheets to produce an overall team report.

| PITCHERS & CATCHERS | PLEASE ONLY ENTER DATA IN THE FIELDS BELOW FOR THOSE PERSONS THAT PLAY THESE POSITIONS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Team Level** | Level 1 - Novice | | Level 2 - Intermediate | Level 3 - Advanced | |
| **Player Competency Point Values** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **Fielding** | Occasionally makes basic fielding plays on balls hit to them; slow reaction to balls hit away from them; rarely tracks hit balls | Cleanly fields some balls hit to them; attempts to field balls hit in their direction; slow to track hit balls | Regularly fields balls hit to them and occasionally fields/plays balls hit away from them; understand the principle of "backing up" other players, but is inconsistent in doing so; able to track hit balls | Can field balls consistently and will occasionally field balls requiring quick reflexes and more rapid tracking; capable of backing up other players regularly | Routinely makes fielding plays, including those that are more difficult and require quick reflexes and tracking; instinctively backs up other fielders |
| | | | | | |
| | Displays limited throwing ability and mechanics; has difficulty throwing ball for any distance and accuracy | Has below average throwing ability and mechanics; can throw with accuracy for shorter distances; capable of throwing the ball for medium distances | Average throwing ability and mechanics; can throw with accuracy for shorter and medium distance; can throw for longer distances with less accuracy; | Above average throwing ability and mechanics; regularly and accurately makes shorter and medium distance throws and some longer distance throws; | Excellent throwing ability and mechanics; can throw the ball for accuracy and distance from any position/place on the field; can throw with accuracy |

Defense

Make sure to complete top section

# Tracker (Last tab) - APT Data Collection Form

| | Key | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Blood Pressure Key**
| Normal |
| Elevated |
| High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1 |
| High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2 |
| Hypertensive Crisis |

**6 Minute Run/Walk Key**
| Very Good | Developing 1 |
| Good | Developing 2 |
| Average | Developing 3 |
| Advancing | Developing 4 |

**BMI Key**
| Underweight |
| Healthy |
| Overweight |
| Obese |

**Pre Data: First Training**

| Athlete # | First Name | Last Name | Gender | Age | Height in inches (pre) | Weight (pre) | Systolic BP (pre) | Diastolic BP (pre) | 6 Minute Run/Walk (pre) | BMI (pre) | Nutrition (pre) | Hydration (pre) | Physical Activity (pre) | Height in inches (post) | Weight (post) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | n/a | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | n/a | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | n/a | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | n/a | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | n/a | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | n/a | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | n/a | | | | | |

- We HIGHLY encourage you to add Athlete Performance Training to your practice routine.
- If opting in this is where you will keep the data collect during the season
- This is a great way to help the athlete set personal Health and Fitness goals and improve their overall well-being.
- Repeating the program allows athletes to see improvements season to season for those who have previously participated and helps maintain health and fitness habits.
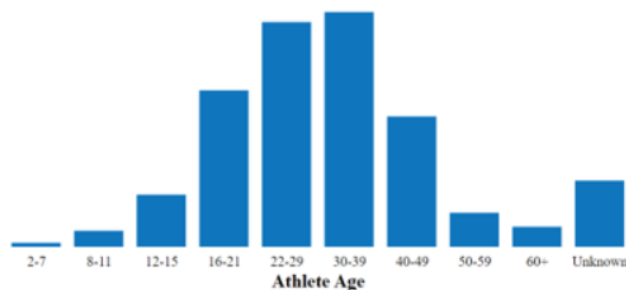
Athlete Performance Training

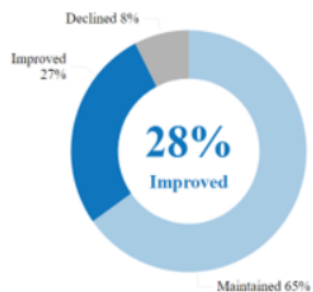**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

SOPA's *Athlete Performance Training (APT)* program has served nearly 600 athletes since Fall 2022!
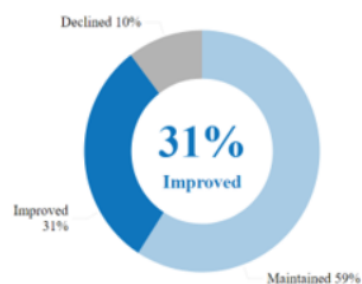
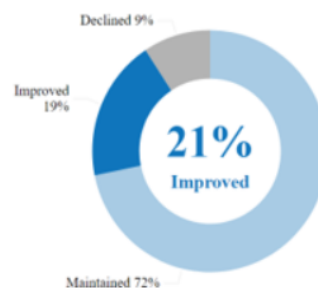A majority of high-risk athletes maintained or improved their health status!

Athlete Age

**6-Minute Test**

Declined 8%
Improved 27%
**28% Improved**
Maintained 65%

**Blood Pressure**

Declined 10%
Improved 31%
**31% Improved**
Maintained 59%

**BMI**

Declined 9%
Improved 19%
**21% Improved**
Maintained 72%

If you are looking to participate or learn more, please reach out to Calvin Trisolini, Research Operations Manager, 610-630-9450 ext. 221.

You can also visit: https://specialolympicspa.org/apt

# Softball Sport Management Team

- Special Olympics Pennsylvania Sport Management Teams are comprised of key regional leadership volunteers who represent each of SOPA's sponsored sports. These individuals represent a variety of levels within their respective sports, both inside and outside of Special Olympic Goals
  - Goals
    - Promote the sport within the Special Olympics community
    - Increase awareness of and athlete participation in the sport
    - Work to improve the quality of coach/athlete training and competition opportunities for the sport they represent

| Name | Region |
| --- | --- |
| Jason Merola | Great Lehigh Valley & Pocono |
| Jen Rice | The Wilds |
| Chris Branda | Susquehanna |
| Gary Adams | Greater Lehigh Valley & Pocono |
| Nelson Trout | Capitol Area |
| Linds Pacovsky | Ridger & Valley |
| Lis Fee | Three Rivers |
| David Kolojejchchick | USA Softball |
| Mary Lou Shaff | The Wilds |
| Ann Midegel | The Wilds |

# Softball Sport Management Team

Special Olympics Pennsylvania

- Goals for 2025
  - Assist coaches with planning of a season providing athletes with several opportunities to compete
  - Plan SOPA Championship event
  - Revise Coach Education, build Facilitator Guide
  - Host in-person Advanced Coach Clinic

# Special Olympics + USA Softball Rules Review

*David Kolojechick (USA Softball of PA UIC)*
*Andrew Fee*

# •Softball Rules

•**Number of players:** 10 defensive players with one EP

•**Game length:** 7 innings or time limit

•**Mercy rule:** 20 after 3 innings, 15 after 4 innings, 12 after 5 innings

•Ball size and type (12") yellow optic cover, red stitch 12-inch ball with a size of 11.875 inches or over, a weight of 6.250 ounces or over, a COR of .520 or under, a compression of 300.0 lbs. or under, and a Dynamic Stiffness of 5500.0 lbs. or under shall be used in the following USA Softball

•No metal cleats allowed

•A coin toss will decide home/visitors

•Catchers must wear a mask with a throat protector, and it is recommended they wear a chest protector

•All offensive players must wear a helmet while on the field of play.

# •Softball Rules

- •Bases:  65 feet

- •Pitching distance:  between 40 feet and 50 feet

- •Pitches must be between a 6ft and 10ft arch to be considered legal

- •You must pitch within 10 seconds of the umpire signally ready to play

- •A double first base, aka safety base, should be used at first base only.

- •A baserunner's home plate must be used.

- •All plays at home are considered force plays.  If the baserunner goes to the defensive home plate, it is a live ball out.

- •Once one foot passes the commitment line, the runner can only continue home

3B

20 foot line

Batter's Box

Batter's Box

HP

BRHP

8 feet

20 feet
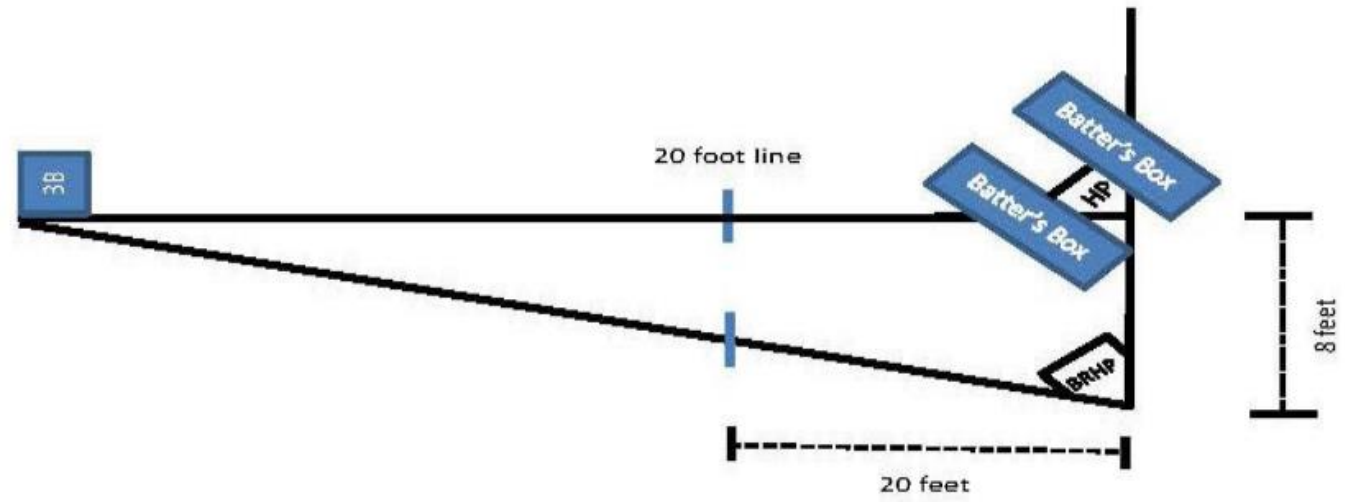
# •Softball Rules

•EPs:  In traditional play you are allowed one EP for a total of 11 players. In Unified, you are allowed to use an EP.  It must be an athlete and a partner for a total of 12.

•All players are able to reenter into the game one time in the original line-up spot. The starting player and substitute cannot be in the game at the same time.

•An Infield Fly is a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two are out. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder who positions themselves in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

•No bunting or chopping downward at a ball.

# Obstruction

- Obstruction is the act of:

1. A defensive player or team member that hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.

2. A fielder who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases while:

- not in possession of the ball, or

- not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or

- Making a fake tag without the ball, or

- In possession of the ball and who pushes a runner off a base, or

- In possession of the ball, but not in the act of making a play on the runner which intentionally impedes the progress of that runner, while he is legally running the bases

# Interference

- ### Interference is the act of:

- An offensive player or team member that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play.

- 2. An umpire who impedes a catcher's attempt to throw out a runner who is off the base.

- 3. An umpire being hit with a fair-batted ball prior to it passing an infielder, excluding the pitcher.

- 4. A spectator who reaches into the playing field and impedes a fielder playing the ball, or makes contact with the ball that a fielder is attempting a play on.

# •Unified Rules

•An "A" or "P" must be listed on the lineup card for an athlete and partner

•You must alternate A / P in the batting lineup

•There are no requirements for defensive positions for Unified.  Play participants in the best positions that are suited for them and the team.

•Principles of meaningful involvement will be enforced for any partner dominance issues.

# •Softball Rules

•When there is a tie after 7 innings, the game will be considered a tie in pool play or will go to the international tiebreaker in the top of the 8th inning.  The player due up last to bat will be placed on second base.  You are allowed to make a substitute.

•Conferences:  You are allowed three defensive conferences and must make a change on every conference after that.  It is not a charged conference or timeout when you make a substitution or pitching change.

•Homeruns:  There is no limit in traditional play but there is a 2 homerun limit in Unified.  Every homerun after 2 will be a dead ball out and all players return to their original base before the pitch.

# Softball Rules

- Unlimited courtesy foul balls will be tested this year.  Participants will not be out when hitting a foul ball with two strikes.

- 45 minutes for prelim games (5 run per inning maximum and no tie-breaker)

- 90 minutes for pool play games (5 run per inning maximum and no tie-breaker)

- 90 minutes for bracket games (no run per inning limit and ITB)

# Meaningful Inclusion

- Athletes must play at least two innings every two games. That means one inning per game or two innings in one game.

- Athletes can serve as the EP for a full game and only hit.

- Athletes must get one at bat a day while playing.

- For Unified play, athletes and partners must play their positions.  Partners cannot cut in front of athletes, and athletes cannot give ball to partner to throw in.   At home plate, the catcher must cover home unless the play leads itself to have another position cover.

# Rules Q&A / Talking with Umpires

- When talking with umpires…here are things to remember:

- Wait until the play ends before coming out of the dugout.

- Call time and go to the Homeplate umpire calmly.

- Don't yell, don't run.

- Ask to talk to the umpire who made the call.  You can ask them to ask for help with certain aspects of the play but not judgment.   Never question balls and strikes.

# Questions?

- [https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/sports-essentials/sport-rules/Sports-Essentials-Softball-Rules-2020-v3.pdf?_ga=2.63060396.2031814229.1616599786-863017483.1600366880](https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/sports-essentials/sport-rules/Sports-Essentials-Softball-Rules-2020-v3.pdf?_ga=2.63060396.2031814229.1616599786-863017483.1600366880)

- [https://www.usasoftball.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/120/2025/01/USAS-2025-Rulebook_digital67.pdf](https://www.usasoftball.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/120/2025/01/USAS-2025-Rulebook_digital67.pdf)

# Uniforms



Uniforms:
- All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color, trim and style.
  - Exception: Players and coaches may, for religious reasons, be permitted to wear specific head covering and apparel that does not conform to standard uniform requirements without penalty.

Caps:
- Caps, visors, and headbands are optional for players but can be mixed. If more than one type is worn, they all must be of the same color and each of the same type must be of the same color and style.
- Plastic or hard visors are not allowed.

Pants/Sliding Pants:
- All player pants shall be either long or all short in style.
- Players may wear a uniform solid color pair of sliding pants
  - It is not mandatory that all players wear sliding pants, but if more than one player wears them, they must be alike in color and style except temporary, Snap-on or Velcro sliding pads. No players may wear ragged, frayed or slit legs on exposed sliding pants.

# Uniforms Con't

Numbers
- An Arabic number of contrasting color at least 6 inches high must be worn on the back of all uniform shirts.
- No player on the same team may wear identical numbers, (numbers 1 and 01 are examples of identical numbers.)
- Only whole numbers 01-99 shall be used.
- Players without numbers will not be permitted to play.
- Individual names may be worn above the numbers on the back of all uniform shirts.

# Uniforms Con't
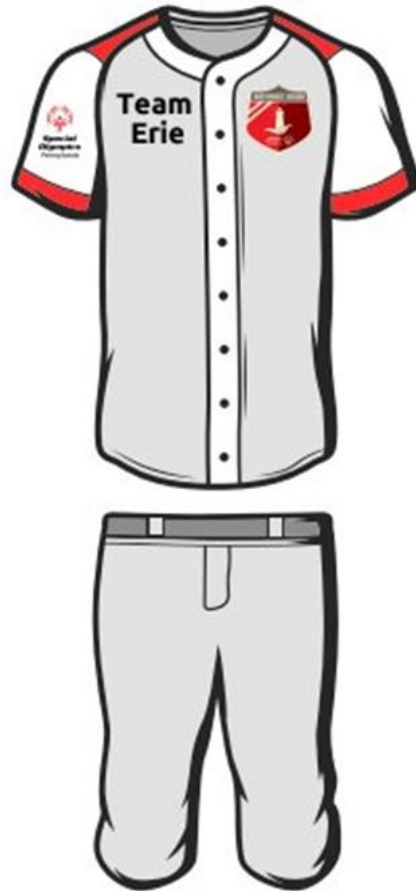
# TRAINING

# Coaching Roles:

Special Olympics Pennsylvania

## 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 a Coach

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

- Link to Athlete as a Coach Webinar

Athlete as Coach Request form to be completed by athletes who wish to apply to be trained as a coach

Athlete as Coach FAQ

Questions contact: Jordan Schubert, jschubert@specialolympicspa.org

# Coaching Certification Requirements

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

  - <span style="color:red">Team Sports:</span>

    - <span style="color:red">Must have at least one (1) certified coach per team</span>

  - Individual Sport (and <span style="color:red">Skills</span>):

- Must have at least one (1) certified coach per 25 athletes

# Get Certified

**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

- Coach trainings will be held regionally based on need

- If you need coaches trained let your Regional Sports Director know ASAP

- Trainings are currently being scheduled for May, check the SOPA Website and SOPA Coaches Facebook page for announcements – bi- weekly seasonal communication

- Training School registration MUST be done via the Portal

- Registration will close Wednesday at 11:59pm prior to Saturday or Sunday training. You MUST register to attend.

# Be Prepared for Season

- 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.

# Air Quality

**Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

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.

# Outdoor Weather

Special Olympics Pennsylvania

Every time you see lightning or hear thunder stop practice and take shelter for at least 30 minutes.

# Build Training Plans

- SOI Coaching Guide: Softball
  o Great resources for developing training plan, goal setting with athletes, warm-up drills, etc.

# COMPETITIONS

# Seasonal Competitions – Regional webinars

Seasonal Schedule/Timeline (suggested):

-Striving to play **6** games prior to SOPA Softball Championship

- **June**:  1 DH scheduled competition

- **July**: 1-2 DH scheduled competitions

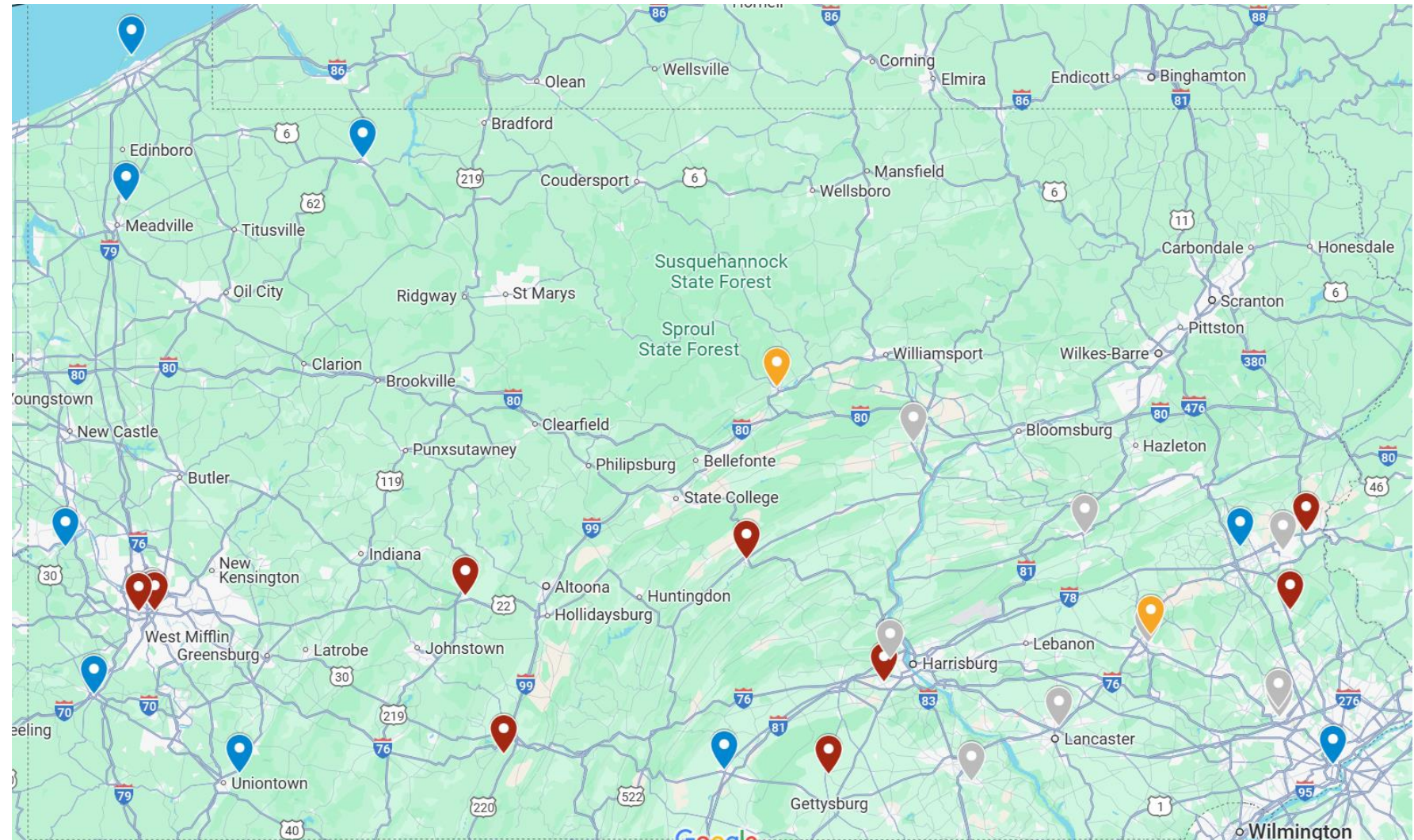- **August**: 1 DH scheduled competition, SOPA Softball Championships

**Regional Webinars** to discuss/solidify competitions to be held in May/early June. We will schedule shortly.

# Seasonal Competitions

- [SB map](#)
- [Softball Contact List](#)
- Yellow = Advanced
- Gray = Intermediate
- Red = Novice
- Blue = Unknown

# Hosting Competitions

- Expectation of coach
  - Work with Regional Sport Director on planning
  - Secure facility/day-of set-up
  - Solicit teams – doubleheader 1 other team, tournament a few teams depending on what facility can accommodate
  - Communicate with teams attending
  - Work with facility/RSD to secure volunteers
  - Assist with securing umpires (via facility or your personal connections)

- Expectation of Regional Team
  - Secure umpires via SMT/HQ staff
  - Supply equipment (if necessary)
  - Set up GMS if needed
  - Ensure all athletes participating meet eligibility criteria

- Awards are NOT necessary

# Hosting Competitions

- Must have umpires
- Must follow SOI Softball Sport Rules
  - Must play complete games (i.e. 7 innings)
  - Field must meet dimensions in Sport Rules and include 3 bases, home plate with base runner home plate and pitching rubber
  - Field must lined with foul lines, base runner home plate, batter's box
- Each team must have 1 certified coach
- Teams must be in matching uniforms

# SOPA Softball Championship

- August 22, 23, 24
- [In the Net](#)
  - Premier Sports Compex in Central PA
  - 998 Airport Road, Palmyra, PA 17078

- Events Offered
  - Traditional Team
  - Unified Team
  - Individual Skills

# Facilities

- 6 fields
  - 5 Artificial Turf Infields
- Outdoor Multipurpose Field
- Main Dome

# Potential Schedule



- Friday, August 22nd
  - Arrival 11:00PM
  - Prelims 12:00PM
  - Opening Ceremonies

- Saturday, August 23rd
  - Pool Play and Medal Rounds
  - Olympic Town
  - Healthy Athletes
  - Night Activity

- Sunday, August 24th
  - Medal Rounds
  - Awards

# THANK YOU