SOCQUER
At-Home Guidelines for Training & Competition
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Coaches Guide to Training and Competition during Return to Activities: Phase A

As we head into Return to Activities the following requirements will be in place for a program to begin training:

**PHASE A: At-Home Training:**
- For team sports, only Level 1 and Level 2 skills activities are permitted. No team play will be allowed in the fall.
- All athletes and Unified Partners with active SOPA medicals are eligible to participate in at-home training.
- No in-person competitions will be permitted during the fall 2020 season.
- All State competitions will be done virtually – including Fall Sectionals and Fall Festival.

**Coach Responsibilities:**
- Verify with Local Program leaders that all athletes have current medicals.
- You as a coach must be an active Class A volunteer.
- Conduct weekly training sessions to engage athletes, discuss health and fitness and prepare athletes for competition. (See appendix)
- How to engage athletes.
- Engage athletes who do not have access to technology. (See appendix)
- Provide each athlete with needed equipment if they do not have access to their own.
- Instruct athletes on how to prepare their competition site to participate in virtual competition.
- Adhere to deadlines for competition information.

**Requirements for Phases A:**
To conduct at-home training and competition, organizations and teams must adhere to the following:
- Prepare appropriate resources for safe at-home activities.
- Prepare participants for participation in at-home training and virtual competitions.
- Share resources digitally and when necessary, mailings to activate participants virtually.
- Virtual participants with COVID-19 symptoms must refrain from participating in activities and consult with a healthcare professional for further evaluation.
- Ensure that athletes and coaches abide by the Honor Code (appendix).
- Athletes are required to work virtually with a Class A coach.
- Ensure athletes have the necessary equipment to conduct at-home training and competition safely.
- Ensure athletes have assistance in recording scores and preparing competition area.
- Adhere to deadlines for competition information.
Soccer At-Home Training

**Description**
For team sports, in Phase A, athletes will be able to compete in Level 1 (Entry) or Level 2 (Advanced) Skill Competitions. Each athlete should be provided with ONE soccer ball if they do not own one.

**Recommended equipment and alternative options**
- One appropriately sized soccer ball per athlete.
- Soccer goal: Chairs, garbage cans, or other object to denote the posts of the goal. Chalk or taped outline of the goal on a wall. Ribbon, rope, or tape outline of the goal on a fence.
- Timing device: stop watch, wrist watch, phone, kitchen timer
- Measuring device: ideally a tape measure, if not you can use your feet (one of your feet = 12 inches or 1 foot)
- Cones/Marking device: cones, plastic water bottles, shoes, chalk, string
- Playing area: backyard, schoolyard, park, parking lot
- Assistant for conducting competition: household member, family member, caregiver

**Sample Training Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-10 Min</td>
<td>Warmup/Stretch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Min</td>
<td>Skill Recap and Follow up</td>
<td>Prior to first training have meetings with the athletes to discuss a drill to work on. See how their development in that skill has come along.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Min</td>
<td>Fitness Work</td>
<td>Fitness Drills may include the Additional Drill examples in the Skills Guide. This can also be a good time to do a pushup challenge or something of that nature with your athlete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Min</td>
<td>Nutrition Recap</td>
<td>Discuss the athlete’s nutrition over the time between meetings. Fit 5 is a great turnkey program that can give coaches and athletes nutritional guides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Min</td>
<td>Drill to Work on Prior to Next Meeting</td>
<td>Identify drills that the athlete can do on their own in the time before the next meeting to improve their skills in anticipation of the upcoming competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Min</td>
<td>Cool Down</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>I like to keep notes on the upcoming training and competition schedule here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is great to have notes on pertinent information for the athletes and coaches.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommended Warmups

- Warmup lap
- Hip circles
- Arm circles
- Jumping jacks
- High Knees
- Butt kicks
- Moving lunges

Recommended Cool Downs

- Reach for the sky
- Side stretches
- V Sits
- Modified hurdles

Additional Drill Examples

- Plyometric drills
  - Wall sits
  - Air squats
  - Burpees
  - Jump rope
  - Plank
- Cone Drills
• Ladder Drills

• Ball taps
  o Standing in place tap the right foot on the then top of the ball, then
    switch using the left foot to tap the top of the ball.
  o Continuing alternating left, right, left, right for 30 seconds.

Phase A – At-Home -Training Drills

Level 1, Skill #1 - Dribbling
• Skills to work on
  o Keep the close to your body
    ▪ Don’t kick the ball too far out
    ▪ Maintain control of the ball
  o Soft Touch
    ▪ Bend the knees and pass the ball back and forth between the
      insides of your feet
  o Gallop
    ▪ Use the outside edge of your feet to push the ball (not too far!) to
      have a little more speed.

Level 1, Skill #2 - Shooting
• Skills to work on
  o Plant Foot
    ▪ Make sure the foot that is not kicking is planted even with the ball
    ▪ This will give more control to the shot and prevent toeing the ball
  o Strike with the laces
The kicking foot should strike the ball with the top of the foot, not the toe!

- Follow through
  - Once the ball is struck, the kicking leg should keep moving and follow through toward the target

**Level 1, Skill #3 – Side Kick**

- Skills to work on
  - Controlled approach
    - Setup in a balanced stance just behind the ball
  - Kick the ball with the inside of the foot
    - Left foot kicks to right goal
    - Right foot kicks to the left goal
  - Control the pass
  - No need to kick as hard as you can, control the pass with the inside of your foot

**Level 2, Skill #1 – 12 Meter Slalom**

- Skills to work on
  - Keep the ball close to your body
    - Don’t kick the ball too far out
    - Maintain control of the ball
  - Soft Touch
    - Bend the knees and pass the ball back and forth between the insides of your feet
  - Gallop
    - Use the outside edge of your feet to push the ball (not too far!) to have a little more speed.
  - Use both feet!
    - Focus on using the outside foot to move the ball back between the cones
    - Only using one foot is a much slower process

**Level 2, Skill #2 – Control and Pass**

- Skills to work on
  - Controlled approach
    - Run quickly toward the ball, but “chop” your feet to slow down and be under control as you address the ball
  - Control the ball with the dribbling techniques discussed
  - Listen to the coach for the direction of the target
  - Point toward the target
    - As you approach the ball, make sure your body is aimed at your target
  - Control the pass
  - No need to kick as hard as you can, control the pass with the inside of your foot
Level 2, Skill #3 – Advanced Shooting

- Skills to work on
  - Plant Foot
    - Make sure the foot that is not kicking is planted event with the ball
    - If the ball is rolling, make sure you plant your foot ahead of the ball, so as you strike, the plant foot is next to the ball
    - This will give more control to the shot and prevent toeing the ball
  - Strike the ball just under the center
    - Striking the ball in this location will give you some loft, that you can control, on your shot
  - Lean Back through the shot
    - Another tip to help you get your shot in the air
Soccer Competition

Virtual Competition Entry Information

- Athletes may enter up to three individual skills events and must choose either Level 1 (Entry) or Level 2 (Advanced) skills.
- Qualifying scores will be due three (3) weeks prior to State level competitions.
- Final scores are due to the appropriate SOPA Competition Director by the Monday prior to the event.
- Athletes will complete skills at-home and submit scores to coaches.
- Athletes will be divisioned according to their entry scores and placed based on final scores.
- Awards will be given for results in each individual skill, maximum of 3 per person. Must compete in Level 1 OR Level 2, cannot cross over.
  - Level 1 - Entry
    - 10 Meter Dribbling
    - Shooting
    - Run and Kick
  - Level 2 - Advanced
    - 12 Meter Slalom Dribble
    - Advanced Shooting
    - Control and Pass
- In adherence with Honor Code, the same playing surface must be used for divisioning and competition.
- There is a data collection form at the end of this guide that will help to compile the information during your training.
- Phase A competition will occur as:
  - Individual Skills competition for traditional athletes.
  - Unified Pairs Skills competition for an Athlete and Unified Partner. In Unified Pairs Skills events the Athlete’s and Unified Partner’s scores will be added together to determine the score for the pair.

Recommended equipment and alternative options

- One appropriately sized soccer ball per athlete.
- Soccer goal: Chairs, garbage cans, or other object to denote the posts of the goal. Chalk or taped outline of the goal on a wall. Ribbon, rope, or tape outline of the goal on a fence.
- Timing device: stop watch, wrist watch, phone, kitchen timer
- Measuring device: ideally a tape measure, if not you can use your feet (one of your feet = 12 inches or 1 foot)
- Cones/Marking device: cones, plastic water bottles, shoes, chalk, string
- Playing area: backyard, schoolyard, park, parking lot
- Assistant for conducting competition: household member, family member, caregiver
Soccer - Level 1, Individual Skills for Virtual Competition

Level 1, Skill #1: Dribbling

Equipment:
- One Soccer ball
- Six large cones (see equipment list on page 9 for other options)

Description:
- The Athlete dribbles from the starting line to the finish zone, staying inside the marked lane.
- The finish zone should be marked off with cones as well as chalk.
- The clock is stopped when both the Athlete and the ball are stopped inside the finish zone. If the Athlete overshoots the finish zone, he/she must dribble it back in to finish.

Scoring:
- The athlete will get three attempts.
- The time recorded for the athlete result. (Time recorded as MM:SS.00)
- The final score will be the athlete’s fastest time of the three attempts.
Level 1, Skill #2: Shooting

Equipment: (see equipment list on page 9 for other options)

- One soccer ball per person.
- 4 cones to mark the start and shooting lines.
- Four meter by two meter goal with net

Description:

- Athlete begins at the start line and walks or runs forward to shoot the ball into the goal from a distance of six meters.
- Athletes are only allowed to kick the ball once.
- The athlete retrieves the ball, returns it to the shooting line, then returns to the starting line where they will begin the next shot.
- Athlete then repeats for a total of five shots.

Scoring:

- Each successful goal scores 1 point.
- A maximum of 5 points can be awarded.
Level 1, Skill #3: Side Kick

Equipment: *(see equipment list on page 9 for other options)*
- One soccer ball per person.
- A central starting point should be marked.
- Two two-meter wide target gates (cones or flags) set up two meters to the side and one meter in front of the starting point.

Description:
- The Athlete begins at the starting marker.
- Athlete kicks it through any target gate.
- Athletes are only allowed to kick the ball once.
- The Athlete then retrieves the ball, returns to the start, then runs and kicks the ball through the second target gate.

Scoring:
- The athlete will have three attempts at each target.
- One point will be awarded for a ball that passes through the target gate.
- A maximum score of 6 points can be awarded.
Soccer – Level 2, Individual Skills for Virtual Competition

Level 2, Skill #1: 12 Meter Dribbling Slalom

Equipment:
- One soccer ball per athlete.
- Five cones (minimum 18 in high), two meters apart, staggered 0.5 meters from the central line. (see equipment list on page 9 for other options)

Description:
- Athlete dribbles through the slalom as quickly as possible, rounding all cones.
- Skipped cones will add one second to the athlete time.

Scoring:
- The athlete will get three attempts.
- The time recorded for the athlete result. (Time recorded as MM:SS.00)
- The final score will be the athlete’s fastest time of the three attempts.
Level 2, Skill #2: Control and Pass

Equipment: *(see equipment list on page 9 for other options)*
- One Soccer ball per athlete.
- Two cones to form a “passing gate” five meters wide, seven meters from the starting line.
- Two passing “target gates”

Description:
- Ball will rest at the starting gate.
- The Athlete moves toward the ball to start the timer.
- Athlete controls the ball and dribbles through the passing gate.
- Coach randomly calls and physically indicates “left” or “right” to designate a target. Athletes can dribble as close as they like before passing the ball through the target.
- The Athlete retrieves the ball and returns to the starting line before moving toward the gates again.

Scoring:
- Athlete has three attempts at each target.
- Athlete scores 1 point for each successful pass through a target gate.
- A ball that hits the cone and goes through will count.
Level 2, Skill #3: Advanced Shooting

**Equipment:** (see equipment list on page 9 for other options)
- One Soccer ball per athlete.
- Penalty area (marked with cones, if no markings on the field) and full-size goal with nets, on a regulation field.

**Description:**
- Athlete starts at the penalty spot. Runs to the ball, collects the ball, dribbles into the penalty area and shoots; attempting to shoot the ball in the air into the goal.
- Athletes can shoot from whatever distance they choose once they are inside the penalty area.
- As soon as the Athlete has shot, he/she retrieves the ball, returns and repeats. Five Attempts.

**Scoring:**
- The athlete gets 5 shots.
- Athlete scores Five (5) points for each shot traveling from foot to goal in the air; One (1) point for each shot that touches the ground before entering the goal.
## SOCCER - LEVEL 1 - VIRTUAL COMPETITIONS
### At-Home data collection form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA/COUNTY:</th>
<th>ATHLETE/PARTNER NAME:</th>
<th>Athlete/Partner</th>
<th>10 Meter Dribbling</th>
<th>MM:SS.00</th>
<th>Shooting</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Side Kick</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Fall Fest - 1st score</td>
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<th>Side Kick</th>
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</table>
## SOCCER - LEVEL 2 - VIRTUAL COMPETITIONS
At-Home data collection form

### AREA/COUNTY:

### ATHLETE/PARTNER NAME:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete/Partner</th>
<th>12 Meter Slalom Dribble</th>
<th>Control and Pass</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Advanced Shooting</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Sectional - 1st score</td>
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<td>Date completed:</td>
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<td>Fall Fest - 1st score</td>
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<td>Fall Fest - Final score</td>
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### TRAINING RECORD:

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All Special Olympics athletes want to compete fairly and know everyone is following the same rules. This is always important, but even more so now that many athletes are not competing in-person. For athletes who decide to participate virtually at-home, Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) has created the following Honor Code.

The Honor Code is a tool to let all athletes understand how to fairly compete virtually in Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA). Fair and meaningful opportunities are the most important parts of SOPA competitions. Athletes and coaches must follow this Honor Code to make sure everyone can have a fair and meaningful experience in virtual competitions.

SOPA demonstrates a spirit of mutual trust and honesty. As an athlete I promise:

- I will only use one attempt to record my competition score, which is the same as when I compete in-person. Using more than one attempt to try and submit a better score is illegal and violates the rules of virtual competition.
- I will follow the competition rules for my sport.
- I will use the same course, field, court, and equipment for all parts of the virtual competitions.
- I will give my exact recorded time, distance, or score to my coach.
- I will follow all virtual competition rules provided by Special Olympics Pennsylvania.
- I will meet all deadlines to turn in my scores.
- I will give my best effort in training to try to achieve my best competition performance.

This Honor Code and the SOPA Code of Conduct outline how an athlete should train and compete in a virtual setting.

The “Virtual Competition Review Committee” will make sure athletes and coaches follow the rules of the Honor Code. The committee will consist of SOPA Staff and members of Local Programs, and will not tolerate any violation of the Honor Code.
The purpose of this Honor Code is to communicate the meaning and importance of athletic integrity to all members of the Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) community and to articulate and support the interest of the athletes and coaches in maintaining the highest standards of conduct in virtual competition.

SOPA embodies a spirit of mutual trust and honesty. As a coach I promise to:

- Give athletes one attempt to record their competition score as is done in-person. Providing multiple attempts to try and submit a higher score is illegal and violates the integrity of virtual competition.
- Follow and enforce the competition rules for each sport which includes calling any illegal attempt or violation.
- Have my athletes use the same course, field, court, and equipment for divisioning, as well as all virtual competitions.
- Submit the exact time, distance, score, or other performance measurement for each athlete for divisioning and all competitions.
- Follow all virtual competition guidelines and standards provided by Special Olympics Pennsylvania.
- Meet all deadlines for submission of scores.
- Ensure the athletes I coach have the proper equipment and practice facilities which provide them with the best opportunities to succeed.

This Honor Code summarizes the expected standards of conduct in virtual athletic competitions. The Honor Code is an addendum to the existing SOPA Code of Conduct to ensure equality in competition during any time in person competitions cannot be offered.

The Honor Board is the organizational body charged with enforcement of the Honor Code. The Honor Board will consist of state level Competition Staff and select members of Local Programs, and will not tolerate any violation of the Honor Code.
This is a moment of high anxiety, grief, and trauma for many of our athletes. As a coach, you have the opportunity to support your athletes through this difficult time through your support and love for our athletes. Below are guidelines and suggestions for ways to interact and engage our athletes over your preferred video conferencing tool.

Schedule out your meetings
- Just like your in person training, plan out the virtual training with your athletes. There is a sample Phase A plan in the Sport Specific Guidebooks, please adapt that sample to fit your needs.
- Acknowledge each athlete when they log on, address them by name and make sure they know you are glad to see them.
- Ask questions that acknowledge the situation, while also providing a sense of hope and something to look forward to.

Establish team support
- Set normal expectations for each of the virtual training: no phones or other devices that could distract the athlete or group, when someone is talking be are actively listening, develop responses from the group to positively support their teammates.
- When an athlete says something positive or encouraging to a teammate, pause to highlight that behavior.

Celebrate every little thing
- Just like when you are in person, you want your athletes cheering each other on.
- When meeting remotely, try to include activities that engage the athletes and set them up for success (garbage can basketball, soccer dribbling, pushups, etc.).
- Many of our athletes are dealing with challenges away from Special Olympics. Discuss those challenges at your meetings and be proud of how they are working through those challenges.

Focus on the skills
- Training the athletes through this virtual experience will take some creativity. In your meetings, adjust your camera so the athletes can watch you model a skill or drill. You can also have the athletes lead a skill or drill during training as well.
- Keep up their (and your) fitness. Lead your athletes through some basic exercises that they can do at home. You can set goals to reach from meeting to meeting, like 10 pushups without stopping, so the athletes can work toward that goal outside of your meeting time.
Engage athletes in a virtual setting

Set the example
- Be a role model for how you want your athletes to interact. Be mindful that social cues can be read differently on a virtual platform.
- Do the activities with them. Don’t be afraid to fail in front of your athletes. It is great to show your athletes that it is ok to struggle as long as you are improving.
- Talk to your athletes about how you manage your time. Be honest about how these times can be challenging, it’s ok to feel flat, lethargic, and unmotivated from time to time - but focus on the time you have together to be high energy and productive.

Be Coachable
- Talk to other coaches about what they are doing to engage their athletes.
- The best coaches are the best thieves, use other people’s ideas to engage the team.
- Learn about other platforms that you can interact with your athletes on. See what they are using, research those platforms, and use them if you believe it is an appropriate format.
# OPTIONS FOR TWO-WAY VIDEO CHAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLATFORM</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS ALLOWED</th>
<th>TIME LIMIT</th>
<th>OPTION TO RECORD</th>
<th># OF PEOPLE ON GRID VIEW</th>
<th>BREAKOUT ROOMS</th>
<th>JOIN WITHOUT ACCOUNT</th>
<th>SETUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td>FREE (BASIC PLAN)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40 MIN. (UNLESS AND EDU ACCOUNT)</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>UP TO 49</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>LINK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>FREE (UP TO 100 HR/MONTH)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4 HRS.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>UP TO 25</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>LINK 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Messenger</td>
<td>FREE</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>NO LIMIT</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>UP TO 8</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>LINK 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Teams</td>
<td>FREE (BASIC PLAN)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>NO LIMIT</td>
<td>FOR A FEE</td>
<td>UP TO 9</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>LINK 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PROS
- Popular. Many already use
- Good mobile platform
- Easy to use. Many on Facebook
- Many using for work

### CONS
- Poor security: must use passwords
- Desktop version not as strong
- Facebook account required
- Not as easy if not familiar w/Microsoft
“HOW TO”
ENGAGE ATHLETES WITHOUT COMPUTER/INTERNET

We understand that not all athletes have access to a computer or internet, therefore we created this guidance to support coaches in engaging their athletes.

ATHLETES WITHOUT CELL PHONES

Mail Printed Resources
- Create training plans that can be printed and mailed
- Print and mail competition instructions from Sports Specific Guidance
- Work with assistant coaches and Unified partners to print and mail

Home Phone calls
- Contact athletes as often as you can
- Communicate instructions and weekly expectations to athletes

Socially Distant Visits
- Work with assistant coaches and Unified partners to print and deliver to athletes
- Work with athletes and caregivers to have a central packet pick-up location
- Ensure all are utilizing proper PPE and following social distance guidelines (minimal of 6”) when delivering
- No materials should be re-shared or exchanged

ATHLETES WITH CELL PHONES

Cell Phone Calls
- Call athletes with weekly practice plan and expectations
- Be cognizant of athletes phone plans so they do not incur additional charges
- Utilize assistant coaches and Unified partners to make phone calls
- Use conference call function on cell phone to connect multiple athletes on one call

Conference Calls
- Utilize a free conference call line so athletes can call in during training session
  - FreeConferenceCall.com
  - Google Meet
  - Zoom
Social Media Platforms
• Use social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook or Google
• WhatsApp uses less data than Facebook or Google
• Create a Closed Facebook Group for your team

Text Messaging
• Use SMS to send training plans
• Use plain text instead of attachments when emailing. Plain text is easier to access and requires less data (therefore, less money), so consolidating content into the email body using plain text rather than attaching a .pdf is preferable