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The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules (“Sports Rules”) provide standards for Special Olympics training and competition. Article I provides general principles established by the Special Olympics Official General Rules (“General Rules”) that are not found in the sport-specific rules. In case of any conflict between the Sports Rules and the General Rules, the General Rules shall govern.

The Mission Statement, Goal and Founding Principles of Special Olympics may be found in Article I of the General Rules.

SECTION A – SPORTS RULES

1. All Special Olympics training and competitions shall be conducted in accordance with the Sport-Specific Rules. The Sports Rules may be amended from time to time as provided in Addendum A.
2. Use of International Federation or National Sports Governing Body Rules
 - a. Special Olympics sports competitions are intended to operate in accordance with rules established by the International Federations (“IF’s”) or National Governing Bodies (“NGB’s”) of each sport. The Sports Rules are intended to modify, where necessary, IF or NGB rules. In cases where IF or NGB rules are in conflict with the Sports Rules, the Sports Rules shall apply. Each Accredited Program is required to state the governing body rules that will serve as the reference point for each sport offered.
 - b. At Special Olympics Regional and World Games, the IF rules shall be used.
 - c. ADDENDUM B of this document lists the IF’s for each Special Olympics Official and Recognized Sports.
3. Honest Effort Rule.
 - a. If a Competition Manager determines that an athlete or team has not competed with maximum effort in preliminary and/or divisioning rounds with the clear intent to gain an unfair advantage in the divisioning process, he/she has the right to sanction that athlete or team.
 - b. Sanctions may include: Verbal Warning to the player and/or coach, adjusted division placement, final placement or disqualification based on ‘unsportsmanlike conduct’.
4. Section A of each Sport Specific Rule Section includes a list of official events available in Special Olympics. The range of events is intended to offer competition opportunities for athletes of all abilities. Programs may determine the events offered and, if required, guidelines for the management of those events. Coaches are responsible for providing training and event selection appropriate to each athlete’s skill and interest.”
5. When creating opportunities for Special Olympics athletes with physical disabilities to participate in sports training and competition, Special Olympics Programs should be guided by the following principles: 1) each athlete should enjoy a dignified and meaningful competition experience; 2) the integrity of the sport must be preserved; and 3) the health and safety of all athletes, coaches and officials must not be compromised.

SECTION B – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS

1. Eligibility requirements for Special Olympics athletes are detailed in Article 6.01 of the General Rules (found in Addendum C of these rules).

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SECTION C — CODES OF CONDUCT

1. Codes of Conduct

Codes of Conduct for athletes and coaches are contained in Addendum D to these Sports Rules. These are minimum standards and the Board of Directors of Accredited Programs may establish additional criteria.

In addition to these codes, it is the policy of Special Olympics for its accredited programs to participate in all training and competition in the spirit of respect and sportsmanship. Any individual, team or delegation that refuses to compete or participate in Special Olympics Games or activities based on the religion, political affiliation of their fellow Special Olympics athletes in those activities, will be disqualified from participation in the games or event in question and not eligible for awards or recognition at that event.

2. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Any competitor who shall refuse to obey the directions of the Referee or other proper officials, or who shall conduct himself/herself in an unsportsmanlike manner, or who is offensive by action or language to the officials, spectators, or competitors at any competition may be disqualified by the Referee from some portion of future competition at the event.

3. Minimum Training Standards

Guiding Principles

- a. Special Olympics athletes have the right to be provided with sports training that:
 - 1) Is led by competent coaches who are knowledgeable about the sport and Special Olympics, and have the ability to work effectively with people who have intellectual disabilities.
 - 2) Develops their sports skill and physical fitness
 - 3) Prepares them adequately for competition
- b. The process by which Minimum Training Standards are defined and applied is as follows:
 - 1) Programs/Regions must develop their own training standards as a requirement before entering the first level competition.
 - 2) No athlete is to be entered into a competition until they are ready to compete. This is to ensure that each athlete has acquired the skills and level of physical conditioning necessary to compete meaningfully and safely. This does not prohibit other competition opportunities as part of an athlete's training.

SECTION D — CLASSIFICATION OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS SPORTS

1. There are three classifications of sports in Special Olympics:
 - a. Official Sports
 - b. Recognized Sports
 - c. Locally Popular Sports
2. A recommendation for classification of a sport must come from an accredited Special Olympics Program. No sport will be considered solely on the basis of IF or NGB recommendation.

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3. The following criteria will be used to classify Official Sports, Recognized Sports and Locally Popular Sports:

Official Sports	Recognized Sports	Locally Popular Sports
SOI Approved Coaching Guide		
SOI Approved Sports Management Team Guide		
At least 24 Accredited Programs offer this sport at Program level Games*	At least 12 Accredited Programs offer this sport at Program level Games*	
Those 24 Programs represent at least 3 Special Olympics Regions.	Those 12 Programs represent at least 2 Special Olympics Regions	
An SOI Sport Resource Team is in place	An SOI Sport Resource Team is in place	Program Board has approved the sport
An International Federation is in place and has approved the rules published for Special Olympics use	An International Federation is in place and has approved the rules published for Special Olympics use	A National Governing Body is in place and has approved the rules published by Special Olympics
Standardized rules are published and uniformly enforced at Program and WG competitions	Standardized rules are published and uniformly enforced at Program competitions	Standardized rules are published and uniformly enforced at Program competitions
SOI Sports Department has conducted a Health and Safety Risk Assessment	SOI Sports Department has conducted a Health and Safety Risk Assessment	Accredited SO Program has conducted a Health and Safety Risk assessment

* = According to Annual PDS Reports

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4. Official Sports 2009

Summer

Aquatics
 Athletics
 Artistic Gymnastics
 Basketball
 Badminton
 Bocce
 Bowling
 Cycling
 Equestrian
 Football (Soccer)
 Golf
 Judo
 Rhythmic Gymnastics
 Powerlifting
 Roller Skating
 Sailing
 Softball
 Table Tennis
 Team Handball
 Tennis
 Volleyball

Winter

Alpine Skiing
 Cross Country Skiing
 Figure Skating
 Floor Hockey
 Snowboarding
 Snowshoeing
 Speed Skating

5. Recognized Sports 2009

Summer

Cricket
 Kayaking
 Netball

Winter

Floorball

6. Locally Popular Sports

Accredited Programs may offer sports that are locally popular and are not currently considered Official or Recognized Sports.

7. Locally Popular Sports that Require Pre-Approval from Special Olympics Headquarters

These are sports that SOI has determined might expose Special Olympics athletes to unreasonable risks to their health or safety. No Accredited Program may offer any training or competition activities in any sport that SOI has listed here, without approval from Special Olympics Inc. Sports Department. Requests for permission to offer one of these sports must be accompanied by proposed rules and safety standards. SOI has presently classified combative sports, martial arts (other than Judo), sledding sports, motor sports, aerial sports, shooting and archery as Locally Popular Sports that Require Pre-Approval from Special Olympics Headquarters.

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8. Maintenance of Sport Recognition Levels.

- a. Each sport and discipline will be re-evaluated every four years and classified based on the criteria above. Summer Sports will be recertified after each Summer World Games beginning in 2007. Winter Sports will be recertified after each World Winter Games beginning in 2009.
- b. The SOI Sports Department shall be responsible for submitting evidence for the level of recognition of all sports.
- c. The recertification recommendation will be made to the Sports Rules Advisory Committee.

9. Addition/Deletion of Events within Official or Recognized Sports

Proposals for amendment of events within Official and Recognized Sports will be addressed through the Sports Rules modification process. (See Addendum A)

SECTION E — FREQUENCY OF GAMES; INVITATIONAL GAMES OR TOURNAMENTS

1. Each Accredited Program shall provide regular competition opportunities as outlined in General Rules Section 7.03.c General Requirements for Special Olympics Sports and Competition. (See Addendum E)
2. Standards for conduct of Sports Training and Competition are outlined in Article 7 of the General Rules.

SECTION F — MEDICAL AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

1. Accredited Programs and Games Organizing Committees (GOC's) must conduct all sports training and competition activities in a safe environment, taking all reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of athletes, coaches, volunteers and spectators, and must adhere to sport-specific medical and safety requirements as contained in the sport-specific rules.
2. Accredited Programs shall provide for adequate supervision and coaching for all athletes. For competition activities, a maximum ratio of four athletes-to-one Coach/Chaperone (4:1 athlete-to-coach ratio).
3. Coaches should place the health and safety of all athletes above all else; this is particularly important in the selection of appropriate athletes to participate on any Special Olympics sports team.

Individuals with significantly greater skill than other team members may be prohibited from participation on Special Olympics sports teams since their participation may cause a risk to others.

4. Accredited Programs and GOC's must comply with minimum standards for medical facilities and safety precautions at the sites of competitions in addition to the sport-specific requirements of the Sports Rules.

a. Minimum Medical Facilities at Competitions

- 1) A qualified emergency medical technician must be in attendance or readily available at all times.
- 2) A Licensed Medical Professional must be on-site or on immediate call at all times during the competition.
- 3) All first aid areas must be clearly identified, adequately equipped, and staffed by a qualified emergency medical technician for the duration of the event.
- 4) An ambulance, resuscitator and other appropriate medical equipment, particularly equipment for handling seizures, must be readily available at all times.

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b. Minimum Safety Precautions at Competitions:

- 1) Adequate precautions must be taken to avoid exposing athletes to sunburn, hypothermia or other conditions or illnesses caused by exposure to the elements.
 - 2) Special precautions must be taken when holding competitions at high altitudes, including providing training recommendations for athletes before the competition and equipping the competition venues with oxygen tanks.
 - 3) Ample water or other liquids must be provided for athletes throughout the competition and athletes should be encouraged to take appropriate water breaks.
 - 4) Special precautions must be taken to insure that each participant receives any medications that have been prescribed for his/her use.
 - 5) Competition organizers, officials and coaches must take into account the cardiovascular effect and level of strenuousness of a sport when setting the competition schedule for that sport, taking into account the length of competition, weather conditions, the physical ability of the participants and the need for adequate rest periods. In general, athletes should be given adequate time between trials, finals and competitions and teams should be given adequate time between the end of one competition and the next round of competition.
 - 6) Protective equipment requirements are found in sport rules where appropriate.
5. For information relating to participation by individuals with Down Syndrome who have Atlanto-Axial Instability (See Addendum F)
 6. Accredited Programs must comply with Section 6.02 of the Special Olympics General Rules (found in Addendum F of these rules) relating to the registration requirements for athletes, including guidelines for participation of people with Down Syndrome and of parent and medical releases prior to participation in Special Olympics activities.

SECTION G – RULES COMMITTEES

1. Each Accredited Program responsible for conducting competition shall appoint a Jury/Sport-Specific Rules Committee for each sport contested in that competition and a Jury of Appeals/Games Rules Committee.
2. Only a Head Coach or their designee (in the absence of a Head Coach) may file a protest or appeal utilizing the specific rules spelled out by the competition manager.
3. The Jury shall ensure that IF/NGB/Special Olympics Sports Rules are followed and enforced for the sport in question and rule on all protests filed for that sport.
 - a. A Jury shall be established based on the protocol set out by the IF or NGB for that sport.
 - b. Where no such protocol is published, the jury shall consist of three members: one from the Accredited Program responsible for conducting the competition; one from the GOC and the head official for that sport.
4. The Jury of Appeals shall ensure that the Sports Rules are followed and enforced overall; and will hear appeals of Protest Rulings made by Sport Specific Jury. The Jury of Appeals shall be the final authority for all rule interpretations and appeals during the Games.
 - a. A Jury of Appeals shall consist of three members: one from the Accredited Program responsible for conducting the Games; one from the GOC and one who is an at-large member.
 - b. An alternate shall be named to the Jury of Appeals. The alternate shall take the place of the at large member in the event the Jury of Appeals must examine a case involving a member of the team or delegation of the at-large member. The alternate shall be entitled to attend all meetings and to take part in all discussions of the Jury of Appeals, but cannot vote except as provided in the preceding sentence.

ARTICLE 1**SECTION H — AGE REQUIREMENTS AND GROUPINGS FOR COMPETITION**

1. Athletes must be at least eight years of age to participate in Special Olympics competition. Certain sports and events may further restrict athlete participation based on age. If pertinent, additional age requirements are indicated in the specific rules for each sport.
2. The following age groups shall normally be used for all Special Olympics competitions:
 - a. Individual Sports:
 - Ages 8-11
 - Ages 12-15
 - Ages 16-21
 - Ages 22-29
 - Ages 30 and overAdditional age groups may be established if there are a sufficient number of competitors in the “30 and over” age group.
 - b. Team Sports:
 - Ages 15 and under
 - Ages 16-21
 - Ages 22 and overAdditional age groups may be established if there is a sufficient number of teams in the “22 and over” age group. The age group of a team is determined by the age of the oldest athlete on that team on the opening date of the competition.
3. Age Groups may be combined under the following circumstances:
 - a. In individual sports, if there are less than three competitors within an age group, the athletes shall compete in the next oldest age group. That age group shall then be renamed to accurately reflect the entire range of competitors within that age group. Age groups may also be combined to reduce the variance between the highest and lowest scores within a division.
 - b. In team sports: within each ability group, an age group may be competing against a team of a different age group. If there is only one team within an age or ability group, that team must compete against teams of other age and ability groups.
4. An athlete’s age group shall be determined by the athlete’s age on the date of the opening of the competition.

SECTION I — SPECIAL OLYMPICS DIVISIONING

Insuring fair divisioning of athletes for competition is one of the primary duties of the Competition Manager. The following criteria shall determine how Special Olympics athletes are assigned to competition divisions at Special Olympics competitions. Where exceptions to these criteria are necessary, the Competition Manager will review proposed modifications to these criteria and make a final decision based on the goal of providing the most dignified and challenging competition experience for each athlete. The Competition Manager has final authority concerning divisions and any variation from these criteria. Protests based on Divisioning are not allowed.

1. Introduction to Divisioning

Special Olympics suggests a guideline of no more than 10% variance between the highest and lowest scores within any division. This 10% statement is not a rule.

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2. Ability and Determining Criteria for Divisioning.

a. An athlete's ability is the primary factor in divisioning Special Olympics competition. The ability of an athlete or team is determined by an entry score from a prior competition or is the result of a seeding round or preliminary event at the competition itself. The team Head Coach is responsible for ensuring that the athlete score utilized for divisioning most accurately reflects the true ability of the athlete. Forms should be provided to allow coaches to amend qualifying or preliminary scores that will be utilized in the divisioning process. Other factors that are significant in establishing competitive divisions are age and gender.

Note: "Preliminary" in these rules refers to on-site divisioning events utilized to determine final divisions.

b. Within each division the minimum number of competitors or teams is three and the maximum number is eight. In some cases, however, the number of athletes or teams within a competition will be insufficient to achieve this goal. The following procedures describe the sequential process for creating equitable divisions and also provides guidance for managing athlete participation when factors preclude ideal divisioning.

3. Divisioning Individual Sports: Timed and measured events

a. Step One: Divide Athletes By Gender.

- 1) Divide athletes into two groups based upon gender: female and male.
- 2) Athletes shall normally compete against other athletes of the same gender, unless the IF/NGB rules specifically allow mixed-gender events (e.g., Equestrian, pairs figure skating, bowling, table tennis, ice dancing, tennis, etc.).

b. Step Two: Divide Athletes by Age.

- 1) Divide male and female athletes into the following age groups: ages 8-11; 12-15; 16-21; 22-29; and ages 30 years and over. An additional age group may be established if there are a sufficient number of competitors in the 30 years and over age group.
- 2) An athlete's age group shall be determined by the athlete's age on the date of the opening of the competition.

c. Step Three: Divide Athletes By Ability.

- 1) To complete the divisioning process, the following guidelines shall be applied according to the event being divisioned.

a) In events that are measured in time, distance, or points:

- i. For both genders and all age groups, rank athletes in descending order based upon submitted entry scores or divisioning events.
- ii. Group these ranked athletes so that the highest and lowest scores are as close as possible to the 10% guideline and the number of competitors is not less than three (3) or more than eight (8).

b) In events that are judged and when divisioning events will be conducted during the competition:

- i. For both genders and all age groups within a performance level, rank athletes in descending order based upon divisioning scores.
- ii. Group these ranked athletes so that the highest and lowest scores are as close as possible to the 10% guideline and the number of competitors is not less than three (3) or more than eight (8).

c) In events that are judged and where divisioning events will not be conducted during the competition:

- i. The nature of judging precludes the use of scores from prior competitions(s) in divisioning. Without scores from preliminary competition, performance level remains as the only criterion of athlete ability.
- ii. For both genders and all age groups, identify athletes within each performance level.
- iii. If more than eight athletes are in the same gender and age group of a performance level, group athletes into divisions of no less than three and no more than eight competitors.

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4. Divisioning Team Sports.

a. Step One: Divide Teams By Gender.

Divide teams into two groups based upon gender. Female teams shall compete against other female teams and male teams shall compete against other male teams. Mixed gender teams shall be divisioned with male teams unless there are sufficient mixed gender teams of similar ability to make a separate division.

b. Step Two: Divide Teams By Age.

- 1) Divide male and female teams into the following age groups: ages 15 and under; 16-21; and 22 and over. An additional group may be established if there are a sufficient number of teams in the "22 and over" age group.
- 2) Teams should compete against other teams within the same age group.
- 3) The age group of a team is determined by the age of the oldest athlete on that team on the date of the opening of the competition.

c. Step Three: Divide Teams By Ability.

- 1) All Special Olympics team sport competitions shall utilize sport specific skills assessment tools and a divisioning round to assess the level of ability of the participating teams.

Refer to the Special Olympics Sports Rules for each team sport for a description of the skills assessment tool. Additional information regarding the assessment of team sports for divisioning purposes can be found in the Special Olympics Sports Management Team Guide.

- 2) Group teams according to ability based upon the skills assessment tool and results from the divisioning round.
- 3) Create divisions of no less than three and no more than eight teams by applying age groups to the teams within each ability group.

5. Resolving Divisioning Issues

- a. When the above process has been completed there will be instances where there will still be less than three competitors or teams in each division. In such cases the following method should be used:

- 1) **Modify Age Groups:** Age groups may be broadened to achieve an equitable division of no less than three athletes or teams. The age group should then be re-named to accurately reflect the age range of the competitors. However any IF/NGB rules that preclude competition between athletes of different ages (e.g. between children and adults) must be adhered to.

If there are still divisions of less than three competitors or teams:

- 2) **Modify Ability Range:** The ability range may be broadened beyond the 10% guideline.

If there are still divisions of less than three competitors or teams:

- 3) Combine athletes of different genders provided that it will not pose a risk to the health and safety of athletes to do so.

- b. Final divisions of less than three athletes or teams are only permissible once age groups and ability range have been broadened as far as possible within the above guidelines.

- c. Where exceptions to these criteria are necessary, the Competition Manager will review proposed modifications to these criteria and make a final decision based on the goal of providing the most dignified and challenging competition experience for each athlete. The Competition Manager has final authority concerning divisions and any variation from these criteria. Protests based on Divisioning are not allowed.

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6. If an athlete is disqualified in a preliminary event, they may be advanced to the final competition provided that they can safely compete in that event and that a score that accurately measures their ability can be provided to the competition manager in charge of divisioning. Athletes disqualified due to sportsmanship issues will not be allowed to advance.

SECTION J – AWARDS

1. At all Program-Level Games, Regional Games, World Games and any other Games or events, medals shall be presented to the first, second and third-place winners in each event and ribbons shall be presented to athletes who finish in fourth through eighth place. Athletes who are disqualified (for reasons other than unsportsmanlike conduct, including violation of the Honest Effort Rule) or who do not finish an event shall be presented with a participation ribbon.
2. Ties. In the case of a tie, each athlete or team that has achieved the same result shall receive the award for the highest place (e.g., two athletes who tie for third place shall each receive the bronze medal). Athletes or teams that follow shall receive the appropriate award for their order of finish (e.g., an athlete who crossed the finish line fourth shall receive the fourth place ribbon, regardless of whether or not the athletes who preceded him or her tied; thus a tie for one place will result in no award being given for the next place – a tie for first place means there is no second place winner).
3. Special Recognition. In addition to medals and ribbons, athletes may receive special recognition for significant accomplishments (e.g., Highest Pins Over Average, Most Improved Athlete, Personal Bests, Sportsmanship, etc.) following the official awards ceremony. Official Medals and Ribbons may only be awarded to athletes based on competition results and may not be presented as gifts or tokens of appreciation to sponsors, guests, coaches, etc.
4. Mementos. All athletes at a competition may be presented with a memento in recognition of their attendance at that event. These mementos, however, shall not be similar to the competitive awards presented to athletes at the event.
5. Team Sports.
 - a. Team trophies may be awarded to teams at any Special Olympics competition. Individual athletes on those teams may receive a trophy only at a single -sport tournament, but may receive a medal or ribbon at any Special Olympics competition.
 - b. When there is only one male or female team within an event that has been divisioned with teams of the opposite gender, this team may receive a first place award for its performance
 - c. Entire teams or individual members of a team disqualified from the entire competition for unsportsmanlike conduct shall not receive an award of any kind. (This does not include those athletes ejected from one round of competition who are allowed to return to play in the next round or team play).
6. Awards ceremonies shall be conducted in accordance with the Competition Management Guide.

ARTICLE 1**SECTION K — CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT TO HIGHER LEVEL COMPETITION**

1. Fundamental Principle.

Athletes of all ability levels have an equal opportunity to advance to the next higher level competition provided the sport and event are offered at the next highest level of competition.

2. Eligibility for Advancement.

a. An athlete is eligible to advance to the next competition provided she or he has:

1) Participated in the previous level of competition (e.g., an athlete must compete in Program level Games before advancing to the World Games), with the following exception:

2) An athlete or team for which there has been no competition opportunity at a Tournament or Games shall be eligible to advance to the next level of competition.

b. Training and competition must be in the same sport the athlete will participate in at the next level of competition. If additional events within that sport are available at the next level of competition, athletes must receive proper training.

3. Procedure for Athlete and Team Selection.

a. Programs must publish the process and criteria in advance.

b. The Accredited Program with the Games Organizing Committee (GOC) determines the number of athletes or teams that will be allowed to participate at the competition in question by sport and/or event. This is the quota to be filled.

c. The Accredited Program identifies the number of athletes or teams eligible for advancement within the sport/event based on participation in competition at the lower level.

d. If the number of eligible athletes or teams does not exceed the quota, all athletes and teams shall advance.

e. If the number of eligible athletes or teams exceeds the quota, athletes or teams that advance shall be selected as follows:

1) Priority is given to first place finishers from all divisions of the sport/event. If the number of first place finishers exceeds the quota, select athletes or teams to advance by random draw.

2) If there are not enough first place finishers to fill the quota, all first place finishers shall advance. The remaining quota shall be filled by a random draw of second place finishers from all divisions of the sport/event.

3) If the quota is large enough for all second place finishers to advance, the remaining quota shall be filled by a random draw of third place finishers from all divisions of the sport/event.

4) Repeat this process, adding each place of finish as necessary, until the quota is filled.

f. These procedures apply to both individual and team sports.

4. Adherence.

a. The criteria for athlete advancement is an essential component of the Special Olympics movement. Under extraordinary circumstances when the criteria cannot be met, authority to deviate from established procedures may be requested, provided the alternate selection procedures do not conflict with the Fundamental Principle of athlete advancement.

b. Accredited Programs may request authorization to add additional criteria for advancement based on behavior, medical or judicial considerations and/or to deviate from these advancement procedures due to the size or nature of their Program.

c. Requests to deviate from the established procedures must be submitted in writing as follows:

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5. For advancement to Multi-National, Regional and World Games: Special Olympics World Games Department will consider and approve/disapprove all requests.
6. For advancement to Competitions at or below the Program Level: the Accredited Program will consider and approve/disapprove all requests. SOI shall have the right to review approved deviations.
7. Advancement of Coaches. Accredited Programs are encouraged to develop selection criteria for coaches based on certification, technical background and practical experience that will enhance the competitive experience of Special Olympics athletes. SOI shall have the right to review approved deviations.

SECTION L – UNIFIED SPORTS®

1. Special Olympics Unified Sports is a program that combines Special Olympics athletes and athletes without intellectual disability (Partners) on sports teams for training and competition.
Age and ability level matching of athletes and partners and the athlete/partner ratio are defined on a sport-by-sport basis. Special Olympics Unified Sports Partners are individuals that do not have intellectual disability
2. Health and Safety.
 - a. Coaches should place the health and safety of all athletes above all else; this is particularly important in the selection of appropriate Athletes and Partners to participate on any Special Olympics Unified Sports team.
 - b. Individuals with significantly greater skill than other team members may be prohibited from participation on Special Olympics Unified Sports team since their participation may cause a risk to others
3. Philosophical Considerations.
 - a. When Athletes and Partners are of similar ability and age, their Special Olympics Unified Sports experience is enhanced. Every attempt should be made to keep all teammates as closely matched as possible. This will decrease the risk of injury to themselves and others and provide a more meaningful sports experience.
 - b. Members of a Special Olympics Unified Sports team should be able to demonstrate fundamental skills and strategies of the sport.
 - c. While there are specific rules governing the number of Unified Sports Athletes and Partners required during competition, it is also recommended to maintain a proportionate number of Athletes and Partners on the overall roster (as close to 50/50 as possible) so that the possibility of forfeiting a game due to not meeting the required line up ratio is decreased and the Unified Sports experience is enhanced in both training and competition.
4. Conduct of Competition.
 - a. All Special Olympics rules and regulations apply equally to Athletes and Partners with the following exception: Partners are required to complete a Unified Sports Partner Application, which includes an applicant's medical history, release from liability, volunteer screening and background information
 - b. Competition shall be governed by the Sports Rules. Specific rules for Unified Sports (e.g., the number of Athletes and Partners required during competition) are provided in the Rules for each sport.
 - c. If an official determines that a player is dominating play to gain an unfair advantage, the official may sanction the offending player. Sanctions may include: warning to the player and/or coach, citing the player with unsportsmanlike conduct or expulsion from the game.
 - d. Special Olympics Unified Sports teams shall be placed in competitive divisions with other Special Olympics Unified Sports teams based on ability and age, according to established procedures for Special Olympics divisioning.
 - e. Official Special Olympics Unified Sports Awards or Special Olympics Awards, shall be presented to both Athletes and Partners according to established procedures for the use of Special Olympics Awards.
 - f. Modifications have been added in selected sports to ensure the meaningful involvement of all athletes.

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**SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED SPORTS®
SPORTS SPECIFIC PARAMETERS**

		Similar Age	Similar Ability	Unified Sports Athlete-Partner Ratio for Competition on field of play at one time	
		R = Required P = Preferred	R = Required P = Preferred	# of Athletes	# of Partners
Team Sports					
Basketball	Team Competition	R	R	3	2
Cricket	Team Competition	R	R	6	5
Football	5-a-side	R	R	3	2
Football	7-a-side	R	R	4	3
Football	11-a-side	R	R	6	5
Netball	Team Competition	R	R	3	2
Softball	Team Competition	R	R	5	5
Team Handball	Team Competition	R	R	4	3
Volleyball	Team Competition	R	R	3	3
Floor Hockey	Team Competition	R	R	3	3
Individual Sports					
Aquatics	Relays	R	R	2	2
Athletics	Relays	R	R	2	2
Badminton	Doubles/ Mixed Doubles	P	R	1	1
Bocce	Doubles	P	P	1	1
Bocce	Team	P	P	2	2
Bowling	Doubles/ Mixed Doubles	P	P	1	1
Bowling	Team	P	P	2	2
Cycling	Tandem Time Trials	P	P	1	1
Golf	Team Play	P	P	1	1
Kayaking	K-2 Doubles	P	R	1	1
Roller Skating	Pairs/Dance Team	P	P	1	1
Sailing	Crew of 2	P	P	1	1
Sailing	Crew of 3	P	P	2	1
Table Tennis	Doubles/ Mixed Doubles	P	R	1	1
Tennis	Doubles/ Mixed Doubles	P	R	1	1
Cross Country Skiing	Relays	R	R	2	2
Figure Skating	Pairs Skating	P	R	1	1
Figure Skating	Ice Dancing	P	R	1	1
Snowshoeing	Relays	R	R	2	2
Speed Skating	Relays	R	R	2	2

Please refer to Special Olympics Sport-specific Rules for additional information and details for conducting Unified Sports competition.

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5. Individual Sports for which Unified Sports events will not be included:
 - a. Gymnastics
 - b. Judo
 - c. Powerlifting
 - d. Alpine Skiing
 - e. Snowboarding

SECTION M — MOTOR ACTIVITIES TRAINING PROGRAM (MATP)

The Special Olympics Motor Activities Training Program (MATP) is designed for persons with the greatest physical need who do not yet possess the physical and/or behavioral skills necessary to participate in official Special Olympics sports.

The program provides a comprehensive motor activity and recreation training curriculum for these participants. MATP emphasizes training and participation rather than competition. In addition, the program provides the means for athletes to participate in appropriate recreation activities geared to their ability levels.

MATP may only be conducted under the direction of professionals certified in each jurisdiction to work with this population. Activities shall be conducted in accordance with the MATP Coaching Guide which is available from Special Olympics Program offices.

ARTICLE 1**ADDENDUM A — SPORTS RULES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SRAC)**

1. Addendum A.1 - SPORTS RULES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- a. Purpose. The purpose of the Sports Rules Advisory Committee (SRAC) is to conduct an on-going review of the Sports Rules and make recommendations to SOI concerning amendments to the Sports Rules proposed by the Committee and/or by Accredited Programs.
- b. Composition. The SRAC shall consist of members who are sports experts, coaches, parents, athletes, officials, Executive/National Directors of Accredited Programs or members of SOI's Board. Committee members shall be drawn from Accredited Programs throughout the world and shall be as geographically diverse and international in scope as is reasonably practicable. SOI's Board shall determine the size of the Sports Rules Advisory Committee.
- c. Selection and Terms of Members. SOI shall appoint all members of the Sports Rules Advisory Committee. These appointments shall be made by SOI's Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee. In making these appointments, SOI may consider recommendations from Accredited Programs or from other persons who participate in or are affiliated with Special Olympics. Each member of the SRAC shall serve for a term of four (4) years. SOI's Chief Executive Officer will appoint a replacement for any Committee member who is unable or unwilling to complete his/her four-year term.
- d. Staff. The Sports Department of SOI is responsible for providing staff support to the Sports Rules Advisory Committee and Subcommittees.
- e. Chair and Vice Chair. A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, serving during the same rotation period, shall each be elected for a two year term. The Chairperson of the SRAC shall receive all proposals relating to the Sports Rules; he or she shall be responsible for initiating all committee action on all proposals; and he or she shall prepare the Annual Sports Rules Advisory Committee Summary Report.

2. Addendum A.2 - SPORTS RESOURCE TEAMS (SRTs)

- a. The Sports Rules Advisory Committee shall utilize Sport Resource Teams (SRT's) for reviewing the rules concerning each Official and Recognized Sport.
- b. Each SRT shall report its recommendations to the SRAC.
- c. The following shall be the major responsibilities for SRT members pertaining to a specific sport:
 - 1) Reviewing all proposed rule changes.
 - 2) Providing input and guidance to the SRAC regarding proposed rules changes.
 - 3) Acquiring an understanding of Special Olympics and International Federation rules.
 - 4) Ensure that sports rules are accurately reflected in all sport specific resources as they are developed.
 - 5) Working with other SRT members to formulate recommendations to the SRAC.
 - 6) Assuring that the basic philosophy of Special Olympics is kept in mind concerning all sports rules.

3. Addendum A.3 - PROCEDURES FOR ADOPTING SPECIAL OLYMPICS SPORTS RULES, AMENDMENTS, MODIFICATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

- a. Anyone within Special Olympics may submit proposals to the Sports Rules Advisory Committee via the SOI Sports Department regarding new rules, amendments, modifications or deletions to the Sports Rules.
- b. Programs shall be notified of any changes to the Sports Rules.
- c. All new rules, amendments, modifications, or deletions to the Sports Rules shall become effective on January 31 in the calendar year following their adoption by the SOI Board of Directors. A Summary of Changes will be posted with Sports Rules on www.specialolympics.org or on the Special Olympics Knowledge Management System (KMS).

4. Addendum A.4 — OFFICIAL FORM FOR PROPOSING SPECIAL OLYMPICS SPORTS RULES, AMENDMENTS AND MODIFICATIONS

ARTICLE 1

SPECIAL OLYMPICS PROPOSED RULE CHANGE FORM

Name of Sport: _____ Date of Submission: _____

Mail form to: **Sports Rules Advisory Committee (SRAC)**
c/o Sports Department
Special Olympics Inc.
1133 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
USA

Or, e-mail to: **sportsrules@specialolympics.org**

Official Special Olympics Sports Rules Version you are reading from: (date in bottom corner)

Rule Reference (i.e. Cycling — Section E — Rules of Competition, 1. b.)

Page Number: _____

Rule as it Reads: _____

Recommendation: (Check the box of the action proposed)

- Delete Rule
- Add New Rule
- Change Rule to Read as Follows:

Reason for proposed rule change:

Has this rule change been field tested/utilized? If so where and with what results?

Rule Submitted on behalf of Special Olympics Program:

- YES
- NO

If yes, what Special Olympics Program:

Person Submitting Rule Change: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

ARTICLE 1**ADDENDUM B**

International Federations of Sport

Sport	Federations
Alpine Skiing	Federation Internationale de Skie (FIS) Blochstrasse 2 3653 OBERHOFEN AM THUNERSEE SWITZERLAND T: +41 33 / 2 44 61 61 F: +41 33 / 2 44 61 71 Internet: www.fis-ski.com
Aquatics	Fédération Internationale de Natacion Amateur (FINA) Avenue de l'Avant-Poste 4 1005 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND T: +41 21 / 310 47 10 F: +41 21 / 312 66 10 Internet: www.fina.org
Athletics	International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) 17, rue Princesse Florestine B.P. 359 98007 MONACO CEDEX MONACO T: +377 / 93 10 88 88 F: +377 / 93 15 95 15 Internet: www.iaaf.org
Badminton	International Badminton Federation (IBF) Stadium Badminton Kuala Lumpur Batu 31/2 — Jalan Cheras MY-56000 KUALA LUMPUR Malaysia T: +60 3 / 92 83 71 55 F: +60 3 / 92 84 71 55 Internet: www.internationalbadminton.org

ARTICLE 1

Basketball	Federation Internationale de Basketbal (FIBA) 8 Chemin de Blandonnet 1214 VERNIER / GENEVE SWITZERLAND T: +41 22 / 545 00 00 F: +41 22 / 545 00 99 Internet: www.fiba.com
Bocce	Special Olympics, Inc. (SOI) 1133 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036 USA T: +1 202 628-3630 F: +1 202 824-0200 Internet: www.specialolympics.org
Bowling	Fédération Internationale des Quilleurs (FIQ) Green Valley Country Club, Valle Verde I E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave, Brgy. Ugong 1604 PASIG CITY, MANILA Philippines T: +63 2 / 671 2436 F: +63 2 / 671 7031 Internet: www.fiq.org
Cross Country Skiing	Federation Internationale de Skie (FIS) Blochstrasse 2 3653 OBERHOFEN AM THUNERSEE SWITZERLAND T: +41 33 / 2 44 61 61 F: +41 33 / 2 44 61 71 Internet: www.fis-ski.com

ARTICLE 1

Cricket	International Cricket Council (ICC) Al Thuraya Tower 1 Dubai Media City - PO Box 500070 DUBAI United Arab Emirates T: +971 4 / 3688088 F: +971 4 / 3688080 Internet: www.icc-cricket.com
Cycling	Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) CH-1860 AIGLE SWITZERLAND T: +41 24 / 468 58 11 F: +41 24 / 468 58 12 Internet: www.uci.ch
Equestrian	Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) Avenue Mon-Repos 24 Case Postale 157 1000 LAUSANNE 5 SWITZERLAND T: +41 21 / 310 47 47 F: +41 21 / 310 47 60 Internet: www.horsesport.org
Figure Skating	International Skating Union (ISU) Chemin de Primerose 2 1007 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND T: +41 21 / 612 66 66 F: +41 21 / 612 66 77 Internet: www.isu.org

ARTICLE 1

Floorball	International Floorball Federation (IFF) Alakiventie 2 00920 HELSINKI FINLAND T: +358-9 454 214 25 F: +358-9 454 214 50 Internet: www.floorball.org
Floor Hockey	Special Olympics, Inc. (SOI) 1133 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036 USA T: +1 202 628-3630 F: +1 202 824-0200 Internet: www.specialolympics.org
Football (Soccer)	Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Case Postale 85 8030 ZURICH SWITZERLAND T: +41 43 / 222 7777 F: +41 43 / 222 7878 Internet: www.fifa.org
Golf	Royal Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrew's (R&A) St. Andrews Fife United Kingdom KY16 9JD T: +44-33-47-2112 F: +44-33-47-7580 Internet: www.randa.org

ARTICLE 1

Gymnastics	Federation Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) Rue des Oeuches 10 Case postal 359 2740 MOUTIER 1 SWITZERLAND T: +41 32 / 494 64 10 F: +41 32 / 494 64 19 Internet: www.fig-gymnastics.org
Judo	International Judo Federation (IJF) 33rd Fl. Doosan Tower 18-12 Ulchi-Ro, 1KA, Chung-Ku 100 – 730 SEOUL KOREA T: +82 2 / 3398 1017-9 F: +82 2 / 3398 1020 Internet: www.ijf.org
Kayaking	International Canoe Federation (ICF) C/ Antracita 7, 4th floor 28045 MADRID SPAIN T: +34-91 506 11 50 F: +34-91 506 11 55 Internet: www.canoeicf.com
Netball	International Federation of Netball Associations (IFNA) Belle Vue Leisure Centre Kirkmanshulme Lane M12 4TF Longsight, MANCHESTER UK T: +44 161 / 953 2459 F: +44 161 / 953 2492 Internet: www.netball.org

ARTICLE 1

Powerlifting	International Powerlifting Federation (IPF) Lerchenauer Str. 124a 80809 80809 MUNICH GERMANY T: +49 89/ 351 3916 F: +49 89/ 357 32243 Internet: www.powerlifting-ipf.com
Roller Skating	Federation Internationale de Roller Skating (FIRS) c/o FIHP Viale Tiziano 74 00196 ROME ITALY T: +39 06 / 3685 8543 F: +39 06 / 3685 8211 Internet: www.rollersports.org
Sailing	International Sailing Federation (ISAF) Ariadne House Town Quay SO14 2AQ SOUTHAMPTON, Hants. UK T: +44 2380 / 635 111 F: +44 2380 / 635 789 Internet: www.sailing.org
Snowboard	Federation Internationale de Skie (FIS) Blochstrasse 2 3653 OBERHOFEN AM THUNERSEE SWITZERLAND T: +41 33 / 2 44 61 61 F: +41 33 / 2 44 61 71 Internet: www.fis-ski.com

ARTICLE 1

Snowshoeing	Special Olympics Inc. (SOI) 1133 19th St. NW Washington, DC 20036 USA T: +1 202 628-3630 F: +1 202 824-0200 Internet: www.specialolympics.org
Softball	International Softball Federation (ISF) 1900 S. Park Road 33563 PLANT CITY (FL) USA T: +1 813 / 864 0100 F: +1 813 / 864 0105 Internet: www.internationalsoftball.com
Speed Skating	International Skating Union (ISU) Chemin de Primerose 2 1007 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND T: +41 21 / 612 66 66 F: +41 21 / 612 66 77 Internet: www.isu.org
Table Tennis	International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Chemin de la Roche 11 1020 RENENS SWITZERLAND T: +41 21 / 340 70 90 F: +41 21 / 340 70 99 Internet: www.ittf.com

ARTICLE 1

Team Handball	Federation Internationale de Handball (IHF) Case Postale 312 4020 Bale, Switzerland T: +41 61 272-1300 F: +41 61 272-1344 Internet: www.ihf.info/
Tennis	International Tennis Federation (ITF) Bank Lane Roehampton SW15 5XZ LONDON UK T: +44 20 / 88 78 64 64 F: +44 20 / 88 78 77 99 Internet: www.itftennis.com
Volleyball	Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) 12 avenue de la Gare 1001 LAUSANNE SWITZERLAND T: +41 21 / 345 35 35 F: +41 21 / 345 35 45 Internet: www.fivb.org

ARTICLE 1**ADDENDUM C — ELIGIBILITY**

GR 6.01

ADDENDUM D — OATHS AND CODES OF CONDUCT**ATHLETES OATH**

“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.”

COACH’S OATH

“In the name of all coaches and in the spirit of sportsmanship, I promise that we will act professionally, respect others, and ensure a positive experience for all. I promise to provide quality sports and training opportunities in a safe environment for all athletes.”

OFFICIALS OATH

“In the name of all judges and officials, I promise that we shall officiate in these Special Olympics Games with complete impartiality, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the spirit of sportsmanship.”

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE’S CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics athletes and Unified Partners agree to the following code:

SPORTSMANSHIP

I will practice good sportsmanship.

I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team, and Special Olympics.

I will not use bad language.

I will not swear or insult other persons.

I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers, or staff.

TRAINING AND COMPETITION

I will train regularly.

I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.

I will listen to my coaches and the officials and ask questions when I do not understand.

I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.

I will not “hold back” in preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals competition division.

ARTICLE 1**RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS**

I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.

I will not smoke in non-smoking areas.

I will not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics events.

I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.

I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules, the International Federation and the National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport (s).

I understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences by my Program or a Games Organizing Committee for a World Games up to and including not being allowed to participate.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS COACH'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all coaches to honor Sport and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics Coaches agree to observe the following code:

RESPECT FOR OTHERS

I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, coaches, other volunteers, friends and spectators in Special Olympics.

I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.

I will be a positive role model for the athletes I coach.

ENSURE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

I will ensure that for each athlete I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is a positive.

I will respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete.

I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.

I will be fair, considerate and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.

I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.

I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the athlete's ability at all preliminary competition and finals competition in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

ACT PROFESSIONALLY AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.

I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in the sport (athletes, coaches, opponents, officials, administrators, parents, spectators, media, etc.).

I will encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.

I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions or during competition.

I will refrain from any form of personal abuse towards athletes and others, including verbal, physical and emotional abuse.

I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes in my care.

ARTICLE 1
QUALITY SERVICE TO THE ATHLETES

- I will seek continual improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will be knowledgeable about the Sports Rules and skills of the sport (s) I coach.
- I will provide a planned training program.
- I will keep copies of the medical, training, and competition records for each athlete I coach.
- I will follow the Special Olympics, the International Federation and the National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport(s).

HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE ATHLETES

- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training and the environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
- I will review each athlete's medical form and be aware of any limitations on that athlete's participation noted on that form.
- I will encourage athletes to seek medical advice when required.
- I will maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.
- I understand that if I violate this Code of Conduct I will be subject to a range of consequence, up to and including being prohibited from coaching in Special Olympics.

ADDENDUM—E GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPORTS TRAINING AND COMPETITION

GR 7.03. (b)

ADDENDUM F — PARTICIPATION BY INDIVIDUALS WITH DOWN SYNDROME WHO HAVE ATLANTO-AXIAL INSTABILITY

This is reprinted from Section 6.02.(g) of the General Rules

Special Olympics requires temporary restriction of individuals with Down syndrome from participation in certain activities that pose potential risk to the spinal column. This restriction may be lifted once an X-ray is produced showing no evidence of instability on the C-1 vertebrae.

1. Accredited Programs may allow all individuals with Down syndrome to continue in most Special Olympics sport training and competition activities. However, such individuals shall not be permitted to participate in sport training and competition activities which, by their nature, result in hyperextension, radical flexion or direct pressure on the neck or upper spine, until the an X-ray is produced showing no evidence of instability in the C-1 vertebrae or the requirement of 2 below is satisfied. Such sports training and competition activities include:
 - a. butterfly events, individual medley events, diving starts in swimming
 - b. diving
 - c. pentathlon
 - d. high jump
 - e. equestrian
 - f. artistic gymnastics
 - g. football (soccer) team play

ARTICLE 1

- h. powerlifting (back squat)
 - i. snowboarding
 - j. judo
 - k. alpine skiing and
 - l. any warm-up exercise placing undue stress on the head and neck.
2. Any individual diagnosed as having Atlanto-Axial Instability, shall not be allowed to participate in the activities listed above. An exception to this is allowed only if the athlete submits written certifications from two physicians, on forms prescribed by Special Olympics, combined with an acknowledgment of risks signed by an adult athlete or his/her parent or guardian if the athlete is a minor.

ADDENDUM G — GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION OF ATHLETES

GR 6.02