Coach Education Program

Online SOCCER Sport Certification
Coach Education Program

*If you have not already done so, please complete the following Class A Certification Process at: http://soky.org/coachcertification/ prior to completing this Sport Certification Training

- Become a Class A Volunteer
- Complete and Submit Class “A” Volunteer Application. *Required every three years*
- Complete the online Volunteer Orientation Training and submit its quiz. *Only required once during continued involvement with SOKY*
- Complete the online Special Olympics International Protective Behaviors course. *Required every three years for those over the age of 18*
- Complete the online CDC’s “Heads Up” Concussion Training for SOKY and submit its quiz. *Required every three years for those over the age of 18*
Soccer Sport Certification

• This training will cover Special Olympics Kentucky Soccer events, rules, competitions, the divisioning and registration process, along with any additional soccer resources and other general information.

• The online Soccer Sport Certification training is required for SOKY coaches who like to become sport certified and is part of the criteria to be eligible to attend both USA and World Games. The training is also for those coaches and/or volunteers that would just like to learn more information about Special Olympics Kentucky as a whole and specifically its Soccer program.
Coaching Special Olympics Athletes prepares Special Olympics coaches to use their sport-specific knowledge in coaching athletes with intellectual disabilities. This course meets the Special Olympics standards and competencies for coach certification. For veteran Special Olympics coaches, this course serves as a reminder of the essentials sometimes forgotten after years of coaching. For new Special Olympics coaches, this course will help prepare you for your first role in coaching Special Olympics athletes.
Coaching Special Olympics Athletes (Cont.)

The better the coach …

the better the experiences …

the better the athlete!
I COACH BECAUSE...

Please take a minute to watch this “I Coach Because Clip” created by Special Olympics New Jersey

I COACH BECAUSE CLIP
Course Overview

Unit 1: The Athlete
Unit 2: Teaching & Training
Unit 3: Preparing & Coaching During Competition
Unit 4: Managing the Program
Unit 5: Additional Coach Information
Unit 6: SOKY Soccer Specifics
Unit 1 – The Athlete Overview

- Psychological Issues or Learning Issues
- Medical Issues
- Social Issues
Unit 1 – Psychological Issues & Considerations

**Motivation** – helping athletes maintain interest
- May have shorter attention span; harder to keep independently “on task”.
- May be motivated more by short-term rather than long-term goals.
- May learn better with more frequent positive reinforcement

**Perception** – helping athletes understand the sport in which they are participating
- May have difficulty focusing attention on the appropriate object or task
- May have impairments in sight or hearing
Unit 1 – Psychological Issues & Considerations (Cont.)

**Comprehension**—helping athletes remember and perform the skill they have learned (understanding)
- May find it difficult to understand verbal explanations of new skills. Often find it easier to learn through visual demonstrations and physical prompts.
- May have difficulty in understanding complex, multi-part actions or explanations.
- Often take a longer time between learning one piece of information and the next (learning plateau).
- Less able to generalize skills learned in one situation to a different situation.

**Memory**
- May need frequent repetition and reminders in order to remember concept or skill
### Unit 1 – Psychological Challenges

*Each psychological item has its challenge and action:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Item</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Easily distracted by noise</td>
<td>Control surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>History of neglect &amp; negative reinforcement, feeling of failure</td>
<td>Focus on positive, appropriate reinforcement, catch the athlete doing well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>Difficulty applying skills in different environments</td>
<td>Practice in different settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Difficulty learning through verbal explanation only</td>
<td>Add demonstrations and/or physical manipulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Down Syndrome

- Approximately 10% of individuals with Down Syndrome have a condition called atlanto-axial instability, which is a mal-alignment of the cervical vertebrae C-1 and C-2 in the neck. This condition may cause possible injury if they participate in activities that hyper-extend or radically flex the neck or upper spine.

- Prohibited sports – equestrian, gymnastics, diving, pentathlon, butterfly and dive starts in swimming, high jump, alpine/snowboarding, squat lift and soccer.

Medications

- Understand the physical side effects of an athlete’s medication

- Very important to know the medications athletes are taking
Unit 1 – Medical Considerations (Cont.)

Seizures

- Incidence tends to be higher with Special Olympics athletes
- Athlete safety to minimize the adverse effects of a seizure

Physical Disabilities

- Some athletes also have physical disabilities which may affect the sports they can participate in or the methods of teaching a coach must use. Special Olympics has events for individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers or other assistance. *SOCCER IS A NON-ASSISTED SPORT*
- Muscle strength may be needed for particular sports and some athletes may not have the strength for those sports. This is often due to lack of use rather than a permanent disability.
Autism

- 20% of athletes exhibit one or more of the autism spectrum disorders
- Over stimulate

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

- These athletes consistently function better on performance tasks compared with verbal tasks. The more concrete the task, the better the performance.
- Tend to have more verbal comprehension skills, despite being comfortable and chatty around people. These athletes will also tend to have attention and memory deficits and often display poor judgement in distinguishing right from wrong.
## Unit 1 – Medical Considerations for each action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>See the challenge that correlates with the appropriate action.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Down Syndrome</td>
<td>Ensure the athlete is screened for atlanto-axial instability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Seizures</td>
<td>Be prepared to protect the athlete and minimize adverse affects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Autism spectrum disorders</td>
<td>Control and/or block self-stimulatory behavior and set up a behavior support plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Attention deficit/hyperactivity</td>
<td>Shorten drills and provide one-to-one assistance when needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Fetal alcohol syndrome</td>
<td>Provide concrete performance tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit 1 – Social Considerations

Social Skills
- May lack basic social/adaptive skills due to a lack of opportunity or training
- May also lack communication skills and positive interaction with others

Recreation at Home
- Lack of physical activity
- Lack of encouragement

Economic Status
- May lack financial means
- May not have access to independent transportation
All of the following social consideration(s) may impact an athlete’s participation in Special Olympics:

- Inappropriate responses to social situations
- Physical inactivity being modeled
- Lack of endurance
- Lack of access to transportation

Our challenge as coaches is to develop a full understanding of our athletes and the strengths and weaknesses they bring with them to a Special Olympics program. By doing so we can begin to develop a training and competition program that they will benefit from and enjoy.
Unit 2 – Teaching & Training the Athlete
There are many ways to organize a training session for Special Olympics athletes. Because of some of the things previously identified concerning comprehension and memory, there is considerable value in developing a consistent training routine that provides familiarity, stability, and comfort.
## Unit 2 – Organizing a Training Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component and Details</th>
<th>Layout of Drill or Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warm-up &amp; Stretching</td>
<td>Specific to the sport, repetitive and involve athletes in leading activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills Construction</td>
<td>Break skills into smaller tasks, involve many athletes at a time and practice skills related to event situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition Experience</td>
<td>Scrimmage, simulate event/game situations and work towards what the competition will look like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool-Down, Stretch, &amp; Reward</td>
<td>Playing a game related to the sport and end each training with a cool down activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- A warm-up should be the first physical activity in every training session or competition. It helps prepare the body and mind for the activity we are about to do. Warm-ups should begin at a slow pace and gradually become a little faster and more difficult.

- A warm-up helps us to reach a state of physical and mental readiness. When we prepare both the body and the mind, we are less likely to suffer an injury and will preform better at each practice, training and competition.
- **Physical Benefits:** A warm-up prepares the body for sport or exercise and helps to prevent injury by:
  - Increasing heart rate
  - Increasing breathing rate
  - Increasing blood flow to the active muscles
  - Increasing body and muscle temperature

- **Mental Benefits:** Warm-ups prepare the mind to focus on the sport or exercise by:
  - Helping athletes shift focus from life to sport
  - Mentally reviewing skills previously learned
  - Connecting the mind and the body (linking hand and eye coordination)
Every sport is different and each sport has specific skills and movements. The warm-up should be personalized to the sport and the ability levels of all of the athletes.

However there are some general components that should be included in all warm-ups regardless of the sport in which includes the following:

- Aerobic activity to raise heart rate
- Dynamic stretches
- Sport specific movements
Aerobic activities are whole body movements that will increase the heart rate that may include:

- Walk or jog around the field for five minutes
- Team Dance
- Team Game (i.e. – tag or sport specific game)
- Build an obstacle course using the equipment and space you have for practice

Aerobic activities should start at a slow pace and gradually increase in intensity/difficulty and last at least five minutes.
Now that the body is warm it is time to focus on stretching the muscles you will use during your sport.

Dynamic stretches consist of active, controlled movements that take body parts through a full range of motion.

Sport specific dynamic stretches include:

- Sprints
- Agility drills
- Balance drills

General dynamic stretches include:

- High knees
- Butt kicks
- Leg swings
- Torso twists
- Side stepping
- Arm circles
Cool-Down

- When your training, practice or sport session is complete you should always cool down. It as important to have a good cool-down as it is to have a good warm-up. A good cool-down allows the body to gradually return to a state of rest.

- There are many purposes of a cool-down including:
  - Decrease heart rate
  - Decrease breathing rate
  - Decrease body and muscle temperature
  - Decrease muscle soreness
  - Improve flexibility
  - Promote relaxation
Cool-Down

- The cool-down is also a great chance for coaches to review the session, to tell athletes what to expect at the next session, and to ask for feedback from athletes. Remind your athletes they need to drink water and have a healthy snack to help recover from practice. The Fit 5 Guide has suggestions for healthy snacks and recommendations for proper hydration.

- Cool-down activities may include: static stretching, controlled breathing intervals and some light aerobic activity.
Unit 2 – Training Sequence

- The key is to break down skills into small tasks or steps; tasks are then put together to form skills. Use drills and activities that involve many athletes at all times. Practice skills in situations that are related to the game or event. Break skills down into small steps.

Task → Skill → Application → Competition
# Unit 2 – Training Sequence

What’s the challenge and how to fix it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Sequence Element</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Acquire ability to repeatedly demonstrate sport competencies in different situations &amp; environments</td>
<td>Provide game like drills or situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Acquire ability to perform series of sport competencies effectively and necessary to perform a sport</td>
<td>Work on essential sport competencies to perform the sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>Acquire ability to put essential sport competencies into practice</td>
<td>Provide scrimmage opportunities in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Acquire ability to perform essential sport competencies</td>
<td>Break essential sport competencies down into individual parts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Communication is key to immediately reinforcing desired behavior. There are several key words that begin with a “C” which address what a coach should say:

  • CONCISE
  • CONSISTENT
  • CLEAR
  • COMMAND-ORIENTED
  • CONCRETE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sport Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concise</td>
<td>Use a few key words that cue a desired action</td>
<td>&quot;Go to the free throw line&quot; Showing an athlete where to stand on defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Use the same word or phrase for the same action</td>
<td>Coach constantly say “Breathe” – teaching an athlete when to take a breath in swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Use easy to understand words that have one meaning</td>
<td>&quot;Swing the bat&quot; teaching how/when to swing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command-Oriented</td>
<td>Use words that elicit or reinforce a desired action</td>
<td>“On your mark. Set. Go.” Using this phrase for starts in athletics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete</td>
<td>Connect words to something defined or tangible</td>
<td>&quot;Jump forward&quot; when coaching an athlete in the long jump.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit 2 – Levels of Assistance or Instruction

- It is important to use the appropriate level of instruction and assistance.
  - A lower ability athlete may require more assistance
  - Verbal cues should always be accompanied by demonstration
  - Partial physical assistance may be needed to properly position the athlete
  - When all else fails take the athlete through the complete motion
# Unit 2 – Levels of Assistance or Instruction (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Instruction or Assistance</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sport Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Physical Assistance</strong></td>
<td>Help the athlete through the entire motion of the skill</td>
<td>Softball: coach makes an adjustment to the athlete’s arm motion when throwing the ball by moving the athlete's arm through the entire throwing movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal</strong></td>
<td>Tell the athlete what to do</td>
<td>Footwork: “run forward to the line; then return, running backward”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstration</strong></td>
<td>Show the athlete the proper technique</td>
<td>Soccer: one athlete shoots on goal while another watches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partial Physical Assistance</strong></td>
<td>Place the athlete's hands in the proper position</td>
<td>Golf: coach physically adjusts the athlete's hands on the golf club with the correct grip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The goal is for coaches to meet each athlete where he/she is and treat him/her accordingly.

However, a coach may often have certain expectations of an athlete that may not be realistic … not because the coach does not care, but because the coach does not understand or appreciate the differences that may exist.

When an athlete exhibits what is generally perceived as inappropriate behavior, the inappropriate behavior may not be defiance, acting out or silliness. These behaviors may simply be a reflection or part of the person and/or what is operating in the moment.
### Unit 2 – Managing Athlete Behavior (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete Behavior Characteristics</th>
<th>Strategies to Improve Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Swimmer has a short attention span** | 1. Dwell on a stroke or activity for short periods of time; provide numerous activities focusing on same task  
2. Provide different opportunities for repetition and review, which is the key to gaining new skill.  
3. Work one-on-one to gain full attention. |
| **Basketball athlete yells if he/she misses a shot** | 1. Emphasize the other aspects of the game besides shooting  
2. Work on shooting drills without a hoop  
3. Begin to shoot at a hoop but in a non-game setting with a one-on-one coach |
| **Bowler doesn’t wait their turn** | 1. Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is  
2. Have the bowler wait with a coach behind the bowling area until their turn is up  
3. Emphasize the order and that the bowler will always follow the same individual |
- A key goal of Special Olympics is to provide an opportunity for all athletes to experience success in competitions.

- A Special Olympics athlete can benefit from many aspects of a competition (including meeting new people, participating in the festivities of Opening Ceremonies and other social events, the excitement of traveling to new places and staying away from home, etc.). None of these things, however, should be as important to the coach as the focus on the participation in the competition itself.

- This section highlights ways to improve the quality of an athlete’s competition experience.
Unit 3 – Preparing for Competition

**Registration and Key Pre-Season Items**

- Provide accurate entry and team roster information along with accurate scoresheets (Game Summary Forms), appropriate divisioning guidelines in which all are provided to SOKY State Office in a timely manner and by the requested due date.

- Help the specific Program Director prepare a successful competition for your athletes by meeting the registration deadlines and by turning in accurate and up to date information.

- As a coach, know and understand all of the rules in which can then be properly taught to your athletes.

- Hold preseason meeting with athletes, coaches & family members to discuss expectations of the season – set the standard and any guidelines needed.
Unit 3 – Preparing for Competition (Cont.)

**Supervision**

Discuss the challenges associated with participating in competition away from home, and why adequate, non-coaching additional support personnel are needed (other persons).

**Transportation**

**Lodging** (need for same-sex supervision) [SOKY Housing Policy]

**Social activities**

**Coaches meetings** (Who will supervise athletes during these?)
Unit 3 – Preparing for Competition (Cont.)

**Travel and Overnight**

- Discuss overnight concerns with parents or group-home supervisors

- Write up a simple checklist of items to bring and distribute to athletes and parents

- Make sure that all special medication needs are understood. Coaches may have to assist with handling medications. Have all medical forms and information readily available at all times.

- Work with most effective rooming arrangements, taking into account athlete choice, behavioral and personality clashes, etc.
Unit 3 – Competition-Day Coaching

**Guidelines for Success**

- **Teach responsibility & independence:** Assist athletes in dressing appropriately (proper uniform), understanding what is happening at competition site, maintaining a focused attitude and appropriate behavior.

- **Arrive Early:** Allow time for putting on uniforms, warm-up and stretching routines and time to focus on the competition.

  Encourage maximum effort no matter your specific division or opponents throughout the entire competition!
Guidelines for Success

- Help athletes learn from winning & losing
  *Deal graciously and realistically with winning and losing. Focus on effort made, recognize accomplishments and new skills that were performed and taking something positive away from the experience.

- Let athletes compete without direct supervision (depending on ability or division)
  *Not running down the side of the court shouting instructions, allowing the competition officials to conduct the competition and allowing athletes to make mistakes and helping them learn from their mistakes.

IF YOU MUST PROTEST A RESULT OR OUTCOME OF AN EVENT, PLEASE DO SO IN A CALM & RESPECTFUL MANNER!
The coach can be the key person who makes any competition experience a good one.

*Please, take the time to adequately prepare for competition and plan for on-site supervision and make sure your time coaching is time well spent.
Unit 4 – Managing the Program

The successful Special Olympics Kentucky coach:

**Is sports and coaching knowledgeable:**
- Special Olympics Kentucky is a sport organization
- Technical knowledge of the sport and how to teach it is essential if coaches are to effectively help athletes improve their sport skills and truly benefit from Special Olympics.
- Successful coaches are constantly looking for opportunities to learn more about the sport.

**Is Special Olympics Kentucky knowledgeable:**
- Special Olympics Kentucky offered sports and modified rules to each sport
- Special Olympics Kentucky Mission Statement
- Special Olympics Kentucky Athlete and Coach Oath
- Special Olympics Kentucky Coaching Requirements (Coach Certification Process)

*A better understanding of these will benefit your athletes!*
The successful Special Olympics Kentucky coach:

Recruits and trains assistant coaches:
- Individualized coach-athlete teaching is key to successful training in Special Olympics.
- Assistant coaches can be recruited to help provide individualized attention.
- Assistant coaches are useful only if they are trained and coordinated at practice.
- Invites fellow co-workers or friends out to see a game or a practice in hopes they will become involved.

Recruit and trains athletes:
- A coach is also a promoter and recruiter; always tries to expand participation
- Places athletes in correct division or ability level every season
- Puts a priority on safety
- Puts a priority on Health and Fitness & overall well-being of athletes
- Conducts high-quality training and competition
- Involves and educates families of participants
- Assists with community inclusion to improve social and communication skills of participants
Unit 4 – The Successful Special Olympics Coach (Cont.)

- Understands the proper and preferred method for wanting to communicate any feedback, suggestions, or complaints to the SOKY state office.
  - NONE OF THE LISTED ITEMS ABOVE SHOULD TAKE PLACE AT OR DURING AN EVENT
  - THE ITEMS ABOVE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED VIA EMAIL OR PHONE CALL BY THE HEAD COACH AND ONLY THAT PARTICULAR COACH (EMAILS SHOULD BE SHORT AND TO THE POINT)
  - THE HEAD COACH SHOULD FUNNEL ALL COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE TEAM, PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, ETC. THROUGH THEM PRIOR TO BRINGING IT UP TO SOKY STATE OFFICE

We understand that every coach deserves to be heard, but in order to communicate most effectively, every coach should also understand the proper methods listed above!
A Positive Sport Experience Starts With The Coach

- Coaches have the greatest opportunity to create positive change in Special Olympics athletes, because they are the ones who work with athletes on a consistent basis. Good coaches know that learning to play a sport is more than just mastering skills associated with the sport – it takes teamwork, commitment, sacrifice, and dedication. These are qualities that Special Olympics coaches work to instill in their athletes, with the understanding that these lessons can have a positive impact on the athletes’ lives outside of sports. The second reason is that it is a requirement.

- You as a Special Olympics coach are role models and character builders. Coaches help our athletes discover their physical skills, their self-worth, their human courage, and their capacity to grow. Being a Special Olympics coach is one of the most important and rewarding volunteer roles.
Unit 5 – Additional Information
Coaches Corner (Cont.)

Responsibilities of the Special Olympics Coach

• Assist athletes in learning sports skills and applying them in competitions.
• Encourage confidence and self-esteem through sport.
• Obtain equipment for athletic training.
• Help to recruit athletes and assistant coaches.
• Register athletes for competitions.
• Know and share the mission of Special Olympics in your community
• Most importantly HAVE FUN!
Coach Resources

- **Coach Code of Conduct:** Special Olympics Coaches are role models whose behavior should serve as a positive example for their athletes.

- **Athlete Code of Conduct:** Special Olympics Kentucky is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics.

- **Family Member Code of Conduct:** This should be emphasized during training, competition, and special events at any level.

- **Volunteer Code of Conduct:** For SOKY volunteers.

[Links to Code of Conducts]

[Volunteer Code of Conduct]
[Family Code of Conduct]
[Athlete Code of Conduct]
[Coach Code of Conduct]
Unit 5 – Additional Information
Coaches Corner (Cont.)

Key Coaching Forms

- Accident/Incident Form: [Online Version](#)
- Certificate of Insurance: [Online Version](#)
- Athlete Medical Form: [Online Version](#)
- Class A Volunteer and Unified Partner App: [Online Version](#)
- Local Program Contact List: [Online Version](#)
- Special Olympics Logo Usage Guidelines: [Online Version](#)

All can be found on the [SOKY COACHES CORNER PAGE](#)
Special Olympics Coach Oath – “In the name of all coaches, we shall follow written and verbal instructions of Special Olympics officials at all times, have our athletes at the appropriate events and activities at the proper time and abide by the rules and policies, in the spirit of sportsmanship.”
Unit 6 – SOKY Soccer Specifics

**Important General Information**

- **Main Point of Contact:** SOKY Director of Sports and Competition
- **Spring Sport:** Season runs from February-June
- **Season Timeline:**
  - Local/Area sign-ups/tryouts take place in February/March
  - First Packet of Information (registration packet) is sent out via email in mid-March
  - Three regional tournaments will take place in April:
    - Louisville Regional Tournament – EP Tom Sawyer Park (One day event)
    - NKY (Union, KY) Regional Tournament – Central Park (One day event)
    - Versailles Regional Tournament – Centre College (One day event)
  - State Tournament is held in June in conjunction with the State Summer Games at Eastern Kentucky University
Team Sport Divisioning Philosophy

• The divisioning process for team sports is much different, and much harder, than individual sports. Unlike most individual sports, team sports do not have concrete distances or times that can be used, although we do have teams submit game summary forms. Once a game starts, however, the information contained in the Game Summary Forms (GSFs) often takes a back seat to the dynamics at play minute-by-minute, play-by-play on the court or field.

• The challenge with divisioning team sports is that there are many factors that affect how a team performs on any given day — missing players, illness, penalties, behavior, coaching, who’s hot and who’s not, individual match ups, etc. With divisioning in team sports, much more emphasis is put on game results, common opponents, coach rankings and coach notes. There is not a perfect science to ensure that all divisions will have close games, which is why we use leagues/regionals as a divisioning process for team sports. We recognize there may be some games during a competition that are not competitive, but we hope that coaches will use this time to get the team better as a whole and play the back-up players.
SOKY SOCCER

- The official Special Olympics Sports Rules in the SOKY Soccer Sports Manual shall govern all Special Olympics Soccer Competitions. In cases, not covered by these rules, and by Special Olympics North America Soccer rules, then the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) rules shall be employed.

- Official Events: Team Competition (7-A-SIDE Outdoors) and Team Skills Competition

SOKY Soccer Sports Manual

Special Olympics North America Soccer Sport Rules

FIFA Rules
SOKY Soccer Divisioning Criteria

B Division
- Athletes have a LIMITED understanding of the rules
- Athletes demonstrate a LIMITED skill level
- Athletes show no game strategy
- Athletes have a low understanding of their field position
- Athletes have a low understanding of passing or trapping skills
- Athletes kick with LIMITED accuracy and strength
- Athletes demonstrate LIMITED defensive skills

1A Division
- Athletes have a MODERATE understanding of the rules
- Athletes demonstrate a MODERATE skill level
- Athletes demonstrate some understanding of their field position
- Athletes show some game strategy
- Athletes have some understanding of passing or trapping skills
- Athletes kick with MODERATE accuracy and strength without purpose
- Athletes have MODERATE defensive skills but may struggle to play defense aggressively without being physical
SOKY Soccer Divisioning Criteria

**2A Division**
- Athletes have a CONSISTENT understanding of the rules
- Athletes demonstrate a CONSISTENT skill level
- Athletes show better game strategy
- Athletes demonstrate a good understanding of their field position
- Athletes have a good understanding of passing and trapping skills
- Athletes kick with CONSISTENT accuracy and strength with purpose
- Athletes have CONSISTENT defensive skills and are able to play defense without being physical

The criteria should be used as a guide when trying to determine at what level your team should compete. If you are having trouble divisioning your team, please contact the SOKY Office or a Soccer Sport Advisory Team Member for help.
SOKY Soccer Roster

• As a coach you will complete one Official Team Roster for the season. The minimum allowed per team is eight (8) athletes and the maximum is fifteen (15) athletes plus a maximum of three (3) coaches and five (5) additional personnel (chaperones, bus drivers, etc.) per team.

• Each may also have a maximum of two (2) athlete team managers in which must be registered SOKY athletes. The athlete team manager position is for those athletes who may not be able to physically play Soccer or are just looking to help out the team.

• Each team will also complete a Summer Games Registration sheet prior to the State Tournament as long as you compete in at least one (1) SOKY sanctioned Regional Tournament.
Unit 6 – SOKY Soccer Specifics

FIELD DIMENSIONS

- Bench Area
- Goalie Box
- Corner Flag
- Spectator Area

Goal Size: 5M x 2M
Goalie Box: 8M x 20M
Penalty Kick Line: 7M from goal line

Reminders:
Bench Area – Reserved for coaches and athletes only! All spectators should be in spectator area.
SOCCER TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Goalkeeper
The goalkeeper’s main responsibility is to protect the goal by keeping the soccer ball out of the goal. The keeper is the only player who may use his/her hands to play the ball on the playing field within his/her goalie box. The keeper can use their hands to catch or pick up from the ground.

Throw-in
A player throws the ball into the field of play after the ball has been sent off the field outside one of the boundary lines.

Proper throw-in:
• Player must face the field and the player’s hands, must retain on opposite sides of the ball.
• Player must remain off the field until the ball leaves the players hands or foot.
• The throwing motion must begin with the ball behind the player’s head and the ball must be thrown over the head.
• The throw-in must occur from the spot at which the ball left the field.
• When doing the throw-in, the player’s feet must stay on the ground until the ball leaves the player’s hand.
**SOCCER TERMS AND DEFINITIONS (CONT.)**

**Cards**
Certain rule violations by players (and coaches) result in a referee issuing a card to the offending player. There are two (2) types of cards in soccer: yellow and red cards. Specific rules dictate which rule violation result in yellow versus red cards being used. The most serious rules violations result in a player receiving a red card. Once a player receives a red card, he/she is expelled from the remainder of the soccer match. If a player is removed from the game because of a red card, his or her team cannot replace that player on the field. That team must play the remainder of the match minus a player.

**Hand Ball**
A hand ball refers to a rule infraction in which a player, (except the goalkeeper), intentionally handles the ball with his or her hand or arm.
**Unit 6 – SOKY Soccer Specifics**

**SOCCER TERMS AND DEFINITIONS (CONT.)**

**Obstruction**
This is a rule infraction when a player used his or her body to block the path of an opposing player, without the former player making an apparent attempt to play the ball. When a referee calls obstruction, the opposing team is awarded an indirect free kick from the point at which the foul occurred.

**Corner Kick**
Corner kicks are used to restart the field of play when the ball goes out of play across the goal line after having been last touched by a player on the team defending the goal. Corner kicks are taken within the corner area of the field closest to the point at which the ball crossed the goal line.
SOCCER TERMS AND DEFINITIONS (CONT.)

Tackle
Tackle instructs a defensive player to use his or her feet to take the ball away from an opposing player who is dribbling the ball.

Dribble
A reference for a player who has control of the ball while advancing the ball forward with the feet.

Assist
An assist refers to a play in which a player passes the ball to a teammate and the teammate immediately scores a goal.

Header
When a ball in the air approaches a player, he or she should play the ball with his or her head. The player should attempt to pass or direct the ball with his or her head to a teammate or take a shot at the goal.
SOCCER TERMS AND DEFINITIONS (CONT.)

Control
Controlling the ball on the ground or in the air with any part of his or her body.

Procedure to determine the winner of a match
This procedure refers to breaking a tie score existing at the end of a soccer match and the overtime periods. Each team is allowed five penalty kicks as part of this tie breaker. The team scoring the most goals during the tie breaker wins the match. The taking of penalty kicks continues until the tie is broken.

Touch Line = side line
Goal line = end line
Soccer Specifics

Soccer Terms and Definitions (Cont.)

Free Kicks
Free kicks are either direct or indirect. For both free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

The Direct Free Kick
• If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponents’ goal, a goal is awarded.
• If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the team’s own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

The Indirect Free Kick
• Signal
  - The referee indicated an indirect free kick by raising his arm above his head. He maintains his arm in that position until the kick has been taken and the ball has touched another player or goes out of play.
• Ball Enters the Goal
  - A goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal.
    o If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponents’ goal, a goal kick is awarded.
    o If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the team’s own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.
Unit 6 – SOKY Soccer Specifics

SOKY SOCCER MANUAL OVERVIEW

Sections 1-3

1. General Rules
2. Proper Attire/Equipment
3. Fouls/Misconducts
SOKY SOCCER MANUAL OVERVIEW
Section 1 – General Rules

• A 7-a-side field shall be a rectangle; maximum dimensions 70m x 50m, minimum dimensions 50m x 35m. The smaller field is recommended for lower ability teams.

• The field shall be marked out as shown on the diagram on page 10 of this manual.

• The goal size shall be 5m x 2m. The goal area shall be 8m x 20m.

• All divisions will use a size 5 ball.

• Each team is responsible for providing a game ball at each tournament.
 Minimum number of players on a roster is eight (8) and the maximum is fifteen (15).

The game is played between two teams, each consisting of seven (7) players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. A minimum of five (5) players shall be on the field at any one time.

Substitutions are unlimited in number and players may return to the field after being substituted. Substitutions can be made at any stoppage of play (e.g., ball is out-of-bounds, between periods, after a goal is scored, during a time-out). The coach must signal the referee or assistant referee in order to make a substitution. A substituted player can only come on the field when given a signal by the referee.
For all games there should be one Referee (center), and two assistant referees (linesmen).

The match shall consist of two (2) equal periods of 20 minutes with a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

If the event of a tie, teams will play ONE (1) five-minute overtime period.

If the game is still tied after the overtime period, each team will designate five (5) players to take alternating penalty kicks; the best of five (5) is the winner.

If still tied, alternating penalty kicks will be taken by the remaining players until the winner is decided by a single goal.
SOKY SOCCER MANUAL OVERVIEW
Section 1 – General Rules (Cont.)

• A ball must be kicked and move forward from the center spot before being touched by another player.

• A ball over the touch line results in a throw-in. A ball over the goal line results in a goal kick or a corner kick. The ball must be completely over the line to be considered out of play.

• The whole of the ball must have completely crossed the goal line to count as a goal.
Goal Kick:

- When the ball passes over the goal line, (not in the goal), having last been played by an attacking player, the goalkeeper, standing within his own penalty area, shall throw OR kick the ball back into play, beyond his own penalty area but not further than the halfway line. The ball must touch the ground or another player before crossing the halfway line. The ball shall be deemed in play as soon as it has passed outside the penalty area.

- The above goal kick rule also applies when a goalkeeper gains possession, with his hands, of a ball that is still in play.
Free Kick:
• Any free-kick that is awarded to the defending team inside their penalty area will be restarted with a throw from the goalkeeper.

• Opposing players must be at least five (5) meters from the ball for all free-kicks.

• When an indirect free kick is awarded to the attacking team inside the penalty area within five (5) meters from the goal line, the referee must place the ball at five (5) meters from the goal line.
SOKY SOCCER MANUAL OVERVIEW

Section 1 – General Rules (Cont.)

Penalty Kick:

1. Position of the ball and the players
   • The ball is placed on the penalty mark (7meter line).
   • The player taking the penalty kick is properly identified.
   • The defending goalkeeper remains on his/her goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, until the ball has been kicked.
   • The players other than the kicker are located inside the field of play, outside the penalty area, behind the penalty mark, and at least 10 yards (9.15m) from the penalty mark.
   • The referee does not signal for a penalty kick until the players have taken up position in accordance with the rule. The referee decides when a penalty kick has been completed.
Penalty Kick:

2. Procedure
• The player taking the penalty kicks the ball forward.
• He does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
• The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward.
• When a penalty kick is taken during the normal course of play, or time has been extended at halftime or full time to allow a penalty kick to be taken, a goal is awarded if, before passing between the goalposts and under the crossbar, the ball touches either or both goalposts and/or crossbar, and/or the goalkeeper.
SOKY SOCCER MANUAL OVERVIEW
Section 1 – General Rules (Cont.)

Throw-ins:

ALL DIVISIONS, when the whole of the ball passes over a touch line, it shall be thrown back into the game from the place where it crossed the touch line by a player from the opposing team to that of the player who last touched it. The ball must be stationary before being thrown. It shall be deemed in play immediately if it touches, while still in the air, the outer edge of the vertical plane of the touch line. Players from the opposing team must be at least 5m from the spot where the throw is being taken. At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:
• be facing the field of play
• plant his/her heals on the ground and remain on the ground behind or on the touchline. One foot is allowed to drag on the ground, as long as the other foot remains stationary
• use both hands
• deliver the ball from directly behind and over his/her head
Throw-ins (Cont.):

- If at anytime the thrower delivers an incorrect throw-in, the throw-in will be awarded to the other team.
- Proper Throw – Ins will be monitored more strictly for the higher ability levels/divisions
- Kick – Ins from the sideline / touchline are no longer allowed by any division
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.
- If the player taking the kick-in or throw-in plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the point where the infringement occurred.
- A goal keeper may not pick up a ball with his hands that has been passed back to him by his own player.
Corner Kick:
• Awarded to the attacking team when a player from the defending team kicks the ball over his/her own goal line. Opposing players must retire at least 5m from the ball.
SOKY SOCCER MANUAL OVERVIEW

Section 2 – Proper Attire & Equipment

• Teams MUST have matching uniforms and shirts must be numbered. All team members must wear the same color shorts. Numbers are required only on the back of the jersey, and can be any number 0-99.

• Shin guards are required! If wearing shorts, shin guards must be covered by socks.

• Soccer shoes are mandatory. NO shoes with front toe cleats may be worn (i.e. no baseball or football shoes if they have a front cleat, unless you cut it off). Only rubber cleats are allowed. Absolutely NO metal cleats. Tennis shoes are NOT allowed unless an athlete cannot wear cleats for a physical reason. If this is the case, the SOKY tournament director needs to be notified ahead of time.

• No denim shorts or pants are permitted.

• Goal keepers MUST wear colors (JERSEY ONLY) that distinguish them from other players and the referee.
Unit 6 – SOKY Soccer Specifics

SOKY SOCCER MANUAL OVERVIEW

Section 3 – Fouls and Misconducts

• Same as for 11-a-side, except there are no offsides

• Tripping, pushing, handball or charging results in a direct free-kick

• Obstruction or dangerous play results in an indirect free-kick
If a player is expelled from the match (receives two yellow cards or a red card), this player may NOT re-enter the match. His team must play a player down for two (2) minutes unless a goal is scored before the two (2) minutes have elapsed. In this case the following shall apply:

1. If there are seven (7) players against six (6) players and the team with the larger number scores a goal, the team with six (6) players may be completed.
2. If both teams are playing with six (6) players and a goal is scored, both teams may be completed.
3. If there are seven (7) players playing against five (5) and the team with the larger number scores a goal, the team with five (5) players may be increased by one player only.
4. If both teams are playing with five (5) players and a goal is scored, both teams may add one (1) more player.
5. If the team scoring the goal is the one with fewer players, the game shall continue without changing the number of players.

Keeping check of the two (2) minutes shall be the task of the timer or fourth official. The player who enters the game as a substitute after two (2) minutes may only do so with the consent of the referee and when the ball is out of bounds.
• If the referee gives the signal for a penalty kick to be taken, and before the ball is in play:
  o The player taking the penalty kick infringes the rules of the game: the referee allows the kick to proceed. If the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken. If the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is not retaken.
  o The goalkeeper infringes the rules of the game: the referee allows the kick to proceed. If the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded. If the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken.

• If, after the penalty kick has been taken:
  o The kicker touches the ball a second time before it has touched another player: an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team. The kick is to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.
  o The kicker deliberately handles the ball before it has touched another player: a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team. The kick is to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.
  o The ball is touched by an outside agent as it moves forward: the kick is retaken.
  o The ball rebounds into the field of play from the goalkeeper, the crossbar or the goalposts, and is then touched by an outside agent: the referee stops play. Play is restarted with a dropped ball at the place where it touched the outside agent.
Soccer Drills

**Monkey in the Middle**
Circle five (5) to eight (8) players around a single player ("the monkey"). Using one ball, the players outside must pass the ball around the circle without losing the ball to the monkey. The players can make only minimal movements side to side. If the monkey has stolen the ball, the player losing possession goes to the middle. If they make a bad pass, the offending player goes to the middle.

**Who Will Get There First?**
Make two equal teams. Put two cones 5m away from each team. One player is to be the goalie. Place the ball on the penalty line. The coach blows the whistle. One person from both teams will run to the ball. The player who gets the ball first takes a shot on a goal. This drill will improve running and kicking.
Soccer Drills (Cont.)

**Switch**
Divide the team into offense and defense. Pair athletes with similar skill levels so that they are challenged. Place them at mid field. Kick the ball to the middle of the field and have the players race to it. Whoever gets there first is offense, the other is defense. If anytime the defender takes the ball away from the other player, they become offense. Take the shot and try to score. Add a goalie to this drill and practice three players at once.

**World Cup**
Place a goalie and three balls on the goal line. Athletes in pairs will take the field at the midfield line. The goalie will throw the ball into play. The athletes must try to get to the ball first. Partners should pass the ball between them to move the ball up the field, and they should attempt a shot on the goal. If successful, they move on. The ball stays in the net and the goalie throws out a new one. This drill focuses on ball control and teamwork.

**Follow the Leader**
Form a single file line. Place a ball at the feet of the first athlete in line. Set up cones for the players to weave through. The first player dribbles the ball through and the rest of the line follows behind. Once the course is completed, the leader goes to the back of the line. The next athlete in line then becomes the leader. The primary focus of the drill is dribbling.
Unit 6 – SOKY Soccer Specifics

Special Olympics External Resources

This online coaching guide covers planning a season, teaching skills, teaching rules, and includes a quick start guide. It also includes virtual training/learning videos in which can offer you a more hands-on experience when learning about the sport of Soccer.

Online Special Olympics Soccer Coaching Guide
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