

Level 2 – General Information



Purpose of Course

Certification is good for **3 years**

Breakdown of Training

Video #1: Communication Tools & Considerations

Video #2: Competition Preparation & Health Programs

Video #3: Sport Specifics

Questions? Contact CoachEducation@somn.org



Organizing a Training Session

1. Warm-Up
2. Review of previously learned skills
3. Introduce new skills & drills
4. Competition style
5. Cool down & review

Communication Tools (cont.)



USE EASY
WORDS



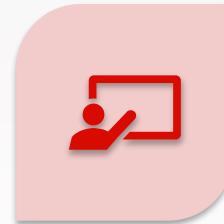
USE ONLY A
FEW WORDS



USE
PICTURES



DEMONSTRATE
BY ACTIONS



GIVE POSITIVE
REINFORCEMENT

Assistance Levels



Level of Assistance	Description	Sport Example
Verbal	Tell the athlete what to do	Footwork: “run forward to the line; then stop”
Demonstration	Show the athlete the what to do	Basketball: have athlete watch while someone else shoots a free throw
Partial Physical Assistance	Place the athlete in the proper position	Golf: coach adjusts the athlete's hands on the golf club with the correct grip
Full Physical Assistance	Help the athlete through the entire motion of the skill	Bowling: coach moves the athlete’s arm through the entire bowling movement

Psychological Considerations



Motivation

Goal: Help athletes maintain or grow interest

Perception

Goal: Help athletes understand the sport in which they are participating

Comprehension

Goal: Help athletes remember and perform the skill they have learned

Social/Medical Considerations



Seizures – How can I assist?

1. Create a safe space around the athlete
2. Protect the head and neck
3. Lay them on their side

Can someone with physical disabilities also compete in Special Olympics?

Social/Medical Considerations



With many of our athlete's conditions, they may succeed more with performance tasks rather than verbal tasks. (ADHD consideration!!)

Approximately 20% of our athletes have an autism diagnosis, with about half also being non-verbal.

Medical Considerations Table



Diagnosis	Consideration
Seizure Disorder	Be prepared to protect and observe the athlete should a seizure occur and minimize adverse affects
Autism spectrum disorder	Understand that athletes may engage in self-stimulatory behavior (hand-flapping, jumping, etc.), and that it is not necessarily a problem
Attention deficit/hyperactivity (ADHD)	Shorten drills and provide one-to-one assistance when needed
Down Syndrome	Family should ensure the athlete is screened for Atlanto-axial instability (see medical if necessary)
Fetal alcohol syndrome	Demonstrate clear performance tasks

Preparing for Competition



Provide accurate qualifying times/scores, and skills assessment scores.

Make sure that you know the rules.

Teach your athletes the rules and, during training, phase out your verbal reminders about rules.

At competition, coaches may have little or no opportunity to assist athletes when they are not following the rules. (A coach cannot be on the track with them!)

Preparing for Competition

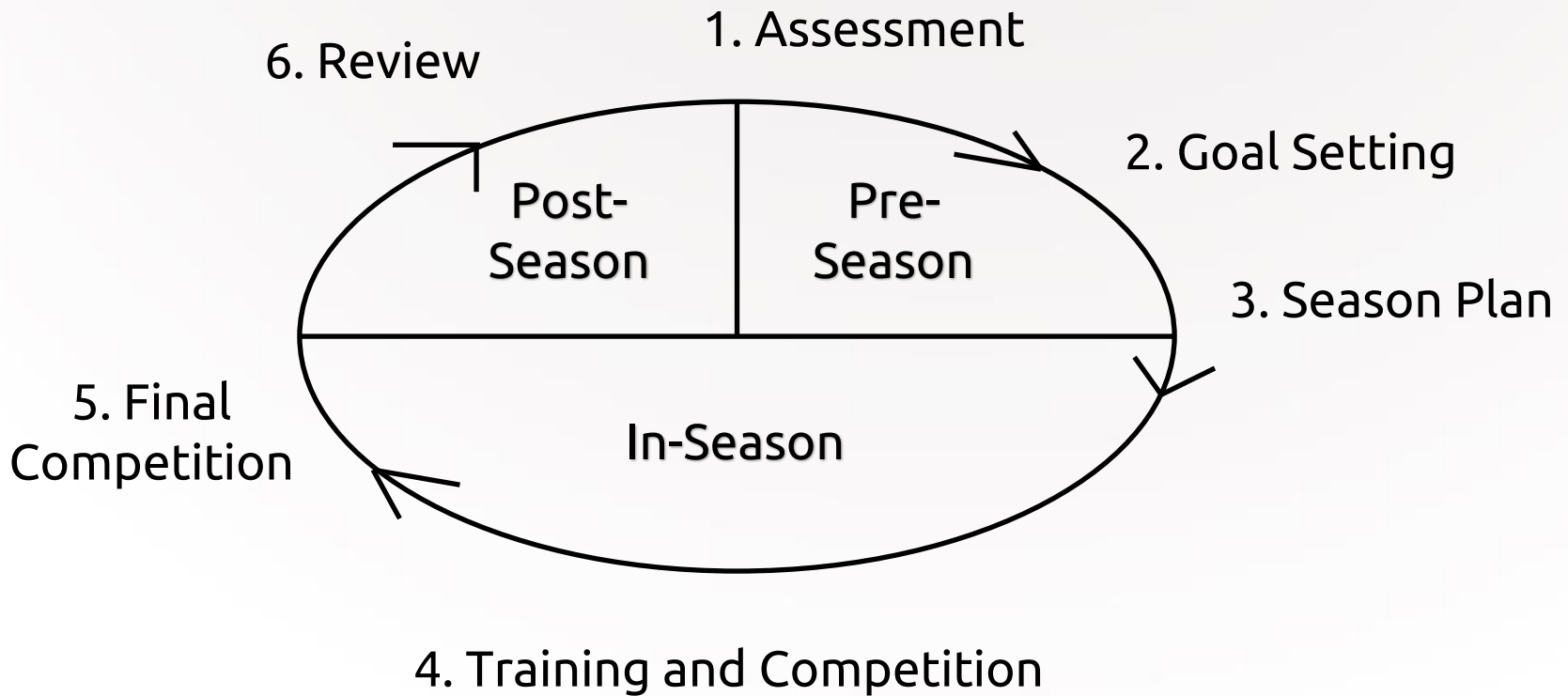


Create a supervision document to share with coaching staff!

There is a lot going on outside of the actual competition, including:

- Transportation
- Lodging
- Social activities
- Healthy Athletes
- Awards ceremonies
- Multiple events at the same time

Season Cycle



Competition-Day Coaching



Early arrival time – allows for more planning, getting uniforms ready, and understanding the venue layout

Check-in with athletes on attire and equipment

Set groundwork for how athletes should behave independently and focus on a growth mindset, even at competitions

When there is a reason, it is okay for you, as a head coach, to protest with an official in a calm matter. Seek to learn, not always to change!

Managing Athlete Behavior



Athlete Behavior	Strategies to Improve Learning
Swimmer has a short attention span	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Focus on a stroke for short periods of time2. Provide multiple activities focusing on same task
Basketball athlete yells if they miss a shot	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Emphasize the other parts of the game2. Work on shooting drills without a hoop, then evolve to shooting at a hoop
Bowler doesn't wait for their turn	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is2. Emphasize that the bowler will always follow the same person

Managing the Program



A successful Special Olympics coaching staff is:

- Knowledgeable about the sport, rules, and competition details.
- An understanding of the mission of Special Olympics.
- Always recruiting new coaches and seeking opportunities to learn more about their sport.
- Focusing on including families, caretakers, and the community.
- Emphasizing safety and offering activities for all ability levels.

SOMN Health Programs



Fit5

- Plan for physical activity, nutrition and hydration
 - 5 fruits and vegetables a day
 - 5 bottles of water a day
 - 5 days of physical activity a week
- Fitness cards offer exercises to challenge abilities. These can be done at practice, the gym and home.
- Seasonal pledge challenges for teams offer incentives and resources.

SOMN Health Programs



SOFit

- Comprehensive health and wellness program focusing on four pillars of wellness: emotional, physical, nutritional, and social.
- Resources and funds provided to delegation or organization
- To learn more about Fit5 or SOFit, or get some of these resources, reach out to our Health Programs Coordinator!
- Jack Dobbs – Jack.Dobbs@somn.org

Level 2 Swimming Session



This training will cover:

Events

Rules of Competition

Resources

If you would prefer to read the handbook, it is linked below this video, and covers the same information.

Events



Events that Special Olympics Minnesota offers at state (in meters):

- Backstroke – 200, 100, 50, 25
- Breaststroke – 100, 50, 25
- Butterfly – 100, 50, 25
- Freestyle – 400, 200, 100, 50, 25, 15
- Individual Medley – 100
- Flotation Race – 50, 25, 15
- Assisted Swim – 50, 25, 15
- Relay – 4x50 Freestyle, 4x25 Freestyle, 4x50 Unified Freestyle, 4x25 Unified Freestyle

Events



Freestyle

- Athletes can start in either a front or back position.
- Athletes can use any stroke style.
- Athletes may switch strokes during the race.
 - This does not need to be a recognized stroke.

Events



Backstroke

- Athletes must start with two feet and two hands touching the wall.
- Athletes must use an alternating arm motion with a flutter kick.

Breaststroke

- Athletes must start with two feet and at least one hand touching the wall.
- The arm action needed in this stroke is an out sweep, down sweep, in sweep, and up sweep with recovery in a streamline position.
- At each turn and the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously.

Events



Butterfly

- The stroke relies on good timing and simultaneous arm and leg actions.
- Best taught by breaking down into three sections: kick, arm action out of water, and breathing.
- Athletes must start with two feet and at least one hand touching the wall.
- At each turn and the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously.

Events



Flotation vs. Assisted

- Flotation = device in the pool
- Assisted = another person in the pool
- In flotation events, athletes are not allowed to have assistance in the pool at all (besides the flotation device).
- In assisted events, the assistant may touch, guide, or direct the athlete in the pool but may not assist the athlete's forward movement.
- The swimmer is allowed to use a flotation device in assisted events.

Events



Freestyle Relays

- For relay exchanges, swimmers in positions 1, 2, and 3 must touch the wall prior to the next swimmer leaving the wall.
- Unified relays must have two athletes and two Unified partners.
- Athlete substitutions are allowed at the regional and state level but will have stipulations outlined in the handbook.
- Unified partner substitutions are not allowed at state.

Competition Details



- All starts will consist of “take your marks” followed by the start signal when all swimmers are stationary.
- To maximize pool time, some divisions will be run simultaneously in the pool.
- Please bring athletes to staging at least 15 minutes prior to their scheduled start time. (early on , please note where/how the competition announces which heat they are staging through)
- If an athlete refuses to enter the pool, event management reserves the right to start the race without that athlete.

Event Details



- If during competition an athlete touches the ground, that is allowed.
 - Athletes can use this or the lane ropes for a break but cannot propel themselves forward from the ground or rope.
 - If athletes propel themselves forward, they will be disqualified.
- Special Olympics recommends practicing relays in the same order in which you will compete.
- We will not offer diving starts at the regional or state level.

Assistance Needed Categories



- **Entry/Exit** – assisting the athlete getting into or out of the pool.
- **Touch Start** – Athlete requires someone to tap them to indicate the start of race.
- **Visual Start** – Athlete requires a visual prompt to indicate the start of the race.
- **Staging** – Athlete needs an assistant present with them throughout the staging process. (must be a coach/UP)

Assistance Needed Categories



- **On-Deck** – Athlete needs someone on the deck at the start or finish line during the actual race. (must be a coach/UP)
- **Outside Lane** – Athlete requires a lane next to the wall of the pool.
- **Middle Lane** – Athlete requires middle lane of pool.
- **Pool Lift** – Athlete needs a mechanical lift to get them into and out of the water.

Registration



Registration is done online by head coaches or head of delegations.

When a coach registers their athletes and partners, they must submit the following:

- Qualifying time for each athlete/partner in each event they are registered in.
- Coaches on the team.
- Updated paperwork for those that need it.

Practice, Skill Development & Resources



- Special Olympics Minnesota wants to make sure that you have confidence in your knowledge of the swimming rules.
- Below this video, you will find links to other resources available including:
 - SOMN Swimming Page
 - SOMN Swimming Handbook
 - SOI Aquatics Coaching Guide
- Any questions? Contact sports@somn.org.