

# 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](mailto: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



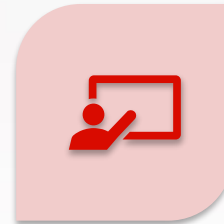
USE ONLY A  
FEW WORDS



USE  
PICTURES



DEMONSTRATE  
BY ACTIONS



GIVE POSITIVE  
REINFORCEMENT

# Assistance Levels



<b>Level of Assistance</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Sport Example</b>
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



<b>Diagnosis</b>	<b>Consideration</b>
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

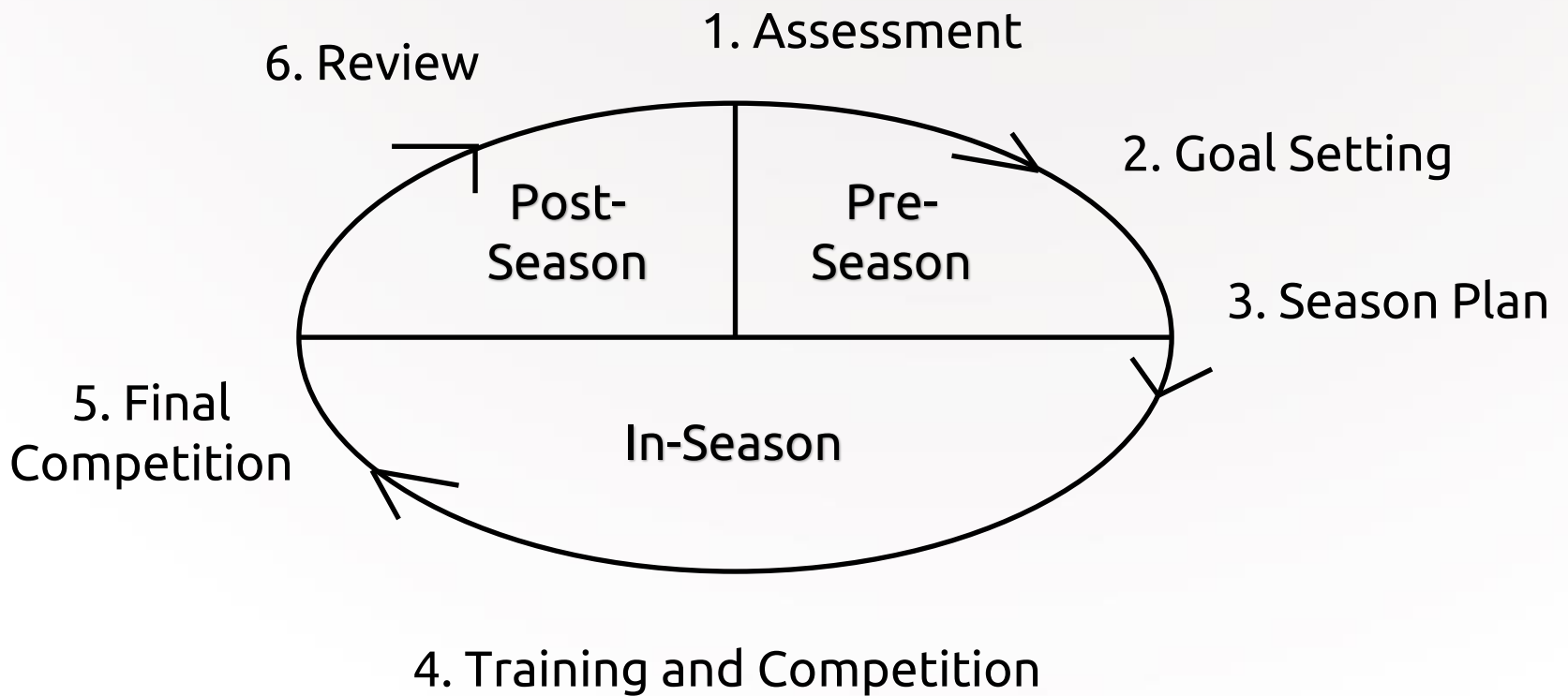


Create a supervision document to share with coaching staff!

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



<b>Athlete Behavior</b>	<b>Strategies to Improve Learning</b>
Swimmer has a short attention span	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Focus on a stroke for short periods of time</li><li>2. Provide multiple activities focusing on same task</li></ol>
Basketball athlete yells if they miss a shot	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Emphasize the other parts of the game</li><li>2. Work on shooting drills without a hoop, then evolve to shooting at a hoop</li></ol>
Bowler doesn't wait for their turn	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is</li><li>2. Emphasize that the bowler will always follow the same person</li></ol>

# 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](mailto:Jack.Dobbs@somn.org)



# Level 2 Track & Field 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.

# Track Events



## General Events

- The commands of the starter will be “on your marks... set...” and, when all competitors are set, the gun will be fired.
- During walking events, athletes must always have one foot in touch with the ground.
- For 800-meter races, athletes will stay in their lanes through the first turn and break toward lane one at the break-line marked after the first turn.
- For 1500-meter or longer races, a waterfall start will be used.

# Track Events



## Physical Assistance Events

- Athletes can have a person on the track to guide them, however the athlete must propel themselves under their own power.

## Device Assistance Events

- Athletes can provide their own assistance device, which may consist of canes, crutches, or a walker.
- Athletes may not receive physical assistance from coaches or officials.

# Track Events



## Wheelchair events

- The first two wheels on each competitor's wheelchair will be regarded as the starting and finishing points of all races.
- Athletes will not be pushed, pulled, or otherwise assisted during these events.
- Please ensure that athletes are correctly registered for their events based on if they will be using a motorized or non-motorized wheelchair for competition.

# Track Events



## Athletes who are Blind or Deaf

- A rope or guide runner may be provided to assist athletes who are visually impaired.
- Guide runners must be provided by the delegation and be registered for the competition as a coach.

## Rules for Unified Relays

- Each team will consist of two athletes and two partners.
- Every relay team is only allowed one substitution.
  - Athlete subs can happen at any competition.
  - Unified partner subs can only happen at regional competitions.

# Field Events



## Jumps

- Running long jump, standing long jump, and high jump are offered at competitions.
- For running long jump, an athlete must be able to just at least 1 meter. If an athlete jumps less than 1 meter at regionals, they cannot advance to state in the running long jump.
- The minimum opening height for all high jump competitions will be 1 meter.
- Athletes can compete in either the standing or running long jump, but not both.

# Field Events



## Throws

- Shot put, softball throw, and tennis ball throw are offered at competition.
- Softball throw and tennis ball throw are events for athletes who throw the ball 15 meters or less.
- If an athlete throws more than 15 meters, they will be awarded participation and cannot advance to state in that event.
- If you have an athlete throwing more than 15 meters, they should be competing in the shot put, if able.

# Field Events



## Pentathlon

- The five events comprising the pentathlon are the 100-meter run, running long jump, shot put, high jump and the 400-meter run.
- If the achieved time or distance is not given in the pentathlon score table, the score for the nearest lesser performance should be read.



# Competition Details



## Divisioning

- At the state competition, divisions will be based on the athlete's regional results.
- There may be multiple divisions on the track for certain events.
- Please make your team aware of this, so there is not confusion on why an athlete is so much faster or slower than another during a single race.

# Assistance Needed Categories



- **Guide Runner** – When an athlete is visually impaired and needs someone to run with them.
- **Whistle Start** – Race will start by whistle instead of starting gun. Used when athletes have severe reactions to the gun.
- **Visual Start** – Race will start by starting gun, but an assistant will signal near the athlete to give them a visual cue to start.
- **Touch Start** – Race will start by starting gun, but an assistant will touch the athlete to give them a cue to start.

# Assistance Needed Categories



- **Staging** – Athlete is allowed an assistant through staging area.
- **Outside Lane** – Athlete will be on an outside lane (1 or 8).
- **Middle Lane** – Athlete will be on the middle lanes (2-7).
- **Rope** – Athlete uses a rope/guide provided by the delegation.
- **1-on-1** – Athlete is allowed an assistant through the staging area and up to the starting line. The assistant must wait for the athlete at the finish line.

# Registration



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

Athletes are allowed to compete in three individual events (or the pentathlon) and one relay event.

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 track & field rules.
- Below this video, you will find links to other resources available including:
  - SOMN Track & Field Page
  - SOMN Track & Field Handbook
  - SOI Athletics Coaching Guide
- Any questions? Contact [sports@somn.org](mailto:sports@somn.org).