



SPECIAL OLYMPICS CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Sport Management Team Guide

Part of the Special Olympics Sports Management System

First Edition

October 1994

©Special Olympics International, 1994



Team Approach to Sports Management

The phrase "Together We Win!" was chosen as the rallying slogan for the Special Olympics 25th Anniversary celebrations. It is this focus on teamwork that has enabled Special Olympics to become a highly visible and recognized worldwide sports movement. Applying a team approach to the development of new sports resources is the key to enhancing the opportunities offered to our athletes and coaches.

Sport Directors and Sport Management Teams

Chapter sports staff are responsible for developing training and competition opportunities in all the sports available. An incredible task! To help them, they have traditionally recruited a "Sport Director" in each sport to provide resource support and technical expertise. Although Sport Directors play a valuable role in many Chapter programs, this type of support structure is no longer sufficient to drive a Special Olympics sport program that is becoming more complex and challenging every year.

In the future, the most successful Chapters will be those which expand their sport-specific support structure to include functional Sport Management Teams. These Sport Management Teams will include specially trained volunteers possessing diverse expertise in sport and in Special Olympics.

Objectives

Under the direction of the Chapter staff and the Sport Director, a Sport Management Team (SMT) for each sport would work year-round to accomplish the following.

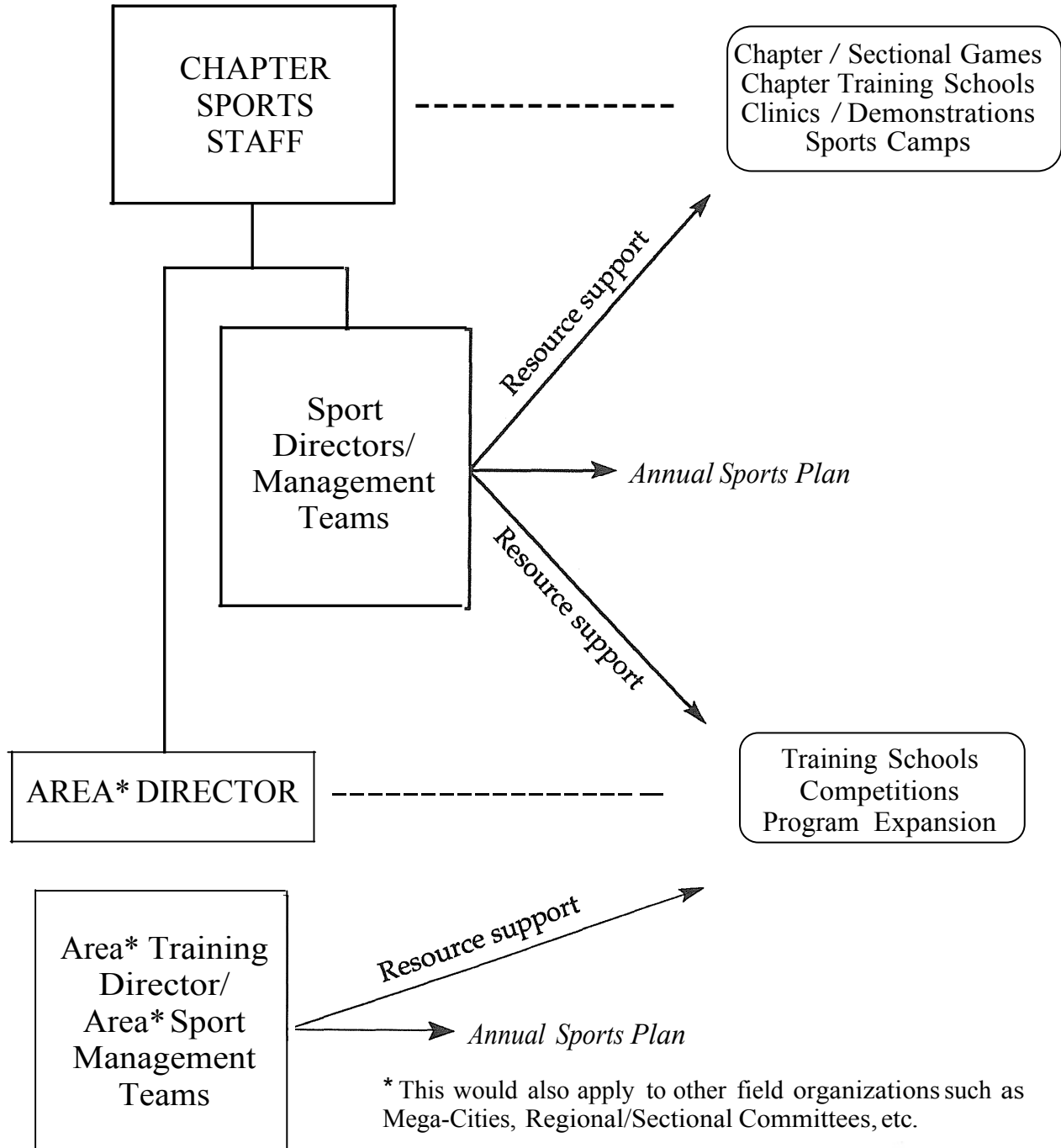
- Assess program needs and develop an annual sport plan.
- Provide technical support for Chapter-level competitions and, whenever possible, for competitions at the Area and Local levels.
- Provide the technical instructors for coaches' and athletes' training schools and other coach or athlete training programs.
- Support Area and Local programs in their efforts to identify, recruit, and train sport-specific resources.
- Develop strong relationships between Special Olympics and other NGB-recognized organizations.





Program Support

A Chapter Sport Management Team provides sport-specific technical expertise and resource support for Chapter-level training and competition and, whenever possible, for Area or Local competition and training programs.



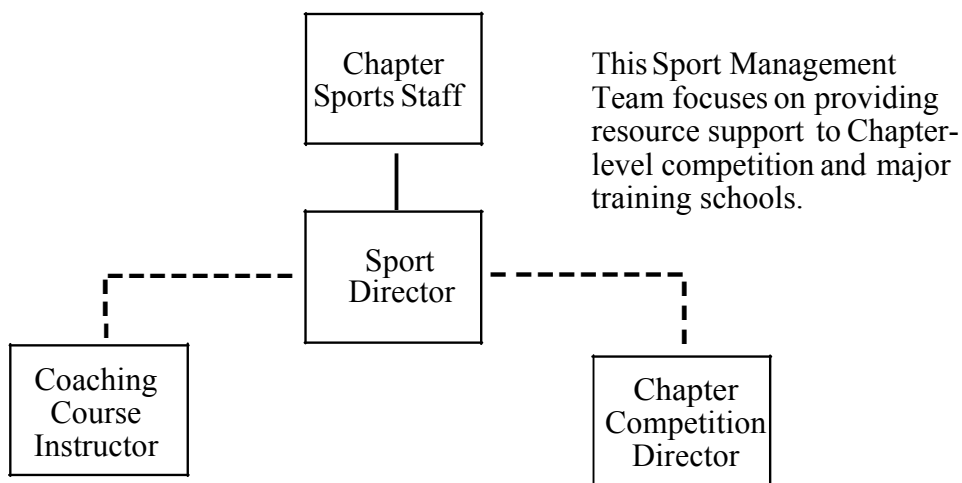
* This would also apply to other field organizations such as Mega-Cities, Regional/Sectional Committees, etc.



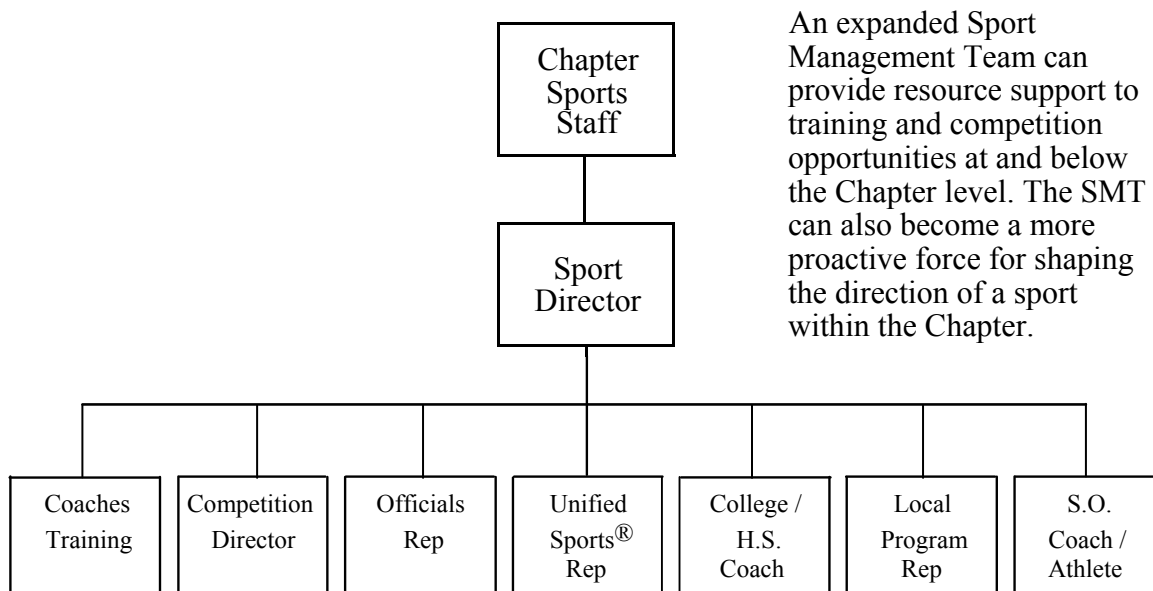
Structuring a Sport Management Team

Below are examples of two levels of a sport-specific Sport Management Team.

Level 1



Level 2





The Sport Management Team

Sample Job Descriptions

Besides including people with the following expertise, it is equally important to have geographic representation across the state.

Coaches Training Coordinator

- Conducts at least one Coaches Training School each season.
- Advises and trains other instructors.

Competition Director

- Serves as the Technical Director for the Chapter competition.
- Assists in the recruitment and training of Area and Sectional Competition Directors.

Officials Representative

- Recruits and trains officials for Area, Sectional, and Chapter competitions.
- Reviews and proposes ideas for rules changes.

Unified Sports® Representative

- Assists in developing Unified Sports® culminating competitions.
- Assists in conducting Unified Sports® training for coaches.

College, High School, or Club Representative

- Conducts a college, high school, or club partnership program.
- Develops statewide involvement with colleges, high schools, and/or clubs.

Local Program Families Representative

- Provides information from the Local Special Olympics program's perspective in designing appropriate training and competition opportunities. This information would include budget, logistics, parental support, etc.
- Provides an excellent opportunity for family involvement.

Special Olympics Coach

- Provides input from a coach's perspective in the training and competition needs of athletes.

Special Olympics Athlete

- Provides input from an athlete's perspective.
- Serves as an Athlete for Outreach at sports functions.





SPECIAL OLYMPICS CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Competition Management Team Guide

Part of the Special Olympics Sports Management System

Second Edition
December 2008



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	8-14
Managing a Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Competition.....	8
Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team	9-13
Official Events	14
COMPETITION	15-38
Sample Competition Stadium	16
Mass and Relay Starts	17
Relay Exchange Zone	18
100 Meter Venue.....	19
Competition Venue Checklist	20-21
Competition Safety Considerations	22
Athlete Roster and Performances.....	23
Divisioning.....	24
Guidelines for Officials.....	25
Official's Quiz	26
Official's Quiz Answers	27
Staging and Event Flow	28-29
Starting List.....	30
Heat Sheet	31
Lap Count Record	32
Timing Sheets	33
Awards Presentations.....	34
Competition Evaluation Checklist	35-36
CROSS COUNTRY SKIING VOLUNTEER COACH COURSE	37-48
Part I: Classroom Session	39-41
Part II: Activity Session	42-44
Part III: Special Olympics Athletes Training Session	45
Part IV: Classroom Wrap-up Session	46

Managing a Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Competition

Thank you for volunteering to be a member of the Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team. Your time and energy are greatly appreciated. Conducting a successful Special Olympics competition is truly a challenge that takes dedication and a lot of hard work. The results can be one of the most satisfying experiences in sports.

As a member of the Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team, you are responsible for conducting an event that will meet a number of challenging goals. These goals include:

- Providing a safe competition environment for all participants
- Providing a competition in which all teams and individuals have an opportunity to compete against others of similar abilities
- Providing a competition that is officiated according to the official rules and to the highest standards of fairness
- Creating an “Olympic” atmosphere around the competition
- Providing a positive and inspiring experience for family members, volunteers, and spectators
- Increasing public awareness and education about the abilities of individuals with intellectual disabilities

The Competition Management Team Guide provides the fundamental technical information needed to achieve these goals. Committees involved with large, Chapter-level competitions may need to expand some of this information. The basic principals, however, should remain the same for any level of competition.

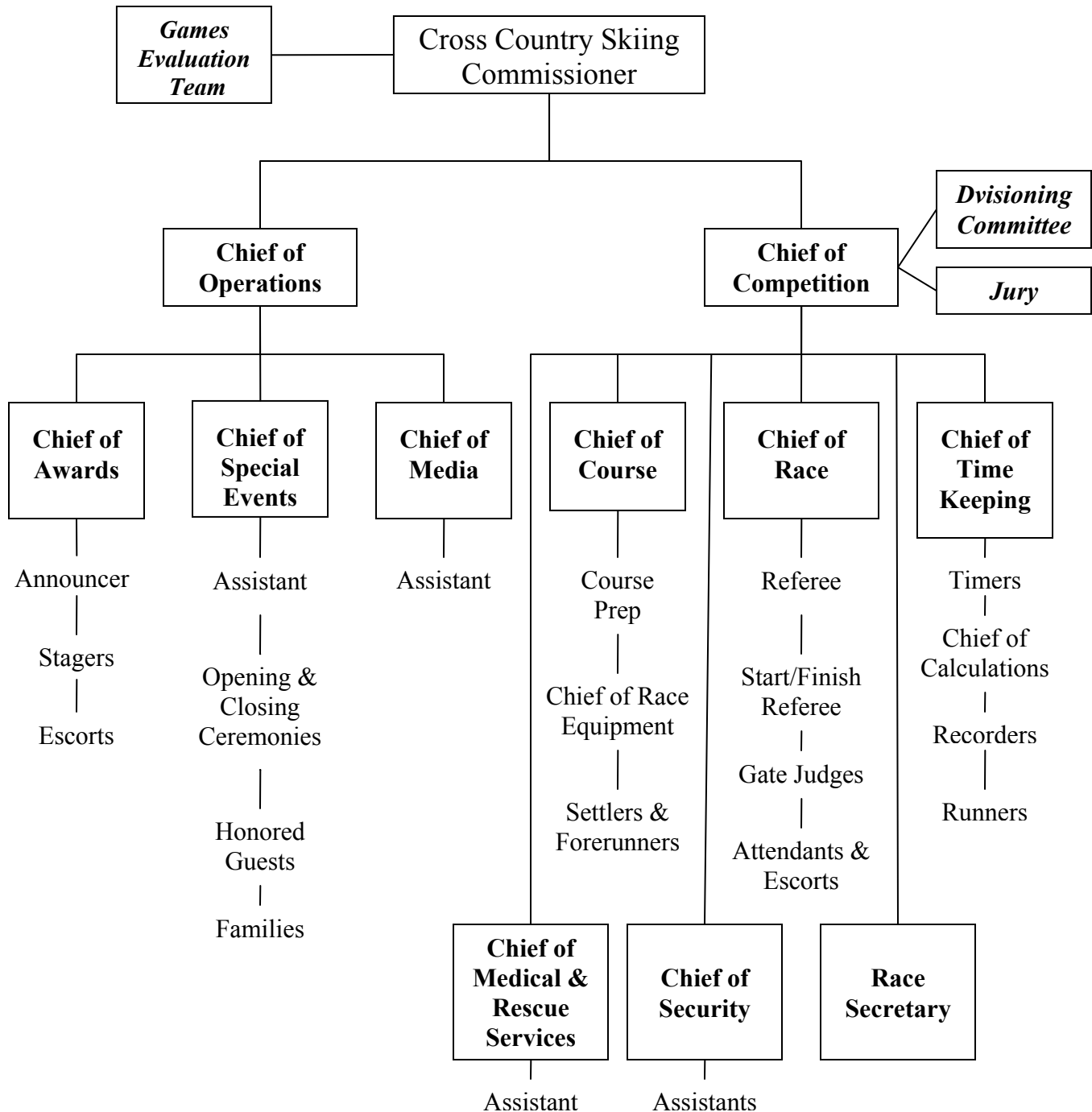
Special Olympics International welcomes your ideas for future revisions of these materials. You are invited to send your comments and ideas to:

SOI Cross Country Skiing Director
Special Olympics International
1133 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036



Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team

Flow Chart



The composition of a Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team will depend on the size and level of the competition and the personnel available. In Local or Area competitions a number of the above positions could be consolidated. If the competition is a part of multi-sport games, the Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team will focus on the operations and competition of Cross Country Skiing. The Games Management Team may oversee Awards, Ceremonies, Special Events, and Media.



Competition Management Team (continued)

Job Descriptions

Every cross country skiing competition requires a number of officials and volunteers to assist in the smooth running of the event. The exact number of personnel involved will vary depending on the size of the competition and the number of competitors. Listed below are some of the more common and necessary positions.

Cross Country Skiing Commissioner

Ultimately responsible for the overall quality of the Cross Country skiing competition. Organizes, recruits, trains, and manages the key Cross Country skiing competition personnel. Supervises the Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team.

Chief of Operations

Responsible for all activities except the competition, such as Awards, Opening Ceremonies and Closing Ceremonies, receptions, etc.

Chief of Awards

Responsible for all aspects of the awards ceremony, including the ordering of medals and ribbons, coordination of final results, and training of the announcer and awards personnel.

Chief of Special Events

Responsible for organizing and conducting Opening and Closing Ceremonies. Also responsible for the hospitality of Honored Guests and families.

Chief of Media

Responsible for developing interest in the local media. Provides information, stories, and photographs to assist in generating pre- and post-event coverage.

Chief of Competition

Responsible for the overall management of the competition. Assigns and instructs all management team personnel on their individual duties. Also has full control and final authority over all aspects of the event. *The Chief of Competition chairs the Jury (Sport Rules Committee) which includes Chief of Course, Technical Delegate, and two coaches. If there is no assigned Technical Delegate, then the Chief of Stadium is involved.*

Chief of Course

Ensures that all trails are properly prepared and tracked. Responsible for signage to events as well as to medical facilities, rest rooms, etc. Works with the Chief of Competition to ensure that all competition areas are correctly marked and safely and properly set up. Organizes all equipment needs. Trains, assigns, and supervises assistants. Responsible for set-up of public address system. Ensures that water and proper medical facilities are provided.

Competition Management Team (continued)

Chief of Stadium

Responsible for controlling the race course in the stadium according to the rules. He or she is also responsible for training Chief of Start/Finish, starter(s), controllers, and Chief of Staging.

Chief of Start/Finish

Responsible for the proper placement of all start and finish personnel. He or she trains start-line and finish line attendants in responsibilities and procedures.

Chief of Staging

Responsible for overseeing and managing athlete staging and the proper placement of athletes into their assigned heats.

Chief of Timing

Directs and coordinates all timing officials and runners.

Chief of Calculations

Supervises and coordinates the calculations of elapsed time for finish racers, and produces the final results for the Race Secretary (Registrar).

Chief of Medical and Rescue Services

Responsible for coordinating all types of medical services as required by the governing rules of the race.

Chief of Security

Controls spectators, skiers, coaches, media and officials within the boundaries of the ski competition venue.

Announcer

Provides continuing event information about racers and their progress during the race to spectators, coaches, skiers, and officials.

Forerunners

Report to the Chief of Course and are responsible for skiing the track and having it in the best (safest) condition possible for the competitors. They are especially important if snow is falling during the race.

Athlete Escorts

Assist athletes to starting areas, arrange competitors at the staging area, and accompany athletes to the awards area from the site of competition.

Starter(s)

Ensures correct start procedure for athletes.

Timers

Take hand-held time for starting and finishing athletes.

Competition Management Team (continued)

Start-Line and Finish-Line Attendants

Supervise athletes at the start and finish lines. Release athletes to escorts.

Runners

Responsible for taking results at the finish area to the results center.

Controllers

Supervise athletes in the staging area outside the relay exchange zone.

Race Secretary (Registrar)

Responsible for all heat sheets and official recording of results.

Security Personnel

Responsible to the Chief of Security. Assist in keeping the competition area free of spectators.

Medical Personnel

A **physician** will preferably be on site during the competition, or at the very least, on call at a local hospital. **First-aid** personnel should be available for athletes and spectators. **Emergency services** should be arranged beforehand, that is ambulance services, emergency rooms, etc.

Competition Management Team Orientation

Because of the complexity of a cross country skiing competition, an orientation for officials and volunteers should be conducted prior to the start of the competition. The orientation should consist of the following:

- Review of the FIS Rules and the Official Special Olympics Winter Sports Rules, concentrating on the rules and modifications of Cross Country skiing
- Review of Competition Management Team assignments and responsibilities
- Risk Management Orientation (identification of the emergency procedures and action plan)
- Venue walk-through

Coaches' Meeting

Whether conditions, lack of snow, and technical problems can alter schedules for cross country races. If possible, it is recommended that a coaches'/team captains' meeting take place either the night before or prior to the start of the competition. All coaches can be updated regarding any changes. In addition, two coaches can be named to the Jury at this time.

Cross Country Skiing Competition Management Team

Title	Name
Cross Country Skiing Commissioner	<hr/>
Chief of Operations	<hr/>
Chief of Awards	<hr/>
Announcer	<hr/>
Stagers	<hr/>
Escorts	<hr/>
Chief of Special Events	<hr/>
Assistants	<hr/>
Chief of Media	<hr/>
Assistant	<hr/>
Chief of Competition	<hr/>
Chief of Stadium	<hr/>
Chief of Start/Finish	<hr/>
Starter(s)	<hr/>
Controllers	<hr/>
Finish-Line Attendants	<hr/>
Chief of Staging	<hr/>
Announcer	<hr/>
Stagers	<hr/>
Escorts	<hr/>
Chief of Timekeeping	<hr/>
Timers	<hr/>
Chief of Calculations	<hr/>
Recorders	<hr/>
Runners	<hr/>
Chief of Course	<hr/>
Course Prep Personnel	<hr/>
Chief of Race Equipment	<hr/>
Forerunners	<hr/>
Race Secretary	<hr/>
Chief of Security	<hr/>
Security Personnel	<hr/>
Chief of Medical & Rescue Services	<hr/>

Official Events

Special Olympics offers competitive Cross Country skiing participation for athletes of **all** ability levels. Program leaders can play a valuable role in providing the widest array of Cross Country skiing events. As a result, coaches and athletes can select the most appropriate events.

The Official Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Rules have been created based on Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS) rules for Cross Country skiing. Special Olympics modifications to these rules can be found in the Special Olympics Winter Sports Rules later in this guide.

Official Events

The following events provide meaningful competition for athletes with intermediate and advanced ability:

1. 500 Meter Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
2. 1 Kilometer Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
3. 3 Kilometer Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
4. 5 Kilometer Cross Country Skiing Race - Classical Technique
5. 7.5 Kilometer Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
6. 10 Kilometer Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
7. 3x1 Kilometer Cross Country Relay - Free Technique
8. 1 Kilometer Unified Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
9. 3 Kilometer Unified Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
10. 5 Kilometer Unified Cross Country Skiing Race - Classical Technique
11. 7.5 Kilometer Unified Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
12. 10 Kilometer Unified Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
13. 4x1 Kilometer Unified Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique

The following events provide meaningful competition for novice athletes with low ability:

14. 50 Meter Cross Country Skiing Race - Classical Technique
15. 100 Meter Cross Country Skiing Race - Classical Technique
16. 10 Meter Cross Country Skiing Race - Free Technique
17. Glide Event - Open



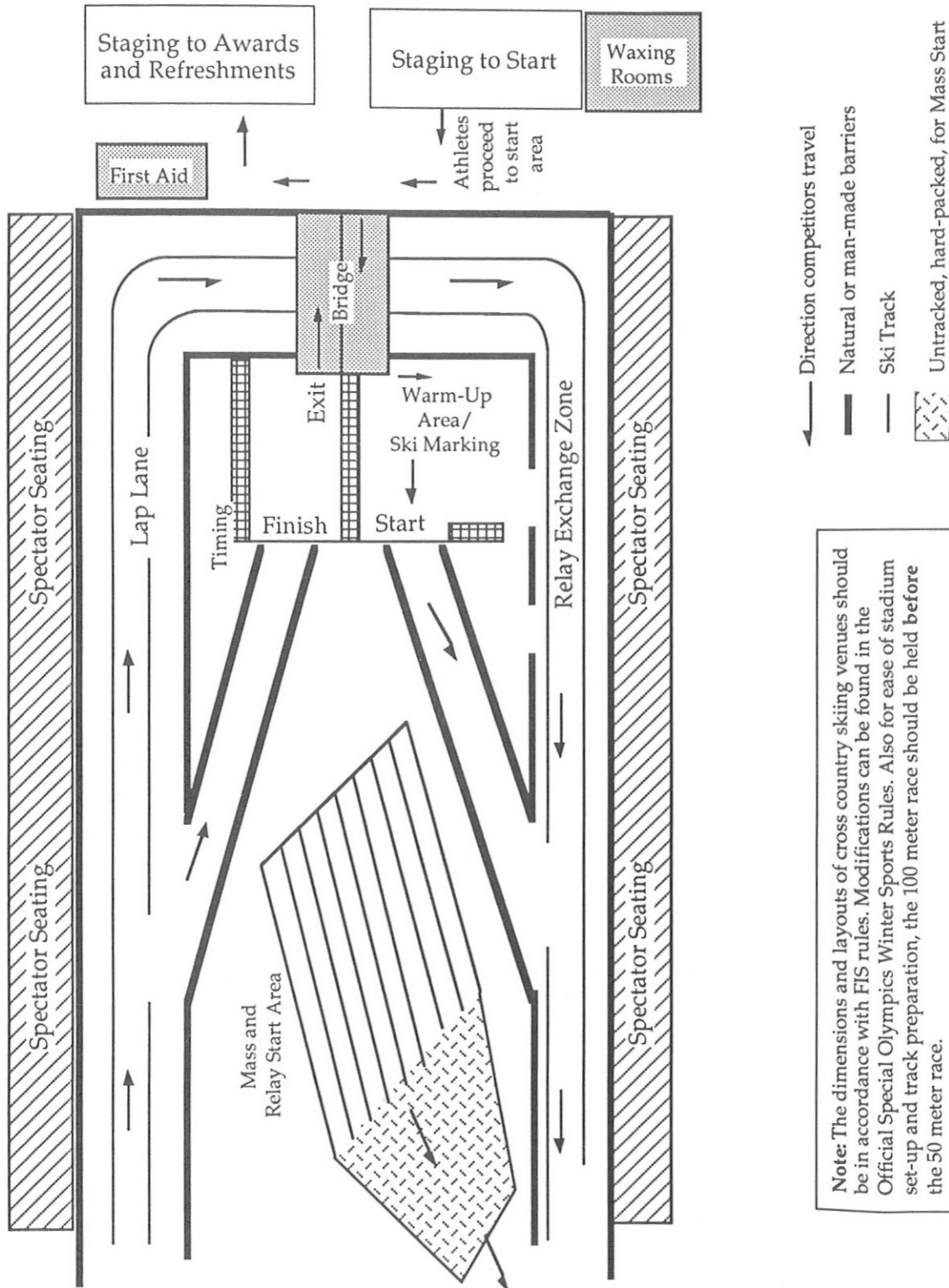
EVENT

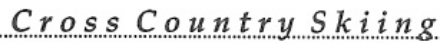


Competition Management



Sample Competition Stadium



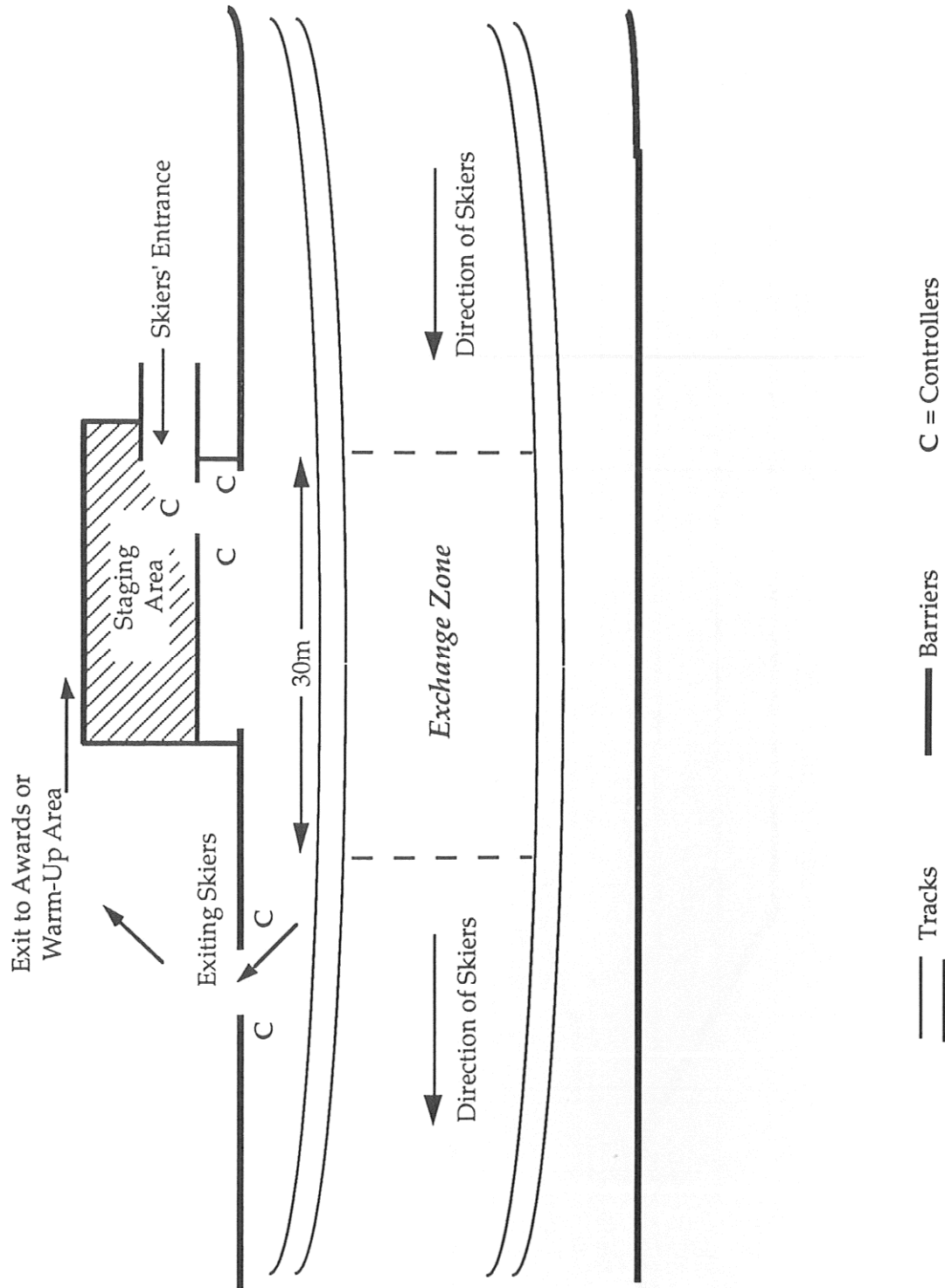


The diagram illustrates the layout of a 100m sprint race. It shows eight lanes, numbered 1 to 8 from the inside out. Key features include:

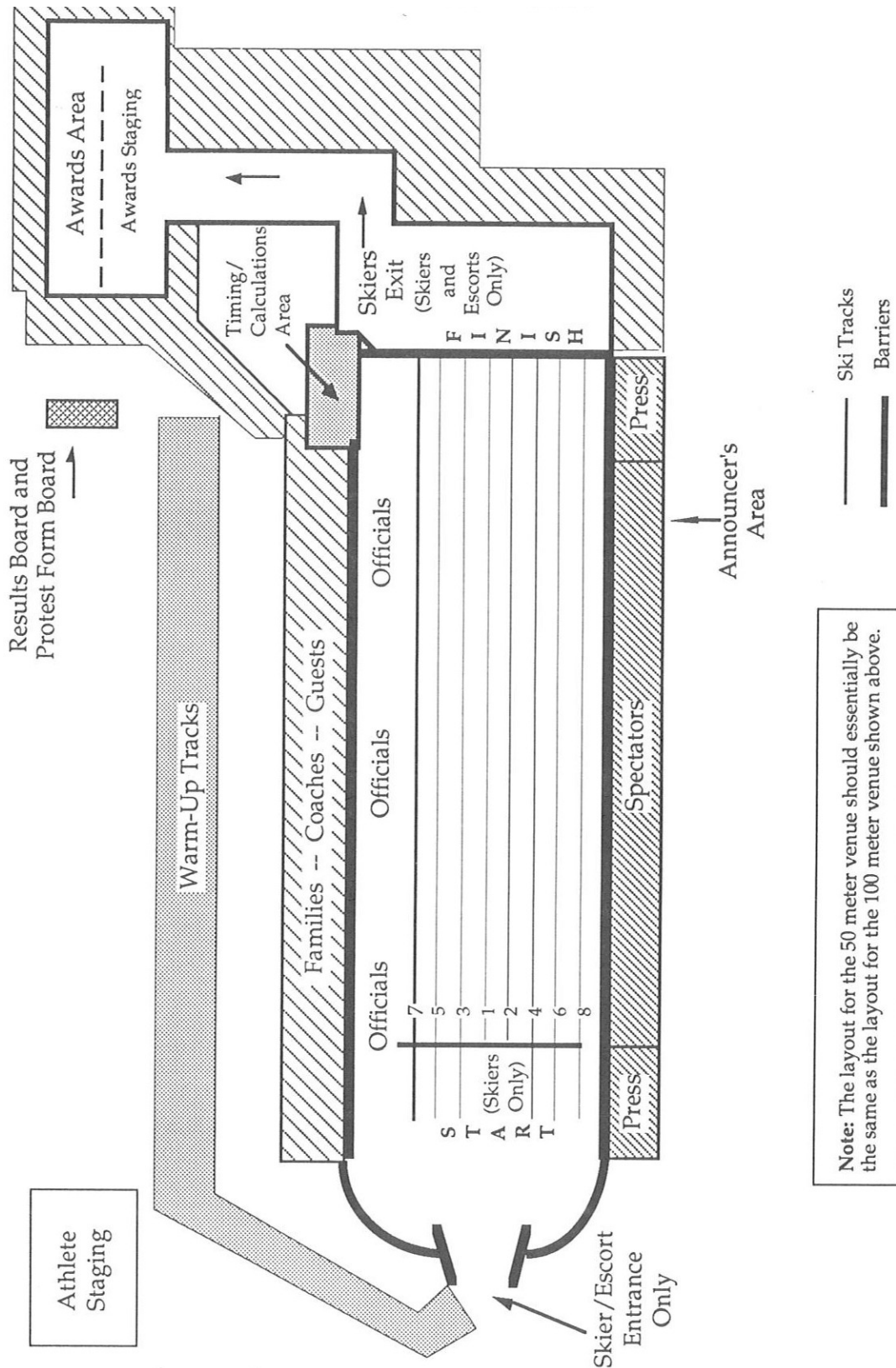
- Start Lines:** Mass Start Line, Relay Start Line, and False-Start Line.
- Controllers:** False-Start Controllers, Starter and Assistant, and False-Start Controllers.
- Distances:** 30-50m (False-Start Zone), 75-100m (Main Race Distance).
- Other Labels:** Double or Triple Tracks to Course, Hard Packed "Scramble Zone", Lane Numbers.

Note: The start line is drawn in a curve. To obtain the proper curve, fix an end of string 75-100 meters long to a point between lanes 1 and 2, 75-100 meters from the start. Holding the other end, walk from lane 7 to lane 8. Start lines should be marked on the snow with a liquid dye. Flags should be used to section off the lanes.

Relay Exchange Zone



100 Meter Venue





Competition Venue Checklist

Equipment	Number Required	Checked
Snowmobile	_____	_____
Shovels	_____	_____
Rakes	_____	_____
Tent	_____	_____
Tracksetter	_____	_____
Markers	_____	_____
Dye for marking start and finish lines	_____	_____
Poles	_____	_____
Snow fence	_____	_____
Pennant flags	_____	_____
Banners (start and finish)	_____	_____
Special Olympics banners	_____	_____
Sponsor banners	_____	_____
Awards stands	_____	_____
Family, Honored Guest, and spectator areas	_____	_____
Heat sheets	_____	_____
Clipboards	_____	_____
Pencils with erasers	_____	_____
Bibs with numbers	_____	_____
Electric timing system	_____	_____
Stopwatches (for backup)	_____	_____
Tables	_____	_____
Chairs	_____	_____
Public address system	_____	_____
Billboard for unofficial results	_____	_____
Hand-held radios	_____	_____
Awards medals/ribbons	_____	_____
Starting guns and blanks	_____	_____
Screwdrivers	_____	_____
Pliers	_____	_____
Scrapers	_____	_____
Files	_____	_____
Wax	_____	_____
P-tex	_____	_____
Rest room facilities	_____	_____



Competition Venue Checklist (continued)

Competition Management Team	Number Required	Checked
Chief of Competition	1	_____
Chief of Course	1	_____
Chief of Stadium	1	_____
Chief of Start/Finish	1	_____
Chief of Timekeeper	1	_____
Chief of Calculations	1	_____
Chief of Security	1	_____
Chief of Medical and Rescue Services	1	_____

Race Personnel*	Number Required	Checked
Starter(s)	2	_____
Timers	6	_____
Controllers	5	_____
Finish-Line Attendants	4	_____
Race Secretary (Registrar)	1	_____
Forerunners	6	_____
Medical Personnel	3	_____
Announcer	1	_____
Runners	4	_____
Athlete Escorts	TBD	_____
Security Personnel	TBD	_____

** Suggested numbers for a small race of less than 100 competitors*

Competition Safety Considerations

Providing a safe environment is a primary responsibility of the competition management team as well as coaches. All Special Olympics cross country skiing training and recreational sessions and competition events will be conducted in accordance with the rules and procedures outlined in the Official Special Olympics Winter Sports Rules. The following is a list of safety considerations that should apply to any competition.

Safety Checklist

To ensure that all safety requirements are met, a safety checklist should be completed before the start of any Special Olympics Cross Country skiing training event or competition. The safety checklist should focus on the following areas:

☐ Risk Management Orientation

Special Olympics Cross Country skiing personnel orientation should be given to all supervisory personnel prior to any Cross Country skiing competition. This orientation should include:

- Assignment of specific responsibilities
- Signals to notify for an emergency
- Emergency Procedures
- Procedures for assists and rescues, first aid and medical needs
- Discussion of the Emergency Action Plan

☐ Ski Course

Cross Country trails should be packed and tracks set prior to any competition. Trails should be clearly marked with red flags or other such identifying banners. Monitors should be positioned at trail junctions to direct athletes onto correct trails where confusion could occur. There should be easy access to a telephone or walkie-talkies, water to drink, blankets at the finish line, and ice for injuries.

☐ Warming Facility

A warming facility should be readily accessible from the trails. It should be large enough to accommodate spectators and athletes in case of extreme weather. An area should be reserved in the warming facility for ski-waxing adjustments.

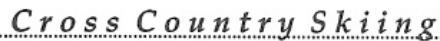
☐ First-Aid Area

An area should be designated for first-aid care in case of accidents or illnesses. The area should be as private as possible with easy access for rescuer personnel. The location should be known to all staff and well marked for spectators, volunteers, coaches, and athletes.

☐ Emergency Action Plan

An Emergency Action Plan should be in place prior to any Special Olympics competition. The plan should define:

- Procedure for obtaining emergency medical support
- Procedure for obtaining weather information, particularly if the event is in an open area
- Procedure for reporting accidents
- Procedure for informing attendees and public of postponements or cancellations
- Any other items which may be required by local jurisdictions



Head Coach _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Information submitted by:

Signature _____

Divisioning

In Cross Country skiing competitions, Special Olympics athletes are placed in divisions in which they can compete against athletes of similar age, gender, and ability. The divisioning process is one of the most **critical** elements of a successful Special Olympics competition and needs to be carefully planned. *A more detailed description of the procedures for divisioning can be found in the Official Special Olympics Winter Sports Rules.*

Step 1: Obtain athlete information in advance of the competition.

- Coaches should submit an entry time from a recent competition or time-trail.

Step 2: Place athletes into preliminary divisions according to ability (based on the above information), age, and gender.

- Males and females compete separately unless there is only one male or female entered in that event. In this case they will compete against the opposite sex.
- The official age groups for Special Olympics individual competitions are as follows:

Ages 8-11	Ages 22-29
Ages 12-15	Ages 30 and over
Ages 16-21	
- Divisions should accommodate at least three and no more than eight competitors of similar ability. Special Olympics suggests that all divisions be created where the variance between the fastest and slowest times within that division not differ by more than **10%**. This is not a rule, but should be used as a guideline for establishing equitable divisions when the number of athletes competing is appropriate.
- Age groups may be combined if there are less than three athletes of similar ability in a particular age group.
- Division placement will determine the start order from the fastest to the slowest.

Step 3: Conduct preliminary trials at the competition site in order to place athletes in final divisions for competition.

- All competitions are encouraged to have athletes perform one or two preliminary heats, the fastest of which being used to confirm or change the division placements. However, in smaller local meets where preliminary heats are not possible, times from previous competitions become even more important.
- All division placements are FINAL. Coaches may not protest these placements.

Responsibilities of the Competitors

In order to ensure fairness and equal opportunity for all athletes, athletes (and coaches) must abide by the letter and spirit of the rules. Athletes who do not participate *honestly with maximum effort* in all preliminary trials and/or finals shall be disqualified from all remaining events by the Sports Rules Committee at the competition.

Guidelines for Officials

Officials are essential to the success of the competition. By performing their jobs well, officials provide Special Olympics athletes with a fair and professionally conducted event.

1. Safety is the number one priority.
2. Be sure to understand the tasks that you are required to perform. Do not be afraid to ask questions if what is expected is not understood.
3. Know the rules of Cross Country skiing and the Special Olympics modifications.
4. Dress warmly and prepare for the weather conditions.
5. Be at the assigned station at the proper time.
6. Enjoy the competition!



Officials Quiz

1. What is the tracking rule for events 500 meters and longer?

2. What happens if a skier uses the staking technique in a classical race?

3. Who are the members of the Jury?

4. At what temperature is a race postponed or cancelled? _____
5. Does a skier need to finish with both skis? _____ Both poles? _____
6. What legal assistance can a course official give a competing skier?

7. Describe the starting procedures for an interval start race.

8. Describe the relay tag.

9. What are the start commands for the 50 meter and 100 meter races?

10. Can a skier who is late still start in an interval start race? _____



**Officials Quiz
Answers**

1. What is the tracking rule for events 500 meters and longer?
When passing, the responsibility for an obstruction or collision shall be with the skier who is passing, provided that the skier being passed does not act improperly.
2. What happens if a skier uses the staking technique in a classical race?
The skier will be disqualified.
3. Who are the members of the Jury?
The Jury is composed of the Chief of Competition, Chief of Course, Technical Delegate (or Chief of Stadium if there is no TD), and two coaches.
4. At what temperature is a race postponed or cancelled? **-20° C**
5. Does a skier need to finish with both skis? **YES** Both poles? **NO**
6. What legal assistance can a course official give a competing skier?
A skier may not receive unauthorized assistance. Help from pacemakers or pushing is not allowed.
7. Describe the starting procedures for an interval start race.
Skiers stand with both skis behind the start line or start timing wand. The start command follows: "Racer ... 15 seconds ... 10 seconds ... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. GO!"
8. Describe the relay tag.
A skier entering the relay exchange zone must tag his or her fellow teammate with his or her hand. For safety reasons, the tag should be on the upper part of the body. The tag must take place within the relay exchange zone.
9. What are the start commands for the 50 meter and 100 meter races?
Those commands are "10 seconds ... Racers ... Ready ... BANG (pistol shot)."
10. Can a skier who is late still start in an interval start race? ____
Yes However, he or she must not interfere with the start of another skier. The time the skier was originally scheduled to start will be the skier's start time, unless the skier can prove to the Jury that circumstances beyond his or her control prevented him or her from starting on time. Start officials should note the late skier's start time should he or she make an appeal to the jury.



Staging and Event Flow

A successful Special Olympics cross country skiing competition is one in which each official and volunteer knows his/her responsibilities and carries them out in a smooth and timely manner. What follows are a number of guidelines and/or procedures which should help ensure a well-run competition.

Arrival and Pre-Staging

Upon arrival and registration at the competition venue, athletes should proceed to a pre-staging area. This area should be used for ski waxing and pre-race briefing by coaches. Athletes may then proceed to the warm-up tracks.

Staging Process

- Approximately twenty minutes prior to the start of his/her race, the athlete should be taken to the staging tent by his/her assigned escort. The escort should remain with the athlete until the athlete has started his/her race.
- In the staging tent, staging personnel shall confirm entries and conduct an equipment check. After assisting athletes with warm-up clothing removal, escorts should bag or hand-carry warm-up clothing for pick-up at the finish area.
- Athletes are then lined up in sequence by start number. At then minutes prior to the start, the announcer should announce “Ten minutes to start.” At this point, escorts shall guide their athletes toward the start line.

Staging Guidelines

- The staging area should be designed so athletes can keep warm by moving about and stretching. It is essential to avoid having the athletes standing around for any lengthy period of time where they could become chilled.
- Skiers may have a warm-up jacket draped over their shoulders while in line.
- For individual start races, athletes should be called by pre-caller to line up no more than five minutes before their start.

Event Flow at Start

Interval Start Events

- After the announcer has announced “Ten minutes to start,” escorts walk with athletes toward the start line for 30 second interval starts.
- The “on-deck” skier must be ready just behind the start line.



Staging and Event Flow (continued)

- Once a skier steps forward to the start line, the escort steps back behind the starting personnel and may then watch his or her athlete's start.
- After the start, escorts should proceed to the finish line.

Mass Start Events

- Athletes and escorts begin the flow toward the start line after the "Ten minutes to start" announcement is made.
- Skiers gather at the start line. Escorts should be just behind their skiers.
- After the start, escorts should proceed to the finish line.

Guidelines for Starts

- Events ranging from the 500-meter race through the 10-kilometer race should be conducted utilizing the interval start format. In interval start races, each athlete starts in 30 second intervals unless otherwise designated by the Chief of Competition.
- The athletes should be lined up according to the start sheets. These sheets are printed prior to the event and must be distributed to all coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Mass starts will be used in the 50-meter and 100-meter races. In addition, mass starts may be used for the longer distance races in adverse conditions only. Athletes should be lined up in rows using the tracks set for the relay events. The position of athletes in rows will depend upon their advanced entry times or their preliminary heat times. Faster skiers will be in the front with slower skiers following.

Event Flow at Finish

- Once each athlete has finished the race, the skier's name and time should be announced.
- Each escort should greet his or her athlete and assist with warm-up clothing. The escort must ensure that the athlete is given plenty of water to drink and has changed into dry clothing.
- Following the rest period, escorts should proceed with athletes to the staging tent and release athletes to their coaches. Coaches and athletes should then check the official results board. Athletes and their escorts or coaches may then proceed to the awards area.
- The escort should then return to the staging area to continue the staging process with the later starting athletes.





Starting List

Name of Competition _____ Local Program _____

Event/Distance _____ Date _____

Start Time	Bib #	Athlete's Name	Local Program	Division





Heat Sheet

Event _____ Race _____

Site _____ Starting Time _____

Group (M/F) _____ Classification (Age) _____ Division Number _____

Date _____

Racer Name								
Bib #								
Finish Time								
Start Time								
Racer Time								
Place Finish								

Recorder's Signature _____



Lap Count Record

Place an "X" in the numbered square each time the skier with that number passes.

Event _____ Name _____

Date _____ Location _____

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100



Timing Sheets

Copy these Timing Sheets onto card stock paper, cut, and provide to the finish-line personnel.

Timing Recorder Sheets

Name _____

Timing Team # _____ Page # _____

Division _____

Bib #	Hour	Min.	Sec.	Tenth	Bib #	Hour	Min.	Sec	Tenth
	•	•	•			•	•	•	
	•	•	•			•	•	•	
	•	•	•			•	•	•	
	•	•	•			•	•	•	
	•	•	•			•	•	•	
	•	•	•			•	•	•	
	•	•	•			•	•	•	
	•	•	•			•	•	•	



Awards Presentations

The awards ceremony provides an opportunity to recognize athletes' accomplishments in a dignified and enthusiastic atmosphere which reflect the Olympic tradition. Consequently, it should honor the athlete with dignity, be energized with fanfare and excitement, and involve spectators.

1. All athletes who compete in a Special Olympics competition should receive recognition for their efforts in the form of ribbons or medals. First through third places receive gold, silver, or bronze medals, respectively. Fourth through eighth places receive ribbons. *Medals are optional at Local-level competitions.*
2. An athlete who is disqualified or does not finish an event should be given a **participation** ribbon.
3. The awards presentation should occur immediately following the division's competition in each event.
4. An awards escort/stager should meet the athletes at the awards area when the event has been completed. He/she should then assist the athletes and seat them in correct order of placement.
5. Athletes on the awards stand should be positioned at different heights in accordance with their final event placement. As in the Olympic Games, the first place finisher should be on a higher platform than the second place finisher, and this should continue in descending order. Bleachers, risers, or sturdy wooden boxes may be used to accommodate this arrangement.
6. The Special Olympics banner should hang behind the awards stand.
7. The Olympic fanfare music should be played throughout the ceremony. After the music begins to play, the awards announcer should say the following: "Ladies and gentlemen... It is my pleasure to announce the results of the (division) of the (age and gender group) (event). In eighth place, with a time of (time), (name),"... pause for awards presentation. This presentation continues in sequential ascending order up first place.
8. For each athlete, the awards presenter should present the award and offer personal congratulations. Sufficient time should be allowed between individual presentations in order to allow family and friends to take photos and enjoy the moment.
9. The awards escort should then assist the athletes from the awards stand to the exit chute.
10. Any protest should be handled by the Technical Delegate and Jury, NOT by the awards personnel. Any and all protests should be handled prior to staging for awards.



Team Competition Evaluation Checklist

1. Venue Preparation	YES	NO
<u>Course</u>		
Hard-pack course	_____	_____
50m and 100m courses have 8 lanes	_____	_____
Longer courses have 2 tracks or 1 track and 1 skating lane	_____	_____
Start area clearly marked	_____	_____
Starting line clearly drawn	_____	_____
Finish line clearly designated	_____	_____
<u>Facilities and Equipment</u>		
Spectators, Honored Guest, and family areas designated	_____	_____
Snow fence erected for crowd control	_____	_____
Warming facilities provided	_____	_____
Separate "Warm-up" tracks provided	_____	_____
Volunteer registration site clearly marked	_____	_____
Starter's pistol and blanks	_____	_____
Stopwatches/timing devices	_____	_____
2. Athlete Attire		
Athletes in proper competition attire	_____	_____
3. Officials		
Starters uniformed	_____	_____
Timers uniformed or distinguishable from starters and spectators	_____	_____
Separate area for timing crew and computation	_____	_____
4. Direction Signs		
Locker Rooms	_____	_____
Staging	_____	_____
Spectator areas	_____	_____
Athlete escort assignments	_____	_____
Rest room	_____	_____
5. Public Address System		
Starting time of each event announced	_____	_____
Racers announced at start	_____	_____
Racers announced at finish	_____	_____
6. First-Aid		
Qualified medical personnel on-site	_____	_____
First-aid area and visible and appropriate	_____	_____
7. Awards		
Special Olympics banners clearly visible	_____	_____
Athletes announced and highlighted	_____	_____
Appropriate Honored Guest presenters	_____	_____
Well-placed family, Honored Guest, and spectator areas	_____	_____
8. Competition		
Adherence to official rules	_____	_____
Equal competition within each division	_____	_____

Competition Evaluation (continued)

Additional Comments

Venue Preparation (Course, Facilities, and Equipment)

Athlete Attire

Officials

Signage/Competition Information

Public Address System

First Aid

Awards

Divisioning / Rules

Other (Coaches' Meeting, etc.)



Introduction

On behalf of Special Olympics International, THANK YOU for contributing your time and expertise. The knowledge you share with the course participants will make a significant impact on the lives of athletes with intellectual disabilities.

The Volunteer Coach Course offers a basic introduction to coaching Special Olympics cross country skiing. The course should be relevant to coaches involved with Special Olympics athletes of low to average ability. Higher-level skills and tactics are introduced in the Advanced Coach Course and in NGB and other accreditation coaching programs.

Coaches should leave the training school with a clear understanding of the following:

- Special Olympics cross country skiing events and rules
- How to use the Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Coaching Guide
- How to organize a training session
- Techniques for warm-ups and stretching
- How to teach the fundamentals of introductory cross country skiing
- Ideas for appropriate drills and activities to teach cross country skiing event strategies
- How to teach Special Olympics athletes cross country skiing event strategies

Review the Quick Quiz at the end of this guide to identify major points and ensure that they are covered within the course.

Suggestions for Instructors

- **Review the Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Coaching Guide.** It provides the necessary background to our coaching program.
- **Recognize the expertise of the participating coaches** and, whenever possible, draw upon their experience of coaching Special Olympics Athletes.
- **Stay on schedule.** There is a lot of material to be covered, and it is easy to fall behind. Remember, this course is an overview. Encourage coaches to take additional coaching courses.
- **Use team teaching.** Two instructors can bring different expertise to the course and also make this course more enjoyable for the participants. It is suggested that one instructor be a specialist in cross country skiing and the other in Special Olympics.

Your ideas on the course are welcomed. Please send any ideas for future improvement to:

SOI Cross Country Skiing Director
Special Olympics International
1133 19th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036





Cross Country Skiing Coach Training School Agenda

PART 1 Classroom Session (90 minutes)

- 1.0** Introduction and Using the Special Olympics Coaching Guide
- 1.1** Special Olympics Coaching Philosophy
- 1.2** Coaching Resources
- 1.3** Athlete Assessment
- 1.4** Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Events and Rules
- 1.5** Preparing for Your Cross Country Skiing Program
- 1.6** Eight-Week Training and Competition Plan
- 1.7** Organizing a Training Program
- 1.8** Prevention of Injuries
- 1.9** Coaching Athletes with Intellectual Disabilities

PART 2 Activity Session (120 minutes)

- 2.1** Warm-up and Stretching
- 2.2** Basic Skills Instruction
- 2.3** Competition Instruction

PART 3 Special Olympics Athletes Training Session (90 minutes)

- 3.1** Model Training Session

PART 4 Classroom Wrap-Up (30 minutes)

- 4.1** Review (Questions)
- 4.2** Quick Quiz
- 4.3** Certification Process and Application

Materials

- Course Agendas (one per coach)
- Special Olympics Cross country Skiing Coaching Guide
- Other recommended coaching books/videos for display

Equipment

- Skis, boots, bindings, poles
- Waxing equipment
- Ski racing numbers for race start
- First-aid kit
- Race clothing
- Yellow/Orange pylons for marking
- Megaphone/Bullhorn
- Water



PART 1
Classroom Session
(120 minutes)

1.0 Introduction and Using the Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Coaching Guide

- Welcome participants and introduce yourself and your coaching background.
- Ask participants to briefly introduce themselves.
- Review the course objectives and agenda.
- Introduce and review the Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Coaching Guide. Refer to it as you go through the course.

1.1 Special Olympics Coaching Philosophy

- The use of the word “**Olympics**” means a commitment to high standards of coaching.
- **Training** is critical for athlete development.
- Coaches must continually **challenge** athletes to achieve new levels of achievement.
- Special Olympics means training to compete, not just recreation. Refer to oath:
“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me brave in the attempt.”

1.2 Coaches Resources

- Provide examples of coaching **books and videos**.
- Encourage coaches to affiliate with their sport’s associations/organizations.
- Provide information on other **NGB coaching courses**.
- Stress the importance of **assistant coaches and Partners Clubs**® with high schools and colleges.
(Many Special Olympics athletes need individualized attention in order to progress.)

1.3 Athlete Assessment

- All athletes must be medically certified to play in Special Olympics (review **Special Olympics medical form**).
- All athletes with **Down syndrome** must have an **atlantoaxial** X-ray.
- Coaches will encounter athletes of all levels of abilities. Try to **individualize** training and competition placement to benefit each athlete.



PART 1 (Continued)

1.4 Special Olympics Cross Country Skiing Events and Rules

- List the **equipment** needed for a training session.
- Special Olympics cross country skiing **rules** include some modifications.
- **Divisioning** allows athletes to compete against those of similar abilities and ages.
- Provide a brief **historical perspective** of cross country skiing.
- Promote cross country skiing as a **lifetime sport**.

1.5 Prepare for Your Cross Country Skiing Program

- List the **equipment** needed for a training session.
- Emphasize the importance of good equipment and **quality ski clothing** for athletes.
- Provide names of **dealers** who will supply low-cost, quality equipment.
- Discuss the importance of proper equipment **maintenance**. Include a brief demonstration of ski waxing.
- Offer suggestions for **basic nutrition** requirements for endurance sports.

1.6 Eight-Week Training and Competition Plan

Briefly discuss each of the topics below. Identify their importance and what can be accomplished.

- Pre-Season Conditioning
- Peaking
- Racing Progression
- Competition Opportunities
- Team Registration





PART 1 (Continued)

1.7 Organizing a Training Program

Emphasize the importance of a **written training plan**.

- Establish a consistent **warm-up** routine.
- Provide flexibility exercises.
- Offer dryland training.
- Move to on-snow training.
- Provide competition experiences.
- Provide a cool-down routine to close.

1.8 Prevention of Injuries

- **Safety** is a coach's number one priority.
- **Check the competition area** for safety hazards before each workout.
- Establish **training rules** to minimize accidents.
- Have an **emergency action plan**, and practice it.
- **Never leave athletes alone** while attending an injured athlete.
- Make sure a **warming area** is always nearby.

1.9 Coaching Athletes with Intellectual Disabilities

- Establish clear **rules** to help athletes understand exactly what is expected of them and to reduce behavior problems.
- **Break down skills** and concepts into simple parts.
- Use **one-part instructions** and "**Key Words**" to explain and reinforce technical skill components.
- Instruct and demonstrate but also coach through asking appropriate *questions*.
Challenge athletes to think for themselves.
- Be aware of **physical impairments** that affect the way athletes hear, see, and/or pay attention.
- Establish a consistent **pre-event** and **post-event routine** at competitions.
- Ask coaches to suggest any of their own **coaching tips**.



PART 2
Activity Session
 (120 minutes)

The **goals** of this session are twofold. One is to help coaches understand the importance of a consistent warm-up and stretching routine and the basic skill components of cross country skiing. The other is to provide simple technical information used to teach Special Olympics athletes these skills. The Coaching Guide should be used extensively in this section.

Teaching Suggestions

- Involve as many participants as possible. Make this an active session with an emphasis on participation.
- Know exactly what you are going to do and stick to the schedule. Time goes by very quickly.

2.1 Instructional Area Selection [20 minutes]

Activities

- **Leg Stretch** (with skis on)
 Step forward on one ski, bending the leg in a 90 degree angle. Extend other leg backwards as far as possible. Lift back heel off ski. Repeat, switching leg positions.
- **Foot Swing** (with skis on)
 While standing with skis parallel to one another, lift one foot and swing feely backward and forward. Repeat with other foot.
- **Toe Touches** (with skis on)
 From standing position (Skis parallel, hip-width apart), bend from the waist and reach down as far as possible. Hold stretch for 5 seconds.
- **Running in Place** (with skis on)
 Run in place continually for 30 seconds, gradually increasing speed.

Teaching Suggestions

- Instruct proper stretching technique, such as slow stretching, no bouncing.
- Show the effectiveness of having an athlete demonstrate a stretch while the other coaches focus on assisting athletes with lower ability.
- Use “**Key Words**” rather than technical explanations. Keep it simple!



PART 2 (continued)

2.2 Teaching the Basic Skills [60 minutes]

For the purpose of this course, the focus should be on the five fundamental skills of cross country skiing: the Ready Position, Recovery, Star Turns, Side Stepping (Climbing), and Diagonal Strides. More activities and technical skill information should be taken from the Coaching Guide.

Teaching Suggestions

- Coaches should be encouraged to make liberal use of **assistants**. One assistant is suggested for every two skiers.
- A recommended method of organization when teaching skills is to **line up skiers** with a minimum of three feet between them. Larger groups may gather in a circle, with instructor/coach in the middle. Always try to keep skiers' backs to the sun.
- If a skier is encountering difficulties learning a skill, **revert back** to the previous skill until he/she is ready to move up.

Skill 1: **READY POSITION**

- Demonstrate the correct ready position, emphasizing looking ahead and keeping chin up.
- Key Words: “Balance”; “Stability”; “Flex”; “Chin Up”; “Look Straight Ahead”

Skill 2: **RECOVERY**

Falling Down

- Demonstrate and practice safely falling down while keeping the hands, arms, and poles out of the way.
- Key Words: “Lean to the Side”; “Relax”; “Reach for the Snow”

Standing Up

- Demonstrate and practice standing up after falling down.
- Key Words: “Bend the Knee”; “Set Your Foot”; “Plant the Poles”; “Push Up”

Skill 3: **STAR TURNS**

- Demonstrate and practice performing an inward and outward star turn.
- Key Word: “Ready Position”; “Form a V”; “Make a Circle”

Skill 4: **SIDE STEPPING (Climbing)**

- Demonstrate and practice sidestepping on flat terrain.
- Key Words: “Pick it Up”

Skill 5: **DIAGONAL STRIDE**

- Demonstrate and practice performing a diagonal stride while skiing.
- Key Words: “Glide”; “Stride Forward”; “Flex at the Knees”; “Push Down on the Pole”





PART 2 (continued)

2.3 Competition Introduction [40 minutes]

The general rules and modifications of Special Olympics cross country skiing are described in detail in the Official Special Olympics Winter Sports Rules. Coaches, however, need to be instructed on the teaching of several competition related issues, including starts, passing, and sign recognition.

• **Starts**

– Interval Starts

Interval starts are used in 500-meter race through 10-kilometer race.

Briefly demonstrate; include the countdown.

– Relay Starts

Relay starts are used in the 50-meter race, 100-meter race, and relay races.

Briefly demonstrate.

• **Passing**

– Discuss and demonstrate common passing errors.

A competitor may not impede or push another skier.

A competitor may not unnecessarily slow down, thereby causing another to slow down or collide.

A competitor should practice stepping around a slower skier when passing.

– Demonstrate proper passing technique.

Call “Track!” when overtaking a slower skier.

Yield when being overtaken by a faster competitor.

• **Sign Recognition**

– Trail markers

– “Cross Country Skier” sign

– Degree of difficulty signs

– Caution or warning signs

– Regulatory signs, including direction signs on race course



PART 3
Special Olympics Athletes Training Session
(90 minutes)

Guidelines

This part of the training school provides an opportunity for coaches to work directly with Special Olympics athletes and to observe expert instructors demonstrating some of the ideas introduced earlier.

Coaches will benefit from seeing how a competition training session is run. Therefore, we recommend that the instructors run a **model training session**.

At least three Special Olympics cross country skiing athletes are needed.

The instructors should lead this session and involve as many coaches as possible as active training partners. Take five minutes before the session to review activities, identify responsibilities, and assign participants specific responsibilities.

Model Training Session

Note: Each training session is likely to focus on different areas. Early in the training season, coaches should concentrate on basic skills, especially on basic skills, especially when dealing with skiers of lower ability. Later in the season, when coaches are keying in on upcoming competitions, the focus may be on tactics and race simulation. The following model is a sample that might be appropriate for early season training session.

3.1 Warm-up and Stretching

- Running in Place
- Stretching Exercises (leg, toe touch, foot swing)

3.2 Skills Instruction

- Star Turns
- Side Stepping

3.3 Competition Stimulation

- Interval Starts

3.4 Cool-Down and Team-Talk

PART 4
Classroom Wrap-up Session
(30 minutes)

4.1 Review (Questions and Answers) [5 minutes]

4.2 Quick Quiz (see following page) [15 minutes]

- Ask coaches to complete the Quick Quiz.
- Provide the answers to each question.
- Coaches grade their own quiz.

4.3 Certification Process and Form [5 minutes]

- Ask coaches to fill out the first part of the certification form.
- In addition to taking this course on teaching and coaching a specific sport, a Special Olympics coach must do the following in order to achieve certification:
 - Attend a General Orientation as a basic introduction to Special Olympics
 - Complete a course on the basics of teaching and coaching Special Olympics athletes.
 - Complete 10 hours of working with Special Olympics athletes under an experienced coach
 - Complete the training programs for Protective Behaviors and Concussion Training and submit confirmation of completion to the Local Special Olympics Program (U.S. only).
 - Receive endorsement from his/her Program as having fulfilled the above criteria, as well as general screening approval as a suitable individual to work with Special Olympics athletes.

4.4 Training School Evaluation [5 minutes]

- Coaches complete the course evaluation and return it before leaving the training school.



Quick Quiz

1. For overall safety and effectiveness, there should be at least ____ coach(es) for every ____ athletes at each practice session.
2. The three main aspects of a well-organized training session in winter training are _____, _____, and _____.
3. The three factors in coaching philosophy are _____, _____, and _____.
4. Skiers learn the most about technique when they first _____ rather than by standing around.
5. Coaches should look to see that the skiers not only have the right ski equipment, but the right _____.
6. Finish this quote: “It is better to train often and easy than _____.”
7. A skier loses more body heat through the _____ than any other part of the body. Let’s keep our skiers warm for athletic activities.
8. A resource for more information on coaches education form cross country skiing is _____.
9. The three key points to either a classical stride or a freestyle skate that coaches look for are _____, _____, and _____.
10. Klister is used on snow that has been _____ and is used primarily in _____ conditions.
11. _____ poles are used to enhance skating, and poles for classical skiing normally measure to the _____.
12. The SOI/FIS Technical Delegate is on hand to oversee that the _____ are followed and will convene the _____ in the event of a protest.
13. The term “Nordic skiing” derived its name from _____

_____.
14. Higher elevations affect endurance athletes by _____

_____.



Quick Quiz Answers

1. For overall safety and effectiveness, there should be at least **one** coach(es) for every **four** athletes at each practice session.
2. The three main aspects of a well-organized training session in winter training are **properly fitted and serviced equipment**, **a well-maintained and set up training area**, and **proper medical and safety support**.
3. The three factors in coaching philosophy are **inclusion**, **training**, and **instilling confidence**.
4. Skiers learn the most about technique when they first **observe and then imitate** rather than by standing around.
5. Coaches should look to see that the skiers not only have the right ski equipment, but the right **clothing**.
6. Finish this quote: “It is better to train often and easy than **to train intensely only a few times.**”
7. A skier loses more body heat through the **head** than any other part of the body. Let’s keep our skiers warm for athletic activities.
8. A resource for more information on coaches education form cross country skiing is **the U.S. Ski Coaches Association (USSCA)**.
9. The three key points to either a classical stride or a freestyle skate that coaches look for are **weight shift**, **forward body position**, and **pole plants**.
10. Klister is used on snow that has been **warmed** and is used primarily in **wet** conditions.
11. **Long** poles are used to enhance skating, and poles for classical skiing normally measure to the **armpit**.
12. The SOI/FIS Technical Delegate is on hand to oversee that the **rules** are followed and will convene the **Jury** in the event of a protest.
13. The term “Nordic skiing” derived its name from **Scandinavia** and refers to a discipline that **involves cross country and downhill maneuvers on skis that affixes the toe to the ski leaves the heel free**.
14. Higher elevations affect endurance athletes by **influencing the amount of oxygen that gets to the bloodstream because there is less oxygen in the air**.

