



Special Olympics

ROLLER SKATING COACHING GUIDE

Planning a Roller Skating Training & Competition Season



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Setting Goals

Realistic, yet challenging goals for each athlete are important to the motivation of the athlete both at training and during competition. Goals establish and drive the action of both training and competition plans. Sport confidence in athletes helps to make participation fun and is critical to the athlete's motivation. Please see the Principles of Coaching section for additional information and exercises on goal setting.

Goal Setting

Setting goals is a joint effort with the athlete and coach. The main features of goal setting include the following.

Structured into short-term and long-term

- ♦ Stepping stones to success
- ♦ Must be accepted by the athlete
- ♦ Vary in difficulty – easily attainable to challenging
- ♦ Must be measurable

Long Term Goal

The athlete will acquire basic Roller Skating skills, appropriate social behavior and functional knowledge of the rules necessary to participate successfully in Roller Skating competitions.

Sample Short Term Objectives

- ♦ Consistently push off into a front skate from a stand up start
- ♦ Practice good form while taking steps
- ♦ Correctly perform three complete rotations of a two-foot spin with feet shoulder-width apart
- ♦ Correctly position hands on roller hockey stick

Benefits

- ♦ Increases athlete's level of physical fitness.
- ♦ Teaches self discipline
- ♦ Teaches the athlete sports skills that are essential to a variety of other activities
- ♦ Provides the athlete with a means for self-expression and social interaction



Assessing Goals Checklist

1. Write a goal statement.
2. Does the goal sufficiently meet the athlete's needs?
3. Is the goal is positively stated? If not, rewrite it.
4. Is the goal is under the athlete's control and focused on their goals and no one else's?
5. Is the goal a goal and not a result?
6. Is the goal important enough to the athlete that they will want to work towards achieving it? Have the time and energy to do it?
7. How will this goal make the athlete's life different?
8. What barriers might the athlete encounter in working toward this goal?
9. What more does the athlete know?
10. What does the athlete need to learn how to do?
11. What risks does the athlete need to take?



Planning a Sport Training & Competition Season

Every practice session will contain the same elements:

- ♦ Warming up
- ♦ Stretching
- ♦ Practicing previously taught skills
- ♦ Teaching new skills
- ♦ Providing a competition experience
- ♦ Fitness training, when time allows
- ♦ Cooling down.

How much time is spent upon each element will vary by the time of the season (more competition experience later in the season); by the total amount of training time available (more time on new skills in a 2-hour session than a 90-minute session); and by the level of skill of the athlete (more practice of previously taught skills for the lower level skater).

Fitness and conditioning exercises are a valuable part of every athlete's training, but may not fit into your limited on-floor schedule. You may choose to meet with athletes at other times for this part of training, or they may supplement their time with you by adding Home Training.

A 90-minute Sample Training Session for a group of 24-speed skaters is shown in the next column. Artistic or hockey skaters could follow the same format, substituting appropriate skills in the stations and an appropriate competition experience.

1:00 Warm-Up

- ♦ Jog in place or dance to a fast popular song.

1:10 Stretch

- ♦ Isolate quadriceps, calves, hamstrings, and groin muscles.
- ♦ Get skates, check for safety and put them on.

1:30 Practice Previously Taught Skills

- ♦ Falling down and getting up.
- ♦ Marching steps.
- ♦ Toe-stop stop.
- ♦ One-foot balance.

1:45 Teach New Skills in 3 groups of 8

- ♦ Move athletes through stations.
- ♦ Spend 6-8 minutes at each:

Station I – Racing Starts

Station II – Two-arm Swing and Corner Set Position

Station III – Corner Crosses.

Skaters not ready for new skills continue to practice previously taught skills during this time.

2:10 Provide A Competitive Experience

- ♦ Put the skills together.
- ♦ Run four practice races of six skaters each.

2:25 Cool-Down

- ♦ Skate to a slow popular song, just for fun.
- ♦ Take skates off.

2:30 Training session is over.

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Special Olympics Roller Skating Training Session

Date: 9/18/92 **Week #:** 3 **of:** 8 weeks **# of Athletes:** 24 **# of Coaches:** 3
Goal for Practice Session: Group 1 (7 athletes) – Mastery of alternating one-foot balance
 Group 2 (17 athletes) – Introduction to 4 of the 6 level II free style singles items
Facility Safety Check: **Equipment** **Floor** **Plans** **Supervision**

Time	Element of the Session	Specific Objective	Activities	Set-Up Needed
1:00	Warm-up	Focus on task. Prepare muscles for safe stretching.	Stash personal belongings. Form circle, dance to fast song.	Top 40 tape
1:10	Stretches	Prevent on-floor injury.	Quadriceps, calves, hamstrings, groin muscles. Get skates, safety check. Put them on.	Wall and floor space
1:30	Previously taught skills	Review basics; reassess athletes as to placement in group 1 or 2.	Falling down and getting up. Marching steps across floor. Alternate one-foot balance to music.	108 Waltz tape
1:40	New Skills	Group 1 – no new skills Group 2 – introduce 4 Free Style items for Level II singles.	Continue to practice one-foot balance. In 2 groups, each with a coach, teach skills in order – 2-foot spin, bunny hop, arabesque, and shoot-the-duck.	On-floor planned program pattern
2:10	Competitive experience	Group 1 – practice Level I dance. Group 2 – put Level II singles items for Level II singles.	From a stop, demonstrate steps to the music while Group 2 watches. With coach leading, perform items to music in order on floor.	108 Waltz tape Free Style tape
2:20	Cool-down	Relax muscles; ease into end of sessions.	Limbo game.	Crossbar and music tape, poles are optional
2:30	Session over		Return skates.	



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Special Olympics Roller Skating Training Session

Date: _____ Week #: _____ of: _____ # of Athletes: _____ # of Coaches: _____

Goal for Practice Session: _____

Facility Safety Check: _____ Equipment _____ Floor _____ Plans _____ Supervision

Time	Element of the Session	Specific Objective	Activities	Set-Up Needed



Essential Components of Planning a Roller Skating Training Session

Each training session needs to contain the same essential elements. The amount of time spent on each element will depend on the goal of the training session, the time of season the session is in, and the amount of time available for a particular session. The following elements need to be included in an athlete's daily training program. Please refer to the noted sections in each area for more in depth information and guidance on these topics.

- Warm ups
- Previously taught skills
- New Skills
- Competition experience
- Feedback on performance.

The final step in planning a training session is designing what the athlete is actually going to do. Remember when creating a training session using the key components of a training session, the progression through the session allows for a gradual build up of physical activity.

1. Easy to difficult
2. Slow to fast
3. Known to unknown
4. General to specific
5. Start to finish



Principles of Effective Training Sessions

Keep all active	Athlete needs to be an active listener
Create clear, concise goals	Learning improves when athletes know what is expected of them
Give clear, concise instructions	Demonstrate – increase accuracy of instruction
Record progress	You and your athletes chart progress together
Give positive feedback	Emphasize and reward things the athlete is doing well
Provide variety	Vary exercises – prevent boredom
Encourage enjoyment	Training and competition is fun – help keep it this way for you and your athletes
Create progressions	Learning is increased when information progresses from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Known to unknown – discovering new things successfully• Simple to complex – seeing that “I” can do it• General to specific – this is why I am working so hard
Plan maximum use of resources	Use what you have and improvise for equipment that you do not have – think creatively
Allow for individual differences	Different athletes, different learning rates, different capacities.



Tips for Conducting Successful Training Sessions

- Assign assistant coaches their roles and responsibilities in accordance to your training plan.
- When possible, have all equipment and stations prepared before the athletes arrive.
- Introduce and acknowledge coaches and athletes.
- Review intended program with everyone. Keep athletes informed of changes in schedule or activities.
- Alter the plan according to weather and the facility in order to accommodate the needs of the athletes.
- Change activities before the athlete become bored, and lose interest.
- Keep drills and activities brief so athletes do not get bored. Keep everyone busy with an exercise even it is rest.
- Devote the end of the practice to a fun, group activity that can incorporate challenge and fun always giving them something to look forward to at the end of practice.
- If an activity is going well, it is often useful to stop the activity while interest is high.
- Summarize the session and announce arrangements for next session.
- Keep the **fun** in fundamentals.



Tips for Conducting Safe Training Sessions

Though the risks can be few, coaches have a responsibility to ensure that athletes know, understand and appreciate the risks of Roller Skating. The safety and well-being of athletes are the coaches' primary concerns. Roller Skating is not a dangerous sport, but accidents do occur when coaches forget to take safety precautions. It is the head coach's responsibility to minimize the occurrence of injuries by providing safe conditions.

- Establish clear rules for behavior at your first practice and enforce them.
 1. Maintain one-way traffic.
 2. Keep your hands to yourself.
 3. Get up right away after you fall.
 4. Do what the floor supervisor asks.
- Make sure there is easy access to bathrooms, a telephone, water to drink, and ice for an injury.
- Make sure the skating surface is smooth, level, clean, dry, and free from debris or holes.
- Check your first aid kit; restock supplies as necessary.
- Train all athletes and coaches on emergency procedures, and have copies of all medical forms on hand. Have someone who is trained in first-aid and CPR on or very near to the skating area during practice and competitions.
- Have at least 2 responsible adults present, at least one of whom will be directly with the athletes at all times.
- If training for competition, have a minimum of one coach or assistant for each 10 athletes. If skating recreationally in a public skating session, have a floor supervisor for every 100 skaters in addition to the two adults with the Special Olympics group.
- Have athletes sized for proper fit of skates, that is, there is room enough for toes to sit flat, but no more than one size (1/2") of extra length.
- All skates should receive a 4-part safety check before use:
 1. Toe-stops secure
 2. Laces long enough
 3. Wheels securely fastened and rolling freely (unless tightened intentionally for a less able skater)
 4. Truck action relatively tight (front and back components that connect wheels/axles to plate have little free movement).
- See that all skates are laced to the top and tied securely.
- Athletes should wear comfortable, loose-fitting or stretchy clothing. No hats, combs, portable tape players, sunglasses or other objects should be worn or carried onto the skating surface. All speed and hockey skaters should be wearing helmets.
- Before allowing athletes to enter the skating surface, make sure they have warmed up and completed a stretching routine, and have learned the proper way to fall down and to get back up.
- Train to improve the general fitness level of your players. Physically fit players are less likely to get injured. Make your practices Active.
- For hockey, check the cages for poorly secured posts and cross-bars. Instruct players never to swing on goals.
- Do not put a player with a very slow reaction time in goal. Make sure that a goalie is able to understand how to play the position safely.



Roller Skating Practice Competitions

The more we compete, the better we get. Part of the strategic plan for Special Olympics Roller Skating is to drive more sport development at the local levels. Competition motivates athletes, coaches and the entire sport management team. Expand or add to your schedule as many competition opportunities as possible. We have provided a few suggestions below.

1. Host a Mini Meet with adjacent local Programs.
2. Ask the local high school if your athletes can compete with them as a practice Meet.
3. Join the local community Roller Skating club and/or associations.
4. Host weekly Mini Meet.
5. Create a Roller Skating league or club in your community.
6. Incorporate competition components at the end of every training session.



Taking an Athlete or Team to a Tournament

Before the Tournament

- Review registration materials, noting specifically:
 - Events/divisions offered
 - Requirements
 - Deadlines
 - Costs and what they cover
 - Procedures for registering, i.e., signatures and approvals needed.
- Assess athlete's readiness to travel. As appropriate, discuss with parent or guardian.
- Arrange for needed uniforms and equipment.
- If not provided, arrange for transportation, housing, and meals.
- Review medical and release forms for effective date and accuracy.
- Complete and submit necessary registration materials, indicating any special concerns or limitations of athletes.
- Inform athletes and their families about the plans and about arrangements for families to attend as spectators.
- Arrange assistance for any athlete that needs help acquiring or packing personal care items, medications, and clothing.
- Recruit and train assistant coaches/chaperones. The delegation needs a minimum of one coach/chaperone per every four athletes. Be certain that each understands the non-alcohol policy and the 24-hour nature of the job.
- Inform local media about the trip.
- Continue training with conditions as close to those of the tournament as possible.

At the Tournament

- Register your delegation on site, being sure to note credentials needed, competition times, venue location, directions to the venue, meal times and locations, coaches meetings times and locations, emergency and inclement weather procedures, how and where to get medical help, how and where to find security volunteers.
- Build the athletes' schedules around the competition including:
 - Adequate rest
 - Pre-competition warm-up and stretching
 - Pre-competition confidence building
 - Pre-competition meals at least 1.5 hours before, and high in complex carbohydrates
 - Practice on off-days of long tournaments
- Regardless of placement, feature all athletes, affirming their pride in their performance.
- Give each athlete as much information about his/her performance as he/she can understand – times or scores, comparison to personal best, etc.
- Make sure that athletes take advantage of special events and activities.
- Make time to keep each chaperone up-to-date and listen to his/her concerns or suggestions.
- Monitor the physical and emotional condition of each athlete.
- For those athletes unable to make sound judgments, monitor meal and snack selections, personal hygiene, and use of spending money.
- Include the Closing Ceremonies in your plans, completing the tournament experience for the athletes.
- Welcome family members who attend, and arrange for their participation as appropriate.
- Complete any evaluation forms requested.

After the Tournament

- See that local media get results information.
- Thank the assistant coaches/chaperones who helped.
- Update families who were unable to attend.



Conducting a Mini Meet

Increasing competition opportunities for athletes is one of the jobs of the coach. In many communities, all athletes may compete at an end of the season local event, but only a small few go on to Chapter or National events. Competition measures progress and demonstrate skills mastered. One opportunity per year is not enough.

A Mini Meet is an organized competition of small scale – a scrimmage between two teams or a small tourney of local individual athletes. Every coach will not have the skills to run a large venue, but every coach can conduct a Mini Meet.

Volunteers and Officials Needed For a Speed Skating Mini Meet

- ◆ 2 Referees/Starters – Start and supervise the race on the floor, assume that rules are followed and that every athlete has an equal chance to win. One skates with the lead skater, the other with a slower or fallen skater. Only referees may disqualify athletes. *Must be a trained official.*
- ◆ 4 Corner Judges – Stand inside the corner pylons, keeping them in place, and tell the referee of any rule infractions. *Should be a trained official.*
- ◆ 1-3 Place Judges – Stand inside the finish line to record the placement of skaters as they cross the finish line. *Should be a trained official.*
- ◆ 3-8 Timers (one per skater in a heat) – One acts as chief. The others time and record assigned athletes. *Volunteer position.*
- ◆ 1 Tabulator – Places athletes according to the place judges, records and posts times, gives results to announcer, and awards presenters. *Volunteer position.*
- ◆ 1 Announcer – Calls for skater check-in, introduces skaters, and announces placements. *Volunteer position.*
- ◆ 1-2 Awards Presenters – Present every competitor in every heat his/her ribbon in an awards ceremony. *Volunteer position.*
- ◆ 1-2 Competitive Stewards – Administer athletes staging, check athletes in, and conduct quick safety checks of helmets and skates. *Volunteer position.*
- ◆ 3-8 Exit Volunteers – Congratulate skaters upon completion of their performance and help them to the awards staging. *Volunteer position.*

One person could do several of these jobs in a small meet. One of those on hand must be certified in First Aid.



Equipment Needed For a Speed Skating Mini Meet

- ◆ Athlete numbers and pins
- ◆ Plastic tape for starting line, timing/finish line, and relay gate area if not painted on the floor
- ◆ Meter measure for track and relay gate area
- ◆ 4 Official cut-corner pylons for the full track or the 30 meter race
- ◆ 5 additional pylons for the slalom
- ◆ 3-8 stopwatches (one per skater in a heat)
- ◆ 12 pencils
- ◆ 6 clipboards
- ◆ Starting pistol and blanks
- ◆ Music for opening, closing, and awards ceremonies
- ◆ Optional banner for opening and closing ceremonies
- ◆ Awards ribbons
- ◆ Optional banner and stand for awards ceremonies
- ◆ Mop
- ◆ Ice for injury
- ◆ Water to drink

Facility Needs For a Speed Skating Mini Meet

- ◆ Flat, dry, clean surface, free from holes and debris, at least 20 x 50 meters for a 100 meter track. (For smaller surfaces reduce the size of the track and skate shorter laps.)
- ◆ Barriers around the track, or at least 10 feet of floor beyond the track all the way around.
- ◆ Padding on any opening in the barrier on the straightaways (between pylons 4 & 1 or 2 & 3).

Volunteers and Officials Needed For an Artistic Mini Meet

- ◆ 1 Referee – Administers the on-floor competition, assures that the rules are followed and that every athlete has an equal chance to win. May also judge. Music is a trained official.
- ◆ 3 Judges (2+ the Referee) – Score the performance of the skaters and place them without ties. Music is trained officials.
- ◆ 1 Tabulator – Receives judges score sheets and ordinals and places athletes. Should be a trained official.
- ◆ 1 Announcer /Music Steward – Calls for skater check in, introduces skaters, announces placements. Plays tapes for free style and dance competitions. Volunteer position.
- ◆ 1-2 Awards Presenters – Presents every competitor in every division with their ribbon in an awards ceremony. Volunteer position.
- ◆ 1-2 Competitive Stewards – administers athlete check in, checks equipment for safety, sends skaters onto the floor on, in figures, to the referee, at the appropriate time. Volunteer position.
- ◆ 1 Exit Volunteer – Congratulates each skater at the end of their performance and takes them to the awards staging area. Volunteer position.

One person may do more than job in a small meet. One of those on hand must be certified in First Aid and CPR.



Equipment For an Artistic Mini Meet

- ◆ 6 clipboards
- ◆ 1 dozen black pencils plus 1 red, 1 blue, and 1 green pencil
- ◆ Score sheets, tab sheets
- ◆ Sound system with cassette player, CD player, amplifiers and speakers
- ◆ Free style music for each free style competitor
- ◆ Stickers to label free style cassettes/CD's with skater's number
- ◆ Stopwatch
- ◆ Dance music – 108 Waltz, 100 March, 100 Tango
- ◆ Music for opening, closing and awards ceremonies
- ◆ Optional banner and torch for opening and closing ceremonies
- ◆ Awards ribbons
- ◆ Optional banner and stand for awards ceremonies
- ◆ Black vinyl tape to put down 3 contiguous 6-meter circles if not painted on the floor
- ◆ Compass tool for the circles with a 3-meter radius
- ◆ Mop
- ◆ Ice for injury
- ◆ Water to drink

Facility Needs For an Artistic Mini Meet

- ◆ Flat, dry clean and unobstructed surface 20 x 50 meters or as close to that size as possible.



Getting Ready For Competition

Guidelines For Artistic Judging

The guidelines below are designed to help give consistency in evaluating the performance of artistic roller skaters. Judges first place the skater within the appropriate 20-point range. Judges then select a score within that range, based upon the skater's demonstrated ability to master the judging points listed.

School Figures

Judging points:

- ♦ Quality of edge
- ♦ Tracing the circle
- ♦ Upright body carriage
- ♦ Even speed or pace
- ♦ In Figure 7, quality of three turns.

0-19	Skater does not complete figure.
20-39	Skaters completes figure, mostly on two feet
40-59	Skater completes figure using many pushes, half of each circle skated on one foot.
60-79	Skater completes figure using few pushes, most of each circle skated on one foot.
80-99	Skater completes figure with no more than one extra push, skating whole circles one the foot.

Free Style Singles and Pairs

Judging points for *Artistic Impression*:

- ♦ Control and accuracy of edge
- ♦ Skating to the music
- ♦ Poise and personality
- ♦ Using the entire skating surface
- ♦ In Pairs, unison of partners.

0-19	Skater/Team successfully attempts fewer than 3 items.
20-39	Skater/Team successfully attempts 3 or 4 items.
40-59	Skater/Team successfully attempts 5 items.
60-79	Skater/Team successfully attempts minimum number of items required in the Official Rules.
80-99	Skater/Team successfully completes minimum items required, with skill.

Solo or Team Dance Level I

Judging points:

- ♦ Upright carriage
- ♦ Even flow from foot to foot
- ♦ Stretched free leg and pointed toe
- ♦ In Team Dance, unison of partners.

0-19	Skater/Team does not skate once around the floor.
20-39	Skater/Team skates mostly on two feet.
40-59	Skater/Team takes alternating steps, rarely in time to the music.
60-79	Skater/Team takes alternating steps, often in time to the music.
80-99	Skater/Team takes alternating steps in time to the music.

Solo or Team Dance Level II – V

Judging points:

- ♦ Upright carriage
- ♦ Even flow from foot to foot
- ♦ Stretched free leg and pointed toe
- ♦ In Team Dance, unison of partners.

0-19	Skater/Team does not attempt all the steps of the dance.
20-39	Skater/Team attempts all steps of the dance at least 1 time.
40-59	Skater/Team successfully completes the dance 2 or more times.
60-79	Skater/Team completes the dance several times, usually in time to the music.
80-99	Skater/Team completes the dance, skating in time throughout the judging period.



In Level III Free Style Singles, judges will give a second score indicating the comparative variety and difficulty of the skater's selection of content. This score is for *Technical Merit* of the program.

- 0-19 Skater performed no Level III items.
- 20-39 Skaters selected all items from less challenging content.
- 40-59 Skater selected most items from less challenging content.
- 60-79 Skater selected items from both less and more challenging content.
- 80-99 Skater performed a variety of skills, all selected from more challenging content.

Volunteers and Officials For a Hockey Mini Meet

- ◆ 1 Referee – Administers the game on the floor, assuring that the rules are followed and both teams have an equal chance to win. *Should be a trained official.*
- ◆ 2 Goal Judges – Stand on the back of the cages to hold them in place and determine if the ball cross the line at the mouth of the cage. *Volunteer position.*
- ◆ 1-2 Timers/Scorekeepers – Records goals, keeps the official game time and penalty times. *Volunteer position.*
- ◆ 1-2 Awards presenters – Presents each member of each team with a ribbon in an awards ceremony. *Volunteer position.*

One person may do more than one job in a small meet. One person on hand must be certified in First Aid and CPR.

Equipment For a Hockey Mini Meet

- ◆ 1 dozen sticks
- ◆ 3 balls
- ◆ 2 cages
- ◆ 1 whistle
- ◆ 1 bell
- ◆ Scoreboard, blackboard and chalk, or poster board and marker
- ◆ 2 stopwatches
- ◆ Music for opening, closing and awards ceremonies
- ◆ Optional banner and torch for opening and closing ceremonies
- ◆ Awards ribbons
- ◆ Optional banner and stand for awards ceremonies
- ◆ Mop
- ◆ Ice for injury
- ◆ Water to drink



Facility Needs For a Hockey Mini Meet

- ◆ Flat, dry, clean surface with a ratio of 1:2, from 10 x20 meters to 17x34 meters.
- ◆ Barriers, at least 2 cm x 15 cm (1" x 6"), along the sides of the court.
- ◆ Vinyl tape for 5 cm (2") lines at mouth of goal cage, in a color contrasting the ball's color.
- ◆ Vinyl tape to mark the center of the court, if not painted on the floor already.
- ◆ Off-court space enough for teams to stand, and from which they can enter the court.

Sample Mini Meet Script 1

Opening Ceremonies

MC: "All Special Olympics athletes, VIP's and celebrities please report to the March staging area. The march will begin in a few minutes."

If band is used, MC introduces band as they enter and take their places.

MC: "Good morning/afternoon/evening ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the opening Ceremonies of the (year) (facility or community) Special Olympics Mini Meet. Let's give a big hand to the athletes as we begin our ceremonies."

Music begins and March of Special Olympics athletes commences.

If there is a banner, athletes carrying the banner will lead, followed by the other athletes and coaches.

The final individuals in the march will be the athlete and VIP chosen to recite the Special Olympics Oath and open the event.*

MC: "(Name of athlete from class/school/program) and our special guest (VIP name) will now lead us in reciting the Special Olympics oath."

Special Olympics athletes: "Fellow athletes please stand; repeat after me... Let me win (pause as others repeat) but if I cannot win (pause as others repeat) let me be brave in the attempt." (Pause as others repeat)

VIP: "I declare the (year) (facility or community) Special Olympics Mini Meet open."

MC: "That concludes the Opening Ceremonies of the (year) (facility or community) Special Olympics Mini Meet. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in saluting our Special Olympics athletes and coaches as they begin the competition."

* If a torch is used, the designated athlete should be introduced and will carry in the torch symbolizing the Flame of Hope at this point.



Sample Mini Meet Script 2

Awards Ceremony

A volunteer brings the athletes to the awards area as soon after competition as possible, in correct order of placement:

Participant (if any):

8th

6th

4th

2nd

1st

3rd

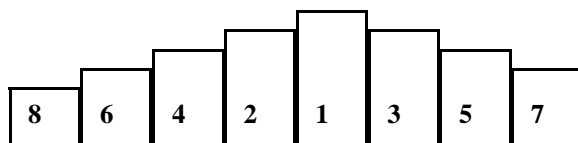
5th

7th

Start the music as athletes move from the awards staging area to the presentation area.

MC: “Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to announce the results in the (division) of the (age and gender group) (event). In eighth place, with a time/score of (time/score), (name)... (Pause for award presentation). In seventh place, with a time/score of, etc.”

For a Mini Meet, the Awards area should be large enough to hold the largest division or heat.



If a Special Olympics banner is available, it is an appropriate back drop. An awards stand with enough placement boxes for an entire division is also an option, but required for a small contest.



Sample Mini Meet Script 3

Closing Ceremonies

MC: “Special Olympics athletes and coaches, please assemble for the Closing Ceremonies. And now, after a hard day of competition and in a spirit of friendship, we will begin the parade to form the friendship circle.”

Introduce the participating athletes or programs as they form the circle.

MC: “This Special Olympics Mini Meet would not have been possible without the efforts and dedication of the volunteers and officials under the leadership of (competition organizer’s name). The (facility or community) Special Olympics Mini Meet has come to an end, but the memory of this wonderful meet will remain with us for many days to come.”

MC: “Athletes, you should be proud of your accomplishments and of your hours of hard work and training. You are all winners. Now, as the competition comes to a close, let us join hands in the circle of friendship.”*

MC or VIP or Head Coach: “I declare the (year) (facility or community) Special Olympics Mini Meet closed.”

* If a torch is used, the designated athlete should be introduced and will carry the torch out at this point.



Developing a Season Plan

Before The Season Starts

- ◆ Attend coaches' training school.
- ◆ Arrange for facility use.
- ◆ Arrange for equipment needed.
- ◆ Hold orientation for family members, teachers, and friends of athletes, including Home Training Program.

Week One

- ◆ Welcome athletes; orient them to the facility and routine.
- ◆ Review safety procedures and rules.
- ◆ Size and check equipment to be used, whether the athletes' own or rented equipment.
- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Teach basic skills.
- ◆ Assess the athlete's skill level.
- ◆ Cool down.

Week Two

- ◆ Review safety procedures and rules.
- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Practice previously taught skills.
- ◆ Teach new skills.
- ◆ Cool down.

Week Three

- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Practice previously taught skills.
- ◆ Teach new skills.
- ◆ Introduce a competitive experience.
- ◆ Cool down.

Week Four

- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Practice previously taught skills.
- ◆ Teach new skills.
- ◆ Provide a competitive experience.
- ◆ Cool down.

Week Five

- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Practice previously taught skills.
- ◆ Teach new skills.
- ◆ Provide a competitive experience.
- ◆ Cool down.



Week Six

- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Practice previously taught skills.
- ◆ Teach new skills.
- ◆ Provide a competitive experience.
- ◆ Cool down.

Week Seven

- ◆ Give out mini meet or competition information (schedule, events, food, transportation, invitation to families).
- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Practice previously taught skills.
- ◆ Provide a competitive experience.
- ◆ Cool down.
- ◆ Invite media to the event.

Week Eight

- ◆ Try on outfits or uniforms for the meet.
- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Provide a competitive experience.
- ◆ Cool down.

Competition

- ◆ Welcome guests, review schedule for meet.
- ◆ Warm up.
- ◆ Stretch.
- ◆ Compete.
- ◆ Present awards.
- ◆ Cool down.
- ◆ Eat snack or meal

After The Eight Week Season

- ◆ Continue training athletes going on to Area, state, or National events.
- ◆ Thank the facility host.
- ◆ Thank assistant coaches.
- ◆ Thank other volunteers.
- ◆ Send follow-up news story and photos to media.
- ◆ Evaluate this season.
- ◆ Develop the season plan for next year.



Selecting Team Members

The key to the successful development of a traditional Special Olympics or Unified Sports® team is the proper selection of team members. We have provided some primary considerations below for you.

Ability Grouping

Unified teams work best when all team members have similar sports skills. Partners with abilities that are far superior to other teammates will either control competition or accommodate others by not competing to their potential. In both situations, the goals of interaction and teamwork are diminished and a true competitive experience is not achieved. For example, in Roller Skating, an 8 year old should not be competing against or with a 30 year old athlete.

Age Grouping

All team members should be closely matched in age.

- ◆ Within 3-5 years of age for athletes 21 years of age and under
- ◆ Within 10-15 years for athletes 22 years of age and over

Creating Meaningful Involvement in Unified Sports®

Unified Sports® embraces the philosophy and principles of Special Olympics. When selecting your Unified team you want to achieve meaningful involvement at the beginning, during and end of your sport season. Unified teams are organized to provide meaningful involvement for all athletes and partners. Every teammate should play a role and have the opportunity to contribute to the team. Meaningful involvement also refers to the quality of interaction and competition within a Unified Sports® team. Achieving meaningful involvement by all teammates on the team ensures a positive and rewarding experience for everyone.

Indicators of Meaningful Involvement

- ◆ Teammates compete without causing undue risk of injury to themselves or others.
- ◆ Teammates compete according to the rules of competition.
- ◆ Teammates have the ability and opportunity to contribute to the performance of the team.
- ◆ Teammates understand how to blend their skills with those of other athletes, resulting in improved performance by athletes with lesser ability.

Meaningful Involvement Is Not Achieved When Team Members

- ◆ Have superior sports skills in comparison to their fellow team members.
- ◆ Act as on field coaches, rather than teammates.
- ◆ Control most aspects of the competition during critical periods of the game.
- ◆ Do not train or practice regularly, and only show up on the day of competition.
- ◆ Lower their level of ability dramatically, so that they do not hurt others or control the entire game.



Daily Performance Record

The Daily Performance Record is designed for the coach to keep an accurate record of the athlete's daily performances as they learn a sports skill. There are several reasons why the coach can benefit from using the Daily Performance Record.

1. The record becomes a permanent documentation of the athlete's progress
2. Helps the coach establish measurable consistency in the athlete's training program.
3. The record allows the coach to be flexible during the actual teaching and coaching session because he can break down the skills into specific, smaller tasks that meet the individual needs of each athlete.
4. The record helps the coach choose proper skills teaching methods, correct conditions and criteria for evaluating the athlete's performance of the skills.

Using the Daily Performance Record

At the top of the record, the coach enters his name; the athlete's name, and their roller skating event. If more than one coach works with the athlete, they should enter the dates that they work with the athlete next to their names.

Before the training session begins, the coach decides what skills will be covered. The coach makes this decision based on the athlete's age, the athlete's interests, and his mental and physical abilities. The skill needs to be a statement or a description of the specific exercise that the athlete must perform. The coach enters the skill on the top line of the left-hand column. Each subsequent skill is entered after the athlete masters the previous skill. Of course, more than one sheet may be used to record all of the skills involved. Also, if the athlete cannot perform a prescribed skill, the coach may break down the skill into smaller tasks that will allow for the athlete's success at the new skill.

Conditions and Criteria for Mastering

After the coach enters the skill, they must then decide on the conditions and criteria by which the athlete must master the skill. Conditions are special circumstances, which define the manner in which the athlete must perform a skill. For example, "given a demonstration, and with assistance". The coach needs to always operate under the assumption that the ultimate conditions in which the athlete masters a skill are, "upon command and without assistance", and therefore, does not have to enter these conditions in the record next to the skill entry. Ideally, the coach needs to arrange the skills and conditions such that the athlete gradually learns to perform the skill while upon command and without assistance.

Criteria are the standards that determine how well the skill must be performed. The coach needs to determine a standard that realistically suits the athlete's mental and physical abilities. For example, "make three strikes, 60 percent of the time". Given the varied nature of skills, the criteria might involve many different types of standards, such as - amount of time, number of repetitions, accuracy, distance or speed.

Dates of Sessions and Levels of Instruction Used

The coach may work on one task for a couple of days, and may use several methods of instruction during that time to progress to the point where the athlete performs the task upon command and without assistance. To establish a consistent curriculum for the athlete, the coach must record the dates he works on particular tasks, and must enter the methods of instruction that were used on those dates.

Special Olympics Roller Skating Coaching Guide
 Planning a Roller Skating Training & Competition Season



Event: Insert Event Name **Athlete's Name** Insert Name
Skill: Insert Skill **Coach's Name** Insert Name

Skill Analysis	Conditions & Criteria	Dates & Instruction Methods	Date Mastered



Roller Skating Attire

Clothing and Equipment

Introductory Level Skaters

Introductory level skaters should wear comfortable loose-fitting or stretchy clothing. Sweat suits and warm-ups are good choices for beginning skaters at practice. The more serious skater should dress appropriately for their competitive event.

Artistic Women

Artistic women wear tights or sheer-to-the-waist hose and skirted leotards.

Speed Skaters

Speed skaters wear shorts and short-sleeved shirts of stretchy fabric. Outfits can be made as one or two pieces. Helmets are required. Knee pads and wrist guards are optional.

Artistic Men

Artistic men wear stretch pants with no belts or pockets and leotard tops. For Dance, men may add a short jacket. Dress pants with a shirt and tie are an acceptable alternative.

Hockey Players

Hockey players wear shorts and short-sleeved shirts. They may be of stretch or non-stretch fabric. Helmets are required, as are protective cups for men. Mouthpieces are strongly recommended. Knee pads, wrist guards, and gloves are optional.

Men or Women

Men or women may wear unitards as practice outfits.



Roller Skating Equipment

Goalies

Goalies must wear a face mask, and may wear a chest protector and shin guards. Hockey uniforms for competition must include a one or two digit number at least 20 cm (8") high on the back. The team captain is identified by a "C" on the upper left front.

Skates

Skates may be traditional 'quads' (two sets of two wheels each on parallel front and back axles, placed under each foot) or 'in-lines' (3, 4 or 5 wheels placed in a single row under the center of each foot). Leather boots are the better choice. Toe-stops are necessary for speed skating starts and artistic jumps. If skating outdoors or on an uneven surface, softer compound wheels are better.

Every time a skater puts on a pair of skates, whether they are the skater's personal pair or a pair of rented skates, a four-point safety check should be made:

1. Toe-stops secure
2. Laces long enough to lace all the way up and tie
3. Wheels clean, rolling freely, and securely attached
4. Action tight on quads (little free movement of the truck assembly that connects the wheels/axles/cushions to the plate).

Skates should fit with no more than one size (1/2") of extra length in the toe. Extra length will mean lack of control and most often leads to blisters. The best fit is one where the toes reach almost to the end of the boot, but have enough room to sit flat.

Artistic Equipment

Artistic equipment needed to train includes:

- ◆ Sound amplification system with a cassette tape player/CD player
- ◆ Metronome dance music – 108 Waltz, 100 March, 100 Tango
- ◆ Free style music selected by the coach
- ◆ Clipboards, stopwatches, and pencils.

Speed Equipment

Speed equipment needed to train includes:

- ◆ 4 official 20 cm (8") pylons to mark the track's corners, 5 pylons needed for 30m Straight Line and Slalom
- ◆ Stopwatches
- ◆ Clipboards and pencils
- ◆ Starter's pistol and blanks.

A whistle may be used to practice starts, but athletes preparing to compete must practice starting to the gun. Extra pylons to help define the track are also helpful.

The Official Pylon

The official pylon or safety cone has its base cut off so there is no protrusion onto the track.

Hockey Equipment

Hockey equipment needed to train includes:

- ◆ Sticks
- ◆ Balls
- ◆ Cages
- ◆ Whistle



Special Olympics Roller Skating Coaching Guide Planning a Roller Skating Training & Competition Season

- ♦ Bell
- ♦ Stopwatch or time clock.

The Hockey Stick

The hockey stick is constructed of durable tubular plastic with a rounded blade. A maximum of 1.14 meters (44. 8") long, it can be easily cut to shorten the length for smaller skaters. It weighs less than 454 grams (1 pound). A skater may add decorative tape to individualize their stick, but may not alter the weight significantly.

The Hockey Ball

The hockey ball is 24.76 cm (9.75") in circumference and made of soft, flexible plastic with virtually no bounce.

The Hockey Goal Cages

The hockey goal cages are rectangular, 1.12 meters (44") high and 1/52 meters (44") high and 1/52 meters (60") wide, covered on four sides by lightweight mesh netting. No metal netting is permitted.



Materials

Artistic Standards Videos

VHS format video to accompany the technical manuals for artistic events. From USARS, call for cost.

Junior Olympic Roller Hockey

VHS format video describing the game as played in Special Olympics. From USARS, call for cost.

Champions Train to Win

VHS format video on speed skating training. Although it focuses on outdoor skating, the off-skates training section is excellent. From USARS, call for cost.

Skating A-2-Z

VHS format video demonstrating in-line skating technique from stretching to stopping on a hill to racing starts. From Andy Zak, P.O. Box 141018, Minneapolis, MN 55414, USA, 800/682-0142, call for cost.

Special Olympics Official Roller Skating Rules

Download from the [Roller Skating page](#) on the Special Olympics Public Web site.

Special Olympics General Rules

[Download Article I](#) from the Special Olympics Public Web site.

Technical Manuals

Specific contest for the competitive coach or official from the USA Roller Skating, call for cost. Manuals of particular interest to Special Olympics coaches include:

- ◆ Ball Hockey
- ◆ Figures
- ◆ Free Skating/Pairs
- ◆ Speed
- ◆ American Dance 1



Roller Skating Organizations

Federation Internationale de Roller Skating (FIRS)

International governing body for artistic, speed, and hockey roller skating. Via Pascagoula 16, 67100 L'Aquila, ITALY

USA Roller Skating

National governing body in the USA for artistic, speed, and hockey roller skating. P.O. Box 6579, Lincoln, NE 68506, USA, (402)483-7551, FAX (402)483-1465.

Roller Skating Associations (RSA)

Trade association for skating center owners with affiliated associations for coaches and related industries including:

- ◆ RSROA – Roller Skating Rink Operators Association
- ◆ RSM – Roller Skating Suppliers and Manufacturers

International In-Line Skating Association

Promotional organization for all aspects of skating on in-line equipment. Suite 300, 3033 Excelsior Blvd., Minneapolis MN 55416, USA, (800)367-4472, FAX (612)924-2349.