



Special Olympics

ROLLER SKATING COACHING GUIDE

Roller Skating Rules, Protocol & Etiquette



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Teaching Hockey Rules

The official sports rules will give details of the rules, but to get started, the coach and the athletes need to know the basics:

- 1) Games are made up of 2 eight-minute halves with a 3-minute break in between.
- 2) A goal (1 point) is scored each time the ball crosses over the line marked at the mouth of the opponent's cage.
- 3) One time out may be called by each team per half, each one lasting one minute.
- 4) Substitution can be made at any time, but the new player may not enter the court until the old player is completely off the court.
- 5) Face-offs used to start play after a time out, or when the referee has stopped play temporarily. Face-offs happen within one meter of the barrier. One player from each team places his back to his own goal and holds his stick 19.9cm (9") from the ball until the referee blows the whistle.
- 6) Free hits are awarded by the referee when a member of the opposing team has committed a foul or when the ball goes out of bounds. The player must pass the ball, not shoot at goal or hit the ball twice. Players do not wait for a whistle to pass the ball on a free hit.
- 7) Fouls include:
 - Checking or obstructing the opponent high sticking
 - Lifting the ball higher than the cage
 - Rough play
 - Hitting the ball illegally, that is:
 - without a stick
 - while lying on the floor
 - While holding onto the barrier or cage.



Unified Sports® Rules

There are few differences in the rules for Unified Sports® competition as the rules as stipulated in the official Special Olympics Sports Rules and modifications outlined in the rules book. The additions are highlighted below.

1. A roster consists of a proportionate numbers of athletes and partners. Although the exact distribution of roster spots is not specified, a hockey roster containing eight athletes and two partners does not meet the goals of Special Olympics Unified Sports® Program.
2. A line up during the competition consists of half athletes and half partners. Teams that have an odd number of players (e.g. 11-A-Side Football) have one more athlete than partner in the game at all times.
3. Teams are divisioned for competition based primarily on ability. In team sports, division assignment is based on the best players on the roster, not the average ability of all players.
4. Team sports must have an adult, non-playing coach. Player-coaches are not allowed in team sports.



Protest Procedures

Protest procedures are governed by the rules of competition. The role of the competition management team is to enforce the rules. As coach, your duty to your athletes and team is to protest any action or events while your athlete is competing that you think violated the Official Roller Skating Rules. It is extremely important that you do not make protests because you and your athlete did not get your desired outcome of an event. Making protest are serious matters that impact a competition's schedule. Check with the competition team prior to competition to learn the protest procedures for that competition.



Criteria for Advancement

- 1) To advance to a higher level of competition in a particular year, an athlete must have participated for a minimum of eight weeks in an organized training program in the sport or sports in which he or she is entered for higher level competition. (A planned regimen of training under a volunteer coach, teacher, or parent is considered an organized training program.)
- 2) To advance to a higher level of competition, an athlete must have placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd, at the lower level of competition in the same sport or sports (e.g. an athlete may not advance to international or multinational competition in a given sport unless he or she competed in that sport at a National or Chapter competition and placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd).
- 3) Athletes should be chosen for higher-level competition by random selection from among 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners from all divisions by event. Athletes selected may also enter other events in which they have not placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd at the next lower level competition.
 - a) National or Chapter programs may establish additional criteria for advancement to higher-level competition based upon behavior, medical, or judicial considerations. These criteria would be applied to athletes on an individual basis. Additional criteria should not conflict with any part of the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.
- 4) When conditions exist which preclude all 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place winners from advancing to higher-level competition (e.g. a Chapter has 100 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in the 100 meter dash and a quota of 5 athletes for the 100 meter dash at the next World Games), athletes shall be selected as follows:
 - a) First priority: Athletes shall be 1st, place winners in at least the event at the next lower level of competition. If the number of 1st place winners exceeds the quota, athletes shall be chosen by random selection from among all division winners.
 - b) Second priority: Athletes who were 2nd place finishers in the event shall be chosen next by random selection, then 3rd place finishers.
 - c) A team having no competition at specific level shall be declared a winner. The team shall receive a place award and be eligible to advance to the next higher level of competition.
- 5) An athlete shall not be barred from future competition because of prior competition (e.g. an athlete who competed in the 1991 International Summer Special Olympics Games is eligible to compete in the 1995 Special Olympics World Summer Games unless he or she fails to meet some other eligibility criteria).
- 6) The above criteria shall be used for selecting athletes for advancement to World Games. They are strongly recommended for use in selecting athletes for advancement to other levels of competition.
- 7) If a Special Olympics organization, because of the size or nature of its competition program, finds that these criteria are inappropriate, it can request authority to deviate from them. Such a request should be submitted, along with proposed substitute selection criteria, to the Chairman of Special Olympics International, Inc., at least 90 days before the Games or competition for which these different selection criteria will be used.



Hockey Protocol

Customs that make every game feel like an official part of the sport include:

The Salute

- At the start of the game, players line up on either side of the referee in the center of the court.
- Players hold their sticks with the blade on the floor in front of them.
- At the referee's whistle, players lift their sticks straight up over their head and return them to the floor.
- The entire line turns to face the other way.
- At the second whistle, they salute the other side of the court.

The Coin Toss

- Team captains meet with the referee in the center of the court.
- Captains call the toss.
- The winning team may either start the game or choose starting side.
- The first play of the game is a pass, not a face-off.

Halftime

- Teams switch sides, goals, and benches.
- Teams playing the next time period may warm up during the break.

The Handshake

- Teams form two lines facing each other in the center of the court.
- At the referee's command, teams skate past each other in line.
- As players pass, they extend and touch right hands.

Putting These Skills Together to Play the Game

Skating skills must come first. Once skaters can march or roll and stop, add ball handling drills. From that point, every practice needs a balance of skating skills, ball handling skills, and game play or scrimmage. By mid-season, a one-hour practice for competent skaters could be 15 minutes of warm-ups and stretches, 15 minutes of skating skills, 15 minutes of ball handling drills, and 15 minutes of scrimmage. Keep rules simple, add one or two each week, but start using protocol as soon as possible.

Suggestions for the Teacher/Coach

When there are too few skaters to have two full teams are creative. Invite other skaters outside your program to join the ranks. Use volunteer coaches as goalies or play one player short on each team. Encourage coaches at other locations to start teams with which you can scrimmage. Play against a junior Olympics or community team at your skating facility. Talk to your Special Olympics organizers about piloting a Unified Sports® program.

For scrimmages at home, five or six players per team are fine. For a multi-game tournament, that team of five needs two substitutes, at least one of whom can sub for the goalie. Eight or nine players are not too many for a tournament team if care is taken to give all a chance to play. Playing the game is what it is all about – no matter how strong the skater's skills become, individual expertise will not replace the lessons learned in team play.



Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is both the coach's and athletes' commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Below we highlight a few focus points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to your athletes. Lead by example.

Competitive Effort

- ♦ Put forth maximum effort during each event.
- ♦ Practice the skills with the same intensity, as you would perform them in competition.
- ♦ Always finish a race or event – Never quit.

Fair Play at All Times

- ♦ Always comply with the rules.
- ♦ Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- ♦ Respect the decision of the officials at all times.

Expectations of Coaches

1. Always set a good example for participants and fans to follow.
2. Instruct participants in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship and ethics the top priorities.
3. Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the event and display no behavior that could incite fans.
4. Treat opposing coaches, directors, participants and fans with respect.
5. Shake hands with officials and the opposing coach in public.
6. Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

Expectations of Athletes & Partners in Unified Sports®

1. Treat teammates with respect.
2. Encourage teammates when they make a mistake.
3. Treat opponents with respect: shake hands prior to and after contests.
4. Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the contest and display no behavior that could incite fans.
5. Cooperate with officials, coaches or directors and fellow participants to conduct a fair contest.
6. Do not retaliate (verbally or physically) if the other team demonstrates poor behavior.
7. Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Special Olympics.
8. Define winning as doing your personal best.
9. Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coach.

Coaching Tips

- Discuss etiquette, such as congratulating opponent after all events, win or lose, controlling temper and behavior at all times
- Teach waiting for one's turn in artistic events
- Teach skating outside the pylons during speed events.
- Give sportsmanship awards or recognition after each competition or practice.
- Always commend the athletes when they demonstrate sportsmanship.



Remember

- ◆ Sportsmanship is an attitude that is shown in how you and your athletes act on and off the field of play.
- ◆ Be positive about competing
- ◆ Respect your opponents and yourself
- ◆ Always stay under control even if you are feeling mad or angry



Roller Skating Glossary

Term	Definition
Action	In Quads, the adjustment of the truck assembly, making it harder or easier to produce edges. Action can be tightened or loosened to the skater's preference.
Axis (1)	In figures, a long axis is an imaginary line that connects the center point of the three contiguous circles and a short axis is the imaginary line perpendicular to the long axis at the point where the circles meet.
Axis (2)	In dance, the angle at which the edges cross the imaginary baseline.
Baseline	An imaginary reference line. In dances, a line on the floor parallel to the barrier around which the steps of the dance are placed. In posture, a line from the top of the head to the center of the employed foot, around which the body rotates.
Brake	On In-Lines, the rubber piece attached to the heel of the right skate, used to stop.
Edge	Any curve traced by the employed foot.
Employed Foot or Leg	The foot or leg rolling on the skating floor.
Free Foot or Free Leg	The foot or leg not touching the skating floor.
In-Lines	Roller Skates with two, three, four, or five wheels arranged in a row down the center of the each foot (see diagram under "brake.")
Inside Edge	An arc curving toward the big toe side of the skate.
Operator	The owner of a roller skating facility. Operators may or may not manage the center.
Outside Edge	An arc curving toward the little toe side of the skate.
Quads	Roller Skates with four wheels on each foot, arranged two on one axle under the ball of the foot and two on a second axle under the heel.
Toe-Stop	In Quads, the rubber piece attached to the front of the plate under the toe, used to stop and to assist in speed starts and artistic jumps.
Truck	In Quads, the assembly that connects the front or back axle to the plate on the bottom of the boot. A truck includes a king pin that goes through rubber or plastic cushions into the plate. The cushions compress when a skater leans to the inside or outside, making edges possible.