



**SPORT IMPACT  
STANDARDS  
UNIFIED FOOTBALL  
WORLD CUP**

*Special Olympics*





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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Sport Impact Standards Overview**

Sport Impact Standards is an optimum athlete experience driven by unprecedented highest standards of quality across three essential fundamentals: athlete divisioning, sport operations and an enhanced athlete experience.

## **1. HISTORY OF FOOTBALL AT SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

Established at the Special Olympics in 1986, Football requires little in the way of specialized equipment. It is organized using simple, intuitive rules. Played in nearly every country, the sport's success is largely due in part that, regardless of gender, physical build and ability, anyone can play it. Initially, the sport was only offered in 5 a-side and 11 a-side formats. FIFA and SOI began collaborating in 2007. This cooperation resulted in the FIFA Foundation's program, Football for Hope.

In 2007, after seven years of testing Unified Football on both the regional and national level, Special Olympics added it to World Games events. In 2019 SOI added Futsal to the World Games program.

In 2010, Special Olympics held its first Unity Cup in connection with the World Cup in South Africa. This paired soccer professionals with Special Olympics Athletes on teams that competed against one another. Each team consisted of members with and without intellectual disabilities.

Offered for the first time in 2018 in Chicago, Illinois, the Special Olympics Unified Cup was part of the Special Olympics 50th anniversary celebration. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Unified Football World Cup was hosted in Detroit, Michigan in 2022.

### **By The Numbers:**

- In all seven Special Olympics regions across the globe, Football ranks as the second sport in terms of participation and in 2019 it finished as the 2nd most popular sport.
- As of 2024, Football was played in all seven Special Olympics Regions, across 176 countries and has a total of 580,242 competitors (athletes and Unified partners).

## **2. GOVERNING RULES**

2.1 The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Football (Soccer) shall govern all Special Olympics competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) rules for football (soccer). FIFA or National Governing Body (NGB) rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Football (Soccer) or Article I. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Football (Soccer) shall apply. An athlete (usually with Down syndrome) who has been diagnosed with Spinal Cord Compression including Atlanto-axial Instability may not participate in football (soccer) events. For more information pertaining to Codes of Conduct, Training Standards, Medical and Safety Requirements, Divisioning, Awards, Criteria for Advancement to Higher Levels of Competition, and Unified Sports, please refer to the end of this manual under the "resources" section.



**2.2 Special Olympics Football Differences**

2.2.1 Special Olympics Football during 11 a-side and Futsal Football matches follow FIFA rules. However, the length of halves, substitution and overtime rules are defined by each Special Olympics Program organization. In 5 a-side and 7/8 a-side Football matches, some rule variations are: kick-ins from the touch line, throw-ins by the goalie, throw-ins by goalies cannot touch the other side of the half field until touched by a player first, and there are no off-sides.

**3. OFFICIAL EVENTS**

The following is a list of official events available in Special Olympics

- 5 a-side Team
- 7 / 8 a-side Team
- 11 a-side Team Competition
- Futsal Team Competition
- Unified Sports 5 a-side Team Competition
- Unified Sports 7 / 8 a-side Team Competition
- Unified Sports 11 a-side Team Competition
- Unified Sport Futsal Team Competition

**4. COACH EDUCATION PROCESS & MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

- 4.1 The Head Coach is the lead for planning and delivery of sport specific technical, tactical, physical, and mental training. He or she provides pre and in competition coaching and guidance as permitted by the rules of the sport. Sport Specific Coaching Standards have been introduced for all international competitions ([link to https://resources.specialolympics.org/sports-essentials/coaching-standards-at-international-competitions](https://resources.specialolympics.org/sports-essentials/coaching-standards-at-international-competitions)).
- 4.2 All coaches and team managers are required to hold valid certifications from following courses, as outlined in the chart below, which are available on the [Special Olympics Online Learning Portal](#). Additional Coaching Standards can be found on the SO Resource Page under '[Coaching Standards at International Competitions](#)'
- 4.3 Learning Portal Accessibility Chart

Course	Head Coach	Coach
	* = Required + = Recommended	* = Required + = Recommended
World Games Coach Preparation	+	+
Level 1 Sport Assistant	+	+
Level 2 Coaching Assistant	+	+
Level 3 Coach (Online Module)	*	*
Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports	+	+



National Sport Governing Body/Federation Coach Certification	+	+
Special Olympics Sports Rules Article 1 Course	*	*

**5. QUALIFICATION PROCESS CRITERIA**

- 5.1 There are three (3) ways that a team can qualify for the Unified Football World Cup.
  - 5.1.1 A qualifier event offered by the region, and in which teams will compete for a quota in the event.
  - 5.1.2 Selection process, which would be the same process that was followed for Chicago and is listed below.
  - 5.1.3 A mix of both strategies: For example, those regions that are able to make a qualifying event just for some of the teams. Using some examples, it could be a region just able to organize a tournament to qualify male teams, or maybe just to qualify teams from one geographic area of the region, so, the rest of the teams will be selected by the strategy number 2.
  
- 5.2 The primary objective of the Unified Football World Cup for SOI, Regions and SO Programs will be to reach, expand cooperation and recognize professional football clubs, their foundations, football federations and sponsors that support Special Olympics Unified Sports. In the case of Composite Teams, the team must be selected at least 6 months prior to competition. All teams must submit their training plan to SOI that should include all details regarding a timeline of training sessions when all teammates train together.
  - 5.2.1 Participating teams will be confirmed based upon the Special Olympic program’s ability to secure a commitment of a professional club/football federation / sponsor to support a Unified Football team.
  - 5.2.2 Each region will receive a proposed target number of slots to fulfill.
  - 5.2.3 Each region must submit a Unified Football World Cup Team Application that confirms a commitment from a club / football federation / sponsor to support the team
  - 5.2.4 The Unified Football World Cup Team Applications will be reviewed by the Selection Committee comprised of members from the LOC and Special Olympics and evaluated based on the strength of the partnership, the commitment of the club/federation/sponsor and SO program to develop Unified Football and the profile and reach of the club/federation/sponsor.
    - 5.2.4.1 Regions will submit team applications to SOI.
    - 5.2.4.2 SOI will select final teams with consultation from the Global Football Sport Development Team.
    - 5.2.4.3 SOI reserves the right to directly invite certain teams/clubs to apply based on strategic priorities.
  - 5.2.5 After an application is reviewed and determined to be satisfactory the team slot will be confirmed. If the application(s) is not determined to be satisfactory from a region then the slot may be opened up to other candidates from another region.
    - 5.2.5.1 Regions with a strong, well-developed Unified Football program, more recognized professional football league and Ambassadors Football program were given additional quota.



5.2.5.2 Additional requirements for each SO Football Program to be considered are:

- The commitment to Unified Football development before and after the event.
- Current status and projected development of Unified Football (to include coach education and training, player development, high quality and regular competition opportunities).
- Potential support from clubs/teams/partners.
- The expected public awareness and fundraising campaign set for the event.

5.2.5.3 The Special Olympics Program is responsible for sourcing the funding for the pre-competition training and the travel costs of the team members, including coaches and HOD, to and from the host country.

5.2.5.4 The following is the partnership criteria used to assess a Unified Football World Cup Team application:

- One primary Partner/Sponsor will be recognized by the Unified Football World Cup (per team)
- Those applications with a written agreement will be given priority.

5.2.5.5 Unified Football Training Support:

- Partner Club/Sponsor may designate a technical coach(s) to help train
- Partner Club/Sponsor may host a football training clinic to certify Special Olympics Coaches
- Partner Club/Sponsor may host Unified Football training clinics
- Partner Club/Sponsor may provide sports equipment and uniforms
- Travel support
- Partner Club/Sponsor may provide travel support (airfare, meals, etc.) to and from locations
- Promotion and Marketing Support
- Partner Club/Sponsor may promote Unified Teams, the Unified Football World Cup and Unified Football through Club’s media channels
- Partner Club/Sponsor may conduct promotional/marketing activities at club matches
- Sustainable Support
- Partner Club/Sponsor may commit to a multi-year Unified Football development project with local program to support a sustainable Unified Football league/tournament and coaches training program.

**6. QUOTA SIZES**

6.1 The highest level of ability athletes will be able to compete in:

6.1.1 11 a-side: 16 Unified Male Teams

6.1.2 7 a-side: 16 Unified Female Teams

6.1.2.1 Should any region have a team that withdraws, the vacant spot will first be offered to the region that has one quota. If there is no interest from that region, SOI will determine which region will receive the reallocated spot

Gender	Region	Number of Teams
--------	--------	-----------------



<b>Male (11 a-side) 16 Teams</b>	SOEE	4
	SOLA	2
	SOAP	2
	SOEA	2
	SOA	2
	SONA	2
	MENA	1
	Host Country	1
<b>Female (7 a-side) 16 teams</b>	SOEE	4
	SOLA	2
	SOAP	2
	SOEA	1
	SOA	2
	SONA	2
	MENA	2
	Host Country	1

## 6.2 Roster Size & Breakdown

Team	Athletes	Partners	Coaches	HOD	Medical	Allowed AS Staff*	Total
<b>Men's Unified Team 11 a-side</b>	9	7	1 Head Coach 1 Assistant Coach	1	1	1	21 Members
<b>Women's Unified Team 7 a-side</b>	6	5	1 Head Coach 1 Assistant Coach	1	1	1	16 Members

## 7. COMPETITION FORMAT

### 7.1 Divisioning By Group Stage

7.1.1 An in-group drawing will seed the teams. SOI will make its best effort to guarantee that teams from the same Region are not placed in the same group for the Group Stage. The Host country will not be seeded in advance. SOI is entitled to seed any other team in advance, should this be providing a positive impact for the tournament.

7.1.2 Divisioning by Group Stage: Four (4) groups of four (4) teams each.

7.1.3 After divisioning teams will be reallocated into two (2) divisions for final standings:

Division 1 – (4 teams)

Division 2 – (4 teams)

Division 3 – (8 teams)

7.1.4 Semifinals and Finals and other matches for finals standings

### 7.2 Division 1



7.2.1 The team in 1st position of each group will play for 1st through 4th place of Division 1:

Semifinal 1: 1st A vs. 1st D

Semifinal 2: 1st B vs. 1st C

7.2.2 Defining positions 1st through 4th in Division 1

7.2.3 The winners of Semifinal 1 vs. Semifinal 2 will play in the final for 1st and 2nd place

7.2.4 Losers of Semifinal 1 vs. Semifinal 2 will play for 3rd and 4th place

**7.3 Division 2**

7.3.1 The 2nd position of each group will play for places 1st through 4th of division 2

Semifinal 1: 2nd A vs. 2nd D

Semifinal 2: 2nd B vs. 2nd C

7.3.2 Defining 1st through 4th positions of Division 2

7.3.3 Winners of Semifinal 1 vs. Semifinal 2 to play in the finals for 1st and 2nd place

7.3.4 Losers of Semifinal 1 vs. Semifinal 2 to play for 3rd and 4th place

**7.4 Division 3**

7.4.1 The team in 3th position of each group will play for 1st through 4th place of Division 3:

Semifinal 1: 3rd A vs. 3rd D

Semifinal 2: 3rd B vs. 3rd C

7.4.2 The 4th position of each group will play for places 5th to 8th of division 3:

Semifinal B 1: 4th A vs. 4th D

Semifinal B 2: 4th B vs. 4th C

7.4.3 Defining positions 5th to 8th place of Division 1

Winners of Semifinal B 1 vs. Semifinal B 2 to play the match for 5th and 6th place

Losers of Semifinal B 1 vs. Semifinal B 2 to play the match for 7th and 8th place

**8. SCHEDULE OF COMPETITION**

**8.1 Unified Football World Cup Football – 72 Matches**

The competition schedule for (7 a-side) that comprises 16 teams should have 42 matches by event if there is full participation (4 events, 168 matches). A modification to the competition schedule can be made with the SOI approval.

Men Group A	Men Group B	Men Group C	Men Group D
A1 Local Team	B1	C1	D1
A2	B2	C2	D2
A3	B3	C3	D3

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A4	B4	C4	D4
<b>Women Group A</b> A1 Local Team A2 A3 A4	<b>Women Group B</b> B1 B2 B3 B4	<b>Women Group C</b> C1 C2 C3 C4	<b>Women Group D</b> D1 D2 D3 D4

**8.2 Competition Schedule**

- Day 1: Training
- Day 2: Opening Ceremony and 1st round group stage (Match 1 to 16)
- Day 3: 2nd round of group stage (Match 17 to 32)
- Day 4: 3rd and last round of group stage (Match 33 to 48)
- Day 5: Free day (Resting time)
- Day 6: Semifinals / Final Standing Round 1 (Match 49 to 64)
- Day 7: Finals / Final Standing Round 2 (Match 65 to 72)

Day 1 Training Day		Location	Day 2 (Group Stage / 1st Round)		9:00am	11:00am	02:00pm	03:00pm	05:00pm
Day 1 Training Day	Men Field 1	Day 2 (Group Stage / 1st Round)	Men Game 1 C1 vs C2	Men Game 5 B1 vs B2	Opening Ceremony	Men Game 9 A1 vs A2	Men Game 13 D1 vs D2		
	Men Field 2		Men Game 2 C3 vs C4	Men Game 6 B3 vs B4		Men Game 10 A3 vs A4	Men Game 14 D3 vs D4		
	Women Field 3		Women Game 3 C1 vs C2	Women Game 7 B1 vs B2		Women Game 11 A1 vs A2	Women Game 15 D1 vs D2		
	Women Field 4		Women Game 4 C3 vs C4	Women Game 8 B3 vs B4		Women Game 12 A3 vs A4	Women Game 16 D3 vs D4		

Day 3 (Group Stage / 2nd Round)		9:00am	11:00am	03:00pm	05:00pm
Day 3 (Group Stage / 2nd Round)	Men Game 17 C1 vs C3	Men Game 21 B1 vs B3	Men Game 25 A1 vs A3	Men Game 29 D1 vs D3	
	Men Game 18 C2 vs C4	Men Game 22 B2 vs B4	Men Game 26 A2 vs A4	Men Game 30 D2 vs D4	

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	Women Game 19 C1 vs C3	Women Game 23 B1 vs B3	Men Game 27 A1 vs A3	Women Game 31 D1 vs D3
	Women Game 20 C2 vs C4	Women Game 24 B2 vs B4	Men Game 28 A2 vs A4	Women Game 32 D2 vs D4

Location	Day 4 (Group Stage / 3rd Round)	9:00am	11:00am	03:00pm	05:00pm	Day 5 Rest Day
Men Field 1		Men Game 33 C1 vs C4	Men Game 37 B1 vs B4	Men Game 41 A1 vs A4	Men Game 45 D1 vs D4	
Men Field 2		Men Game 34 C2 vs C3	Men Game 38 B2 vs B3	Men Game 42 A2 vs A3	Men Game 46 D2 vs D3	
Women Field 3		Women Game 35 C1 vs C4	Women Game 39 B1 vs B4	Women Game 43 A1 vs A4	Women Game 47 D1 vs D4	
Women Field 4		Women Game 36 C2 vs C3	Women Game 40 B2 vs B3	Women Game 44 A2 vs A3	Women Game 48 D2 vs D3	

Day 6 (Semifinals / Final Standing Round 1)	8:00am	10:00am	02:00pm	04:00pm	05:45pm
	Men 5th - 8th Game 49 D3 4th A vs 4th D	Men SF Game 53 D3 3rd A vs 3rd D	Men SF Game 57 D2 2nd A vs 2nd D	Men SF Game 61 D1 1st A vs 1st D	Men 7th Game 65 D3 L G49 vs L G50
	Men 5th - 8th Game 50 D3 4th B vs 4th C	Men SF Game 54 D3 3rd B vs 3rd C	Men SF Game 58 D2 2nd B vs 2nd C	Men SF Game 62 D1 1st B vs 1st C	Men 5th Game 66 D3 W G49 vs W G50
	Women 5th - 8th Game 51 D3 4th A vs 4th D	Women SF Game 55 D3 3rd A vs 3rd D	Women SF Game 59 D2 2nd A vs 2nd D	Women SF Game 63 D1 1st A vs 1st D	Women 7th Game 67 D3 L G51 vs L G52
	Women 5th - 8th Game 52 D3 4th B vs 4th C	Women SF Game 56 D3 3rd B vs 3rd C	Women SF Game 60 D2 2nd B vs 2nd C	Women SF Game 64 D1 1st B vs 1st C	Women 5th Game 68 D3 L G51 vs L G52

Location	Day 7 (Finals / Final Standing Round 2)	8:00am	10:00am	11:00am	12:00am	5:00pm	06:20pm	08:10pm	
Men Field 1		Men 3rd place Game 69 D3 L G53 vs L G54	Men 3rd place Game 73 D2 L G57 vs L G58	Awards Ceremony 1st & 8th places Division 3	Men Final Game 75 D2 W G57 vs W G58	Closing Ceremony		Women Final Game 79 D1 W G63 vs W G64	Men Final Game 80 D1 W G61 vs W G62
Men Field 2		Men Final Game 70 D3 W G53 vs W G54	Celebrity Match Men		Men 3rd place Game 76 D1 L G61 vs L G62				
Women Field 3		Women 3rd place Game 71	Women 3rd place Game 74		Women Final Game 77				



		D3 L G55 vs L G56	D2 L G59 vs L G60		D2 W G59 vs W G60	
<b>Women Field 3</b>		Women Final Game 72 D3 W G55 vs W G56	Celebrity Match Women		Women 3rd place Game 78 D1 L G63 vs L G64	

**Awards Ceremony**  
**1st & 4th places (4 divisions) & Special Awards**

**9. GROUP STAGE COMPOSITION**

9.1 Draw Ceremony

9.1.1 The “Unified Football World Cup Draw Ceremony” is a process used to determine the final composition of the groups for group stage competition within the Men and Women’s draw. It has been designed to guarantee that teams from the same region will not be placed in the same group for Group Stage (when possible).

9.2 The Draw Ceremony will run as follows:

9.2.1 The Host country will be the unique seeded team and labeled both A1 for the Men’s and Women’s Tournament. This seeding allows the LOC to guarantee that the teams compete during primetime and that the matches will be part of the opening ceremony.

9.2.2 The “Unified Football World Cup Draw Ceremony” is an official event of the Unified World Cup, therefore the LOC is responsible, to organize and execute the ceremony no later than 3 months prior to the Opening Ceremony of the Unified World Cup. The LOC shall conduct this ceremony under the technical parameters / regulations established within this document.

9.2.3 The LOC must guarantee appropriate promotional and media coverage for the ceremony including but not limited to, the online broadcast by all social media channels created for the Unified World Cup. This will give Special Olympics Programs that have qualified for the Cup the ability to watch the draw ceremony live if they so choose.

9.3 Technical Parameters and Regulations:

- Pot 1. To be drawn for Group Stage (A1 Host Country, B1, C1)
- Pot 2. To be drawn for Group Stage (A2, B2, C2)
- Pot 3. To be drawn for Group Stage (A3, B3, C3)
- Pot 4. To be drawn for Group Stage (A4, B4, C4)

9.4 Teams to be Drawn by Region (to be defined by LOC determined by the Final Quota):

**Men’s Example:**

- Pot 1 (Host Country, SOEE 1, SOEE 2)
- Pot 2 (SOEE 4, SOLA 1, MENA 1)



Pot 3 (SOAP 1, SOAP 2, SOEA 1)  
Pot 4 (SOA 1, SOA 2, SONA 1)

**Women's Example:**

Pot 1 (Host Country, SOEE 1, SOEE 2)  
Pot 2 (SOEE 4, SOLA 1, SOEA 1)  
Pot 3 (SOAP 1, SOAP 2, SOA 1)  
Pot 4 (MENA 1, MENA 2, SONA 1)

- 9.5 Should more than one team from the same SO region be picked for the same group, they will receive a wild card berth and be moved to the next group (i.e. a move from "Group A" to "Group B"). The team from the next group will replace the wild card team's original position.
- 9.6 The host country will receive a wild card berth. Once its name has been drawn, it will be allocated directly to A1. If a name of another team appears before the host country in pot 1, they will be moved directly to the next group (i.e. Group B).
- 9.7 The teams by pot can be changed up until 1 month prior to the draw ceremony if the quota allocation is modified in any way.
- 9.8 The Draw Ceremony for the Women's Tournament will be conducted first, followed by the Men's Tournament.
- 9.9 The draw ceremony will include the following three roles:  
**MOC / Master of Ceremony:** The Master of Ceremony (MOC) is the person responsible for conducting the draw ceremony and appraising all of the actions taken during each stage. The MOC must introduce the other roles participating in the ceremony and explain the draw system in detail. The role will also announce the status of the competition of the groups each time a team name is selected. At the end of the ceremony the MOC will announce the final group composition that will include the first matches for the tournament and the host country. The MOC will have also the responsibility to run all the official protocols needed for the proper implementation of the Draw.

**Draw Sorters:** The draw sorters are a group of four (4) special guests responsible for picking the name of the teams within each pot. The LOC must decide if the same guests will be the 4-draw sorter for both the Women's and Men's tournament. It is possible for the LOC to use only a few sorters for both tournaments. The sorters in charge of 1 pot, cannot be used for another pot for the same tournament (Men, Women).

The sorters selected by the LOC should include, Special Guests, Sponsors, Celebrities, SO Local Program Authorities, Football Partner of the SO team, Football NGBs, Government Authorities. Neither SO Athletes nor SO partners can act as a sorter. Any person registered as a member of an official delegation for the Unified World Cup cannot act as a sorter.

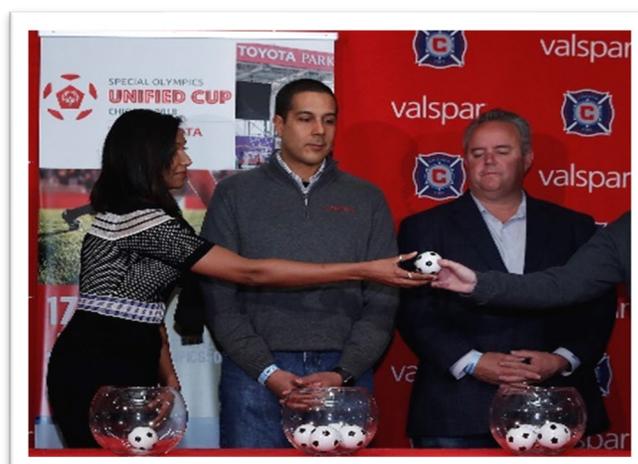
**Draw Messengers:** Each tournament will have their own Draw Messenger. One for Men's and one for the Women's tournaments. They are responsible for collecting the names of each team



from the sorter, and delivering it to the MOC. This role must be filled by an SO Athlete (a male for the Men's Draw and a female for the Women's Draw).



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

#### 9.10 The Process

- 9.10.1 Pictured above in Figure 1, is a clear, transparent bowl containing receptacles in the shape of footballs. These receptacles house slips of paper that contain each SO program team name.
- 9.10.2 The LOC should provide five transparent bowls (similar to the one in Figure 1). Four should be located next to one another on a table and visible at all times (Figure 2). Each bowl will represent a respective Pot. Every team participating in the tournament will be written on a sealed piece of paper located within a receptacle (preferably in the shape of a football, as pictured in Figure 1), and in turn, be placed in the appropriate bowl.
- 9.10.3 The fifth bowl should be placed next to the MOC for all of the discarded papers and receptacles.
- 9.10.4 Each sorter will stand behind one of four pots (Figure 2). At the direction of the MOC, the sorter, using one hand, will pull one of the receptacles out of one bowl at a time.
- 9.10.5 Prior to picking each team, the sorter will make sure to mix up all the balls.
- 9.10.6 Once a receptacle is selected, the sorter will give it to the messenger. The messenger will then carry it to the MOC (Figure 3).
- 9.10.7 The MOC will open up receptacle, select the paper out, unfold it, and then show the paper with the name of the team to the audience (Figure 4). The MOC will place the name of the team in the position that it corresponds.
- 9.10.8 Once the paper has been read and the group has been updated with the new team, the MOC should throw away the empty receptacle and the paper in the transparent bowl located next to him/her.
- 9.10.9 The sorter, messenger and MOC should keep the receptacle visible at all times until it has been discarded.
- 9.10.10 Once the name of the team has been updated in the group that corresponds the process will start again.



- 9.10.11 The order of picking should be done by Pot. Once all teams corresponding to Pot 1 have been selected, the MOC should continue onto Pot 2 and so on until all Pots through Pot 4 have been selected.
- 9.11 The Draw ceremony will include a screen and projector displaying the groups and where each team has been selected (as can be seen in Figure 3).
- 9.12 Even though the Host teams have been seeded in advance, the name of the team will be placed in a receptacle located in the corresponding Pot.



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



- 9.12.1 Prior to picking each team, the sorter will make sure to mix up all the balls.
- 9.12.2 Once a receptacle is selected, the sorter will give it to the messenger. The messenger will then carry it to the MOC (Figure 3).
- 9.12.3 The MOC will open up receptacle, select the paper out, unfold it, and then show the paper with the name of the team to the audience (Figure 4). The MOC will place the name of the team in the position that it corresponds.
- 9.12.4 Once the paper has been read and the group has been updated with the new team, the MOC should throw away the empty receptacle and the paper in the transparent bowl located next to him/her.
- 9.12.5 The sorter, messenger and MOC should keep the receptacle visible at all times until it has been discarded.
- 9.12.6 Once the name of the team has been updated in the group that corresponds the process will start again.
- 9.12.7 The order of picking should be done by Pot. Once all teams corresponding to Pot 1 have been selected, the MOC should continue onto Pot 2 and so on until all Pots through Pot 4 have been selected.

9.13 The Draw ceremony will include a screen and projector displaying the groups and where each team has been selected (as can be seen in Figure 3).

9.14 Even though the Host teams have been seeded in advance, the name of the team will be placed in a receptacle located in the corresponding Pot.

## **10. DRAW REGULATIONS**

- 10.1 Once a team is selected and its letter placement is known, it will be placed in the corresponding group, as described below:
- If more than one team from the same Special Olympics country is picked for the same group, the second team chosen will automatically be moved to the next group.
  - The teams in each pot to start can be changed up to one month prior to the Draw Ceremony, if the quota allocation is modified in any way

## **11. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FIELD OF PLAY & STADIUM**

11.1 The Unified World Cup requires the following:

- Four (4) Fields of Play
- Two (2) 11 a-side Fields of Play
- Two (2) 7 a-side Fields of Play

11.2 Any or all of the following modifications are permissible with the approval of SOI:

- Field of Play Size
- Size, weight and material of the ball
- Width between the goalposts and height of the crossbar from the ground
- Duration of the periods of play
- Substitutions

### **11.3 11 A-SIDE**

11.3.1 Field Surface



11.3.1.1 Matches may be played on natural or artificial surfaces, according to the rules of the competition. The color of artificial surfaces must be green.

**11.3.2 Field Markings**

11.3.2.1 The field of play must be rectangular and marked with lines. These lines depict the boundary areas.

11.3.2.2 The two longer boundary lines are called “touch lines”. The two shorter lines are called goal lines.

11.3.2.3 The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line, which joins the midpoints of the two touch lines.

11.3.2.4 The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of 9.15m (10 yds.) is marked around it.

11.3.2.5 Marks may be made off the field of play, 9.15 m (10 yds.) from the corner arc and at right angles to the goal lines and the touch lines, to ensure that defending players retreat this distance when a corner kick is taken.

**11.3.3 Dimensions**

11.3.3.1 The length of the touch line must be greater than the length of the goal line

11.3.3.2 Touch line Length: minimum 90m (100 yds.), maximum 120m (130 yds.)

11.3.3.3 Goal Line Width: minimum 45m (90 yds.), maximum 90m (100 yds.)

11.3.3.4 All lines must be the same width, which must not exceed 12cm (5 ins.)

**11.3.4 Goal Area Dimensions**

11.3.4.1 Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 5.5m (6 yds.) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 5.5m (6 yds.) and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

**11.3.5 Penalty Area Dimensions**

11.3.5.1 Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 16.5m (18 yds.) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 16.5 m (18 yds.) and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area.

11.3.5.2 Within each penalty area, a penalty mark is made 11m (12 yds.) from the midpoint between the goalposts and is equidistant to them.

11.3.5.3 An arc of a circle with a radius of 9.15 m (10 yds.) from the center of each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

**11.3.6 Flag Posts**

11.3.6.1 A flag post must be placed at each corner of the field.

11.3.6.2 It must be no less than 1.5m (5 ft.) high, with a non-pointed top.

11.3.6.3 Flag posts may also be placed at each end of the halfway line, no less than 1m (1 yd.) outside the touch line.

**11.3.7 The Corner Arc**

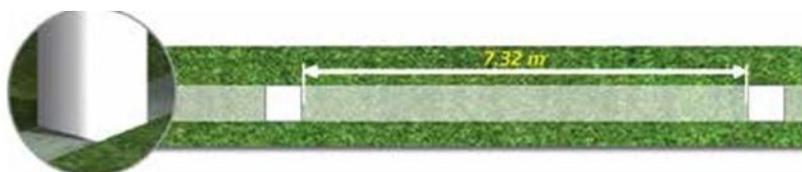
11.3.7.1 A quarter circle with a radius of 1m (1 yd.) from each corner flag post must be drawn inside the field of play.



**11.3.8 Goals**

- 11.3.8.1 A goal must be placed on the center of each goal line.
- 11.3.8.2 A goal consists of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The goal posts and crossbar must be made of wood, metal or other approved material.
- 11.3.8.3 The posts must be square, rectangular, round or elliptical in shape and must not be dangerous to participants.
- 11.3.8.4 The distance between the posts is 7.32m (8 yds.)
- 11.3.8.5 The distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground must be 2.44m (8 ft.).
- 11.3.8.6 The position of the goalposts in relation to the goal line must be placed according to the graphics below:
  - If the shape of the goalposts is square (FIG.5), the sides must be parallel or perpendicular to the goal line.
  - The sides of the crossbar must be parallel or perpendicular to the field plane.

**FIG. 5**



- If the shape of the goalposts is elliptical (FIG. 6), the longest axis must be perpendicular to the goal line. The longest axis of the crossbar must be parallel to the field plane.

**FIG. 6**



- If the shape of the goalposts is rectangular (FIG. 7), the longest side must be perpendicular to the goal line. The longest side of the crossbar must be parallel to the field plane.



**FIG. 7**



- Both goalposts and the crossbar have the same width and depth, which do not exceed 12 cm (5 ins.). The goal lines must be of the same width as the goalposts and the crossbar. Nets may be attached to the goals and the ground behind the goal, provided that they are properly supported and do not interfere with the goalkeeper.
- The goalposts and crossbars must be white.
- Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

**FIG. 8**



#### **11.4 7 A-SIDE**

##### 11.4.1 Field Surface

- 11.4.1.1 Matches may be played on natural or artificial surfaces, according to the rules of the competition. The color of artificial surfaces must be green.

##### 11.4.2 Field Markings

- 11.4.2.1 The field of play must be rectangular and marked with lines. These lines depict the boundary areas.
- 11.4.2.2 The two longer boundary lines are called “touch lines.” The two shorter lines are called goal lines.
- 11.4.2.3 The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line, which joins the midpoints of the two touchlines.
- 11.4.2.4 The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of 5m (5.46 yds.) is marked around it.
- 11.4.2.5 Marks may be made off the field of play, 5 m (5.46 yds.) from the corner arc and at right angles to the goal lines and the touchlines, to ensure that defending players retreat this distance when a corner kick is taken.



**11.4.3 Dimensions**

- 11.4.3.1 The length of the touch line must be greater than the length of the goal line
- 11.4.3.2 Touch line Length: minimum 50m (54.68 yds.), maximum 70m (76.55 yds.)
- 11.4.3.3 Goal Line Width: minimum 35m (38.28 yds.), maximum 50m (54.68 yds.)
- 11.4.3.4 All lines must be the same width, which must not exceed 12cm (5 ins.).

**11.4.4 Goal Area Dimensions**

- 11.4.4.1 Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 8m (8.74 yds.) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 20m (21.87 yds.) and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

**11.4.5 Penalty Area Dimensions**

- 11.4.5.1 Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 7.5m (8.2 yds.) from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 8 m (8.74 yds.) and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area.
- 11.4.5.2 Within each penalty area, a penalty mark is made 7m (7.65 yds.) from the midpoint between the goalposts and is equidistant to them.

**11.4.6 Flag Posts**

- 11.4.6.1 A flag post must be placed at each corner of the field.
- 11.4.6.2 It must be no less than 1.5m (5 ft.) high, with a non-pointed top.
- 11.4.6.3 Flag posts may also be placed at each end of the halfway line, no less than 1m (1 yd.) outside the touchline.

**11.4.7 The Corner Arc**

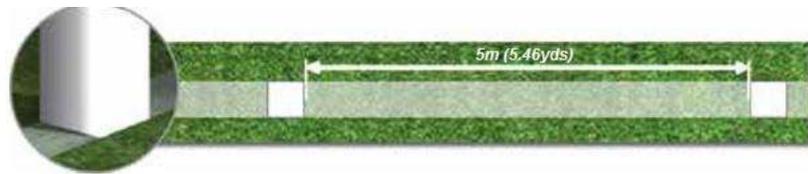
- 11.4.7.1 A quarter circle with a radius of 1m (1 yd.) from each corner flag post must be drawn inside the field of play.

**11.4.8 Goals**

- 11.4.8.1 A goal must be placed on the center of each goal line.
- 11.4.8.2 A goal consists of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The goal posts and crossbar must be made of wood, metal or other approved material.
- 11.4.8.3 The posts must be square, rectangular, round or elliptical in shape and must not be dangerous to participants.
- 11.4.8.4 The distance between the posts is 5m (5.46 yds.)
- 11.4.8.5 The distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground must be 2m (2.18 ft.)
- 11.4.8.6 The position of the goalposts in relation to the goal line must be placed according to the graphics below.
  - If the shape of the goalposts is square (FIG.9), the sides must be parallel or perpendicular to the goal line.
  - The sides of the crossbar must be parallel or perpendicular to the field plane.

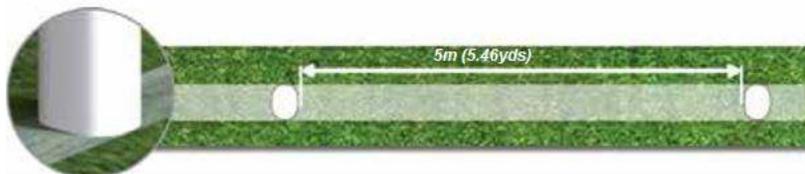


**FIG. 9**



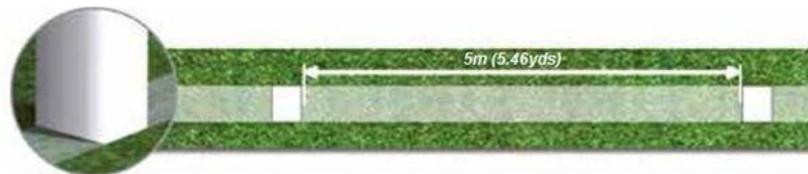
- If the shape of the goalposts is elliptical (FIG. 10), the longest axis must be perpendicular to the goal line. The longest axis of the crossbar must be parallel to the field plane.

**FIG. 10**



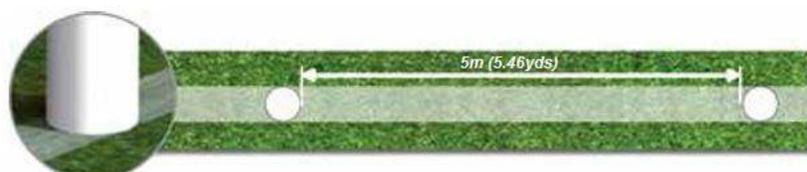
- If the shape of the goalposts is rectangular (FIG. 3), the longest side must be perpendicular to the goal line. The longest side of the crossbar must be parallel to the field plane.

**FIG. 11**



- Both goalposts and the crossbar have the same width and depth, which do not exceed 12 cm (5 ins.). The goal lines must be of the same width as the goalposts and the crossbar. Nets may be attached to the goals and the ground behind the goal, provided that they are properly supported and do not interfere with the goalkeeper.
- The goalposts and crossbars must be white.
- Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

**FIG. 12**

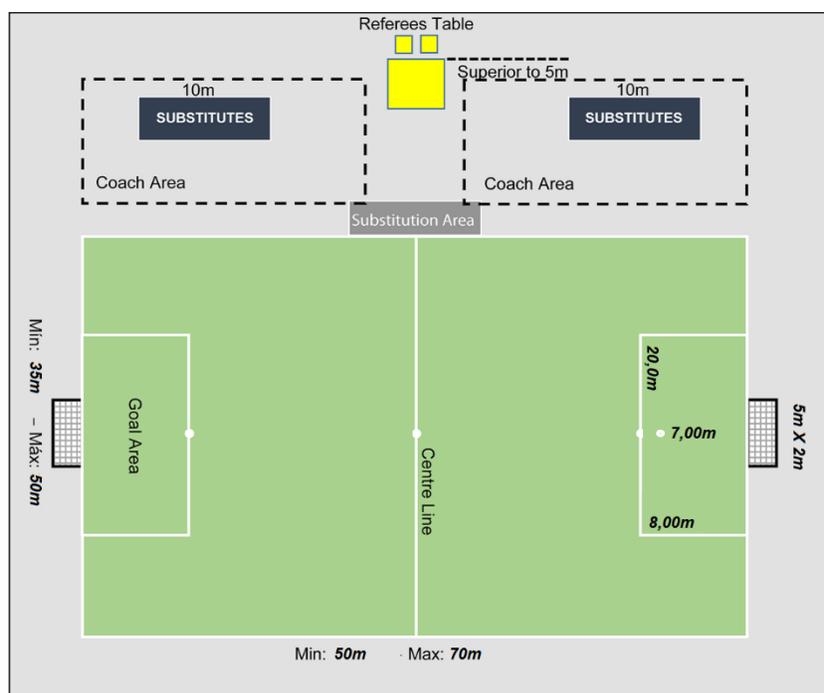




### 11.5 Field of Play Diagram

11.5.1 The 7-a-side field shall be a rectangle: maximum dimensions of 70 meters by 50 meters, minimum dimensions of 50 meters by 35 meters.

11.5.2 The goal size shall be five meters by two meters. The goal area shall be eight meters by 20 meters.



### 11.6 Benches (7 and 11 a-side)

11.6.1 Each field of play will have two benches for substitutes and the rest of the technical team.

11.6.2 Each team will have one bench with the following requirements.

11.6.3 One team bench will be located within one half of the field of play.

11.6.4 The opposing team will be located within the other half.

11.6.5 Benches should be no closer than two (2) meters from the field line and no more than five (5) meters.

11.6.6 Except for indoor fields, benches must have roofs.

11.6.7 11-a-side will have 10 seats.

11.6.8 7-a-side will have eight seats.

11.6.9 Each bench will be provided with either a cooler filled with water and ice or bottled water.

### 11.7 Technical Table

11.7.1 The technical table must be located between the two teams benches, and incorporate the following specifications:

- The table is 2m x 1m
- 2 chairs should be placed with the table
- Include a substitution board for the players to utilize when going onto the pitch during a substitution

### 11.8 Field of Player Dividers

11.8.1 Dividers must be used to split the Field of Play



- 11.8.2 Any obstacles, including advertising frames can be as close as two (2) meters for 7 a-side.
- 11.8.3 Dividers can be no higher than one (1) meter and must be made with safety materials with the understanding that players can crash into them during the game.

#### 11.9 Scoreboards and Screens

- 11.9.1 Every field of play will have one score board or screen containing following information:
- 11.9.2 Playing time, half and score for each team at the same time.
- 11.9.3 The scoreboards / screens should be large enough for all spectators to view and aid them in understanding the competition on the field of play. Whatever font is used to display the information must be visible regardless of weather conditions (i.e. sunny, cloudy, rainy).
- 11.9.4 Team Name Scoreboard Display:
  - 11.9.4.1 Every team should have its name displayed during the match on the field of play with the following specifications:
    - SO (name of the program)
    - Easily legible for all spectators and included on the score board
  - 11.9.4.2 All information must remain displayed on the scoreboard for the duration of the match. It should be removed 10 minutes post match conclusion and readied for the ensuing competition so that all spectators know the competitors for the upcoming match.
- 11.9.5 Number of Fields
  - 11.9.5.1 Each field shall be numbered the same throughout the entire tournament.
  - 11.9.5.2 This number must be visible from all spectator areas.

## 12. BALL QUALITIES & MEASUREMENTS

#### 12.1 7 a-side and 11 a-side ball specifications

- 12.1.1 The ball must be spherical in shape
- 12.1.2 It must be a number "5" size ball
- 12.1.3 Made of leather or other suitable material
- 12.1.4 Its circumference is between 68 cm (27 ins.) and 70 cm (28 ins)
- 12.1.5 It must weigh between 410 g (14 oz.) and 450 g (16 oz.)
- 12.1.6 The pressure of the ball, at the start of the match must be equal to 0.6 – 1.1 atmosphere (600 – 1,100 g/cm<sup>2</sup>) at sea level (8.5 lbs./sq. in – 15.6 lbs./sq. in)
- 12.1.7 No form of commercial advertising on the ball is permitted, except for the logo of:
  - The competition
  - The competition organizer
  - The authorized trademark of the manufacturer
- 12.1.8 Competition regulations may restrict the size and number of such markings.

#### 12.2 Training Balls

- 12.2.1 Each team will be given a certain number of balls for use during training prior to the first day of competition. This day is noted on the competition schedule as "Training Day".
  - 12.2.1.1 7 a-side: 3 training balls per team
  - 12.2.1.2 11 a-side: 5 training balls per team



**12.3 Match Balls**

**12.3.1 11 a-side**

- 12.3.1.1 Three (3) balls per game. Three (3) new balls will be used for the first match and the two (2) finals.
- 12.3.1.2 The remaining matches will use one (1) new ball and two (2) previously used match balls from the same tournament.
- 12.3.1.3 If no modifications are made to the competition calendar or to the number of teams, the chart below details the number of balls used during match play.

**12.3.2 7 a-side**

- 12.3.2.1 Two (2) balls per match. A new ball will be used during the first match for each team. Two (2) new balls will be used for the final match.
- 12.3.2.2 The remaining matches will use one (1) new ball and one (1) previously used match ball from the same tournament.
- 12.3.2.3 If no modifications are made to the competition calendar or to the number of teams, the chart below details the number of balls used during match play.

<b>Event / Type of Balls</b>	<b>Number of Teams</b>	<b>Number of Matches</b>	<b>Number of Balls</b>
11 a-side / Training Balls	12		60
11 a-side / Match Balls		30	38
7 a-side / Training Balls	12		36
7 a-side / Match Balls		30	30
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>164</b>

**12.4 International Standards**

12.4.1 The Balls used must display the following international standards



**13. LOCKER ROOMS AND TECHNICAL AREAS**

**13.1 Lockers Rooms**

13.1.1 Each field of play should have 2 locker rooms (one per team playing in the match), with the following specifications:

- 13.1.1.1 A fixed, internal room within the venue or a temporary tent established for this purpose.
- 13.1.1.2 In order to guarantee every player and delegate have a seat, each locker room should be at least:
  - 7 a-side (5m x 5m / 18 sq.m)
  - 11 a-side (6m x 6m)

13.1.2 The locker room temperature should always be set to a maximum of 25 Celsius.



13.1.3 If toilets are not located within the locker room, then there needs to be access to toilets. They should be between 20 and 40 meters.

13.1.4 Locker rooms should be no farther than 30 meters from the field of play.

13.1.5 The locker room should have a "TEAM ONLY ENTRANCE" to the field of play

### 13.2 Technical Areas

13.2.1 Transition Room and Tent: The area of the transition where teams can collect their belongings post-match.

13.2.2 One transition room / tent for every 2 Fields of Play

13.2.2.1 The Transition Room / Tent size must be 4 x 8 meters. Have 6 chairs and two 2 x 1 tables for nutrition and hydration

13.2.2.2 The Transition Tent may be combined with the Recovery Station if space allows.

### 13.3 Officials Locker Room

13.3.1 Each locker room includes

- 3 round tables
- 6 chairs each or similar
- 1 cooler and/or freezer
- 2 bards 1 table for fruit and water

13.3.2 Should the competition fields be located in different areas, 1 staging area is required to be nearby. If that is the case, then the size of the room could be smaller but the LOC must work in conjunction with SOI to make that determination.

13.3.3 Officials' Toilets should be located between 20m – 40 m from the staging area

13.3.4 It is highly recommended that the Officials Locker Rooms have showers

### 13.4 Technical Office

13.4.1 The technical office serves as Sport Operations Head Quarters. This area should have enough room to accommodate at least 10 staff members to work at the same time and include:

- Internet Connection
- Power
- 3 Printers
- 1 TV Screen / Monitor at least 43"
- Provide adequate number of tables and chairs to accommodate 10 people
- 1 Freezer
- 1 Table to accommodate snacks
- 1 Standing Whiteboard
- 1 Meeting Table with Chairs to accommodate 5 people

13.4.2 Should the LOC have an area with different specifications, it must provide the dimensions to SOI for review and approval.

13.4.3 In the specific case that football fields are located at multiple venues, then the LOC and SOI will mutually decide the placement of the main technical office. Smaller technical offices will be open and available at other venues.

### 13.5 Sport Information Desks

13.5.1 An area where delegations will find updated scores, schedule of competitions, and any other important technical will be displayed on monitors / TVs.



### 13.6 Protest and Appeals Station

13.6.1 This area allows coaches to submit any protest online. The coach will then get a file number associated with status and a final decision.

### 13.7 Sensory Spaces

13.7.1 Sensory Rooms and low-stimulations environments are specially designed spaces containing a range of stimuli designed to provide a safe environment for individuals to engage their senses. Sensory space is important for athletes who have issues with sensory processing/integration and have difficulty regulating certain sensory stimuli to help them decompress and cope with their surroundings. Along with many other benefits related to developing sensory skills, these spaces can provide a moment of comfort and calmness. The benefits of these spaces include:

- Improved focus and concentration
- Develop senses
- Provide a feeling of calm and comfort
- Promote relaxation
- Encourage socialization
- Promote cognitive development
- Improved motor development and coordination

13.7.2 Consideration should be made to have a designated space at the event for a sensory area meeting the following requirements.

#### 13.7.3 Space Requirements:

- Centrally located, but away from excessive external noise
- Soft lighting that can be dimmed is preferable, avoid strobe lighting and try to avoid fluorescent lighting
- Size and dimensions vary, based on the size of the event. On average around 500 square feet or larger is ideal.
- Appropriate heating, cooling, and ventilation present

#### 13.7.4 Safety Requirements:

- Develop safety and risk management plan
- Engage Occupational Therapists and other clinicians with experience in creating sensory spaces and low-stimulation environments as leads  
More than one volunteer MANDATORY when the volunteers in the Sensory Space are not certified Class A volunteers (permitted to be alone with an athlete) for security and policy purposes. However, it is still recommended that you have more than one volunteer present, even if they are Class A volunteers, to accommodate more athletes in the space and/or in case one volunteer must leave the space temporarily

#### 13.7.5 Communication Requirements:

- Incorporate communication about location and hours of availability through delegation services, Healthy Athlete volunteers, and medical services.
- Required Supplies At least 5 items from the equipment list in the Sensory Space Technical Manual should be available in the room for athletes. It is recommended to work with a local organization or company to borrow supplies or have them donated.
- A suggested equipment list can be found in the Sensory Space Technical Manual.



## **14. SPORT EQUIPMENT AND REQUIREMENTS**

### 14.1 Cones

- 14.1.1 Four (4) sets of ten (10) cones (flat plates) will be available for use by teams during training and warming up prior to match play.

### 14.2 Vests

- 14.2.1 Three (3) sets of different color vests will be provided by the LOC for the field of play. Each vest will have the logo of the Unified Football World Cup. The following colors will be provided:

- One (1) Set Blue
- One (1) Set Yellow
- One (1) Set Green

- 14.2.2 All bench players of the teams competing will wear the vests. All vest sizes should be XL.

#### 14.2.3 Vest Quantities

- 7 a-side: Five (5) vests
- 11 a-side: Seven (7) vests

## **15. GLOBAL GAMES SYSTEM (GGS) AND STATISTICS**

### 15.1 Global Games System (GGS)

- 15.1.1 GGS is the technology platform that connects, engages and mobilizes, users across the globe. It delivers a web-based games management solution by supporting the constituent lifecycle from registration to competition.

- 15.1.2 All of the football competition will run under GGS. SOI will determine the GGS Technical staff member for football who will be in charge of the software operations for the sport. SOI, in conjunction with the LOC Technical Department, will determine the equipment and resources required.

### 15.2 Statistics

- 15.2.1 Statistics will be used to measure the progress of a team and individual players by highlighting their performance within a specific match and their overall performance in the tournament. Through statistical highlights, the profile and brand of players will be built and will also provide valuable content to media and potential broadcasters.

- 15.2.2 An LOC of the Unified World Cup should have a comprehensive plan and resources (staff, software, etc.) to track, analyze and distribute statistics to coaches, media and broadcasters.

- 15.2.3 The below statistics should be tracked by team and individual player per match:

- Goals
- Assists
- Corner Kicks
- Shots on goal
- Saves
- Save percentage
- Fouls
- Yellow Cards and Red Cards
- Playing time per playing including time of substitution



#### 16. TRAINING DAY

- 16.1 Performance Stations support athletes competing in the Unified Football World Cup in the areas of fitness. Stations are strategically placed in the flow of the competition from beginning to end, providing a unique experience that directly impacts performance, prevents on-site injuries and illness, and promotes healthy lifestyle choices.
- 16.2 Athletes will first experience the stations during the Training Day, when more time can be spent visiting each station. Volunteers will provide the support outlined above and also dedicate time to educate athletes about the importance their station holds to performance and what to expect at each station throughout the competition. Volunteers will also encourage athletes to visit their respective station each time they compete and provide tips and suggestions on how they can continue what they've learned at home.
- 16.3 On competition days, station participation will be much more succinct in order to flow seamlessly with the tight schedule of each day. The focus of the stations will be on providing the services and support related to each station (i.e. warm-up activities, snack, water), rather than educating the athletes. This will ensure athletes stay focused on their competition.
- 16.4 For more information and ideas for offering onsite education, please reference the Technical Manual for Fitness and Performance Station.

#### 17. COMPETITION PROTOCOL

- 17.1 Stadium Arrival
  - 17.1.1 Prior to departure, athletes should review their Competition Readiness checklists to ensure they are ready to perform and have all of their equipment and health-related items.
  - 17.1.2 Competing teams must arrive no later than 1:30 hours prior to match start time.
  - 17.1.3 Teams must arrive in official Unified World Cup transportation.
  - 17.1.4 A volunteer will board the bus and check in team by team (if joint buses for more than 1 delegation) for all the members of delegations arrived.
  - 17.1.5 Once the check in is complete the volunteer will clear the delegation to disembark the bus.
  - 17.1.6 A volunteer will escort each team to a general warm-up area, where fitness professionals will be available to assist them.
  - 17.1.7 After general warm-ups, a volunteer will escort each team to their respective locker room. Each Locker Room will be identified with the name of the team.
  - 17.1.8 Each team will have access to their locker room 1 hour prior to match start time.
  - 17.1.9 Teams will stay in their locker rooms until 15 minutes prior to kickoff
  - 17.1.10 Referees will meet with each team in their respective locker room and review players uniforms, shoes and shin guards. At this time, they will also take the lineup.
  - 17.1.11 Referees will meet with each team in their respective locker room and review players' uniforms, shoes, and shin guards. At this time, they will also take the lineup.
- 17.2 Warm Up
  - 17.2.1 Warm up will start 40 minutes before the match begins and last until 25 minutes prior to kickoff.
  - 17.2.2 Each team will have 15 minutes to warm up.
  - 17.2.3 Delegations will warm up on the half of the field that is designated for that team.



- 17.2.4 Professional fitness volunteers will be available to assist teams with warm-ups, if needed.
- 17.2.5 A volunteer in the warm-up area will serve as the timekeeper and notify coaches when they can access the field and when it is time to return to their respective locker rooms.

#### 17.3 Warm Up – Pre Locker Room Area

- 17.3.1 A general warm-up area should be available to teams prior to locker room access. Fitness professionals will be available to assist teams, as needed.
- 17.3.2 The general warm-up area should be at least 15 x 15 meters. If competition fields and locker rooms are split apart due to venue layout, all fields should have easy access to a dedicated, safe space to warm-up that is within 100m of their locker room.
- 17.3.3 The general warm-up should include some aerobic activity and dynamic stretches, whereas the on-field warm-ups should focus on sport-specific skills and with-ball drills.

#### 17.4 Pre-Match Protocol

- 17.4.1 Fifteen (15) minutes prior to kick off
  - 17.4.1.1 Referees, officials, and any special guests will meet in the official entrance area.
  - 17.4.1.2 Coaches and athletes not in the starting lineup will walk straight to their respective benches.
  - 17.4.1.3 The flag bearers for each field (2 flags per field) should already be in position on the field of play waiting for the teams.
- 17.4.2 Seven (7) minutes prior to kick off
  - 17.4.2.1 The march out onto the field will be as follows:
    - 17.4.2.1.1 Three referees at the front of the line with the main referee in the center carrying the official game ball to begin the match.
    - 17.4.2.1.2 The teams line up in two (2) vertical rows behind the referees, with each team captain at the head of their respective lines.
  - 17.4.2.2 Beginning at 10 seconds prior to the beginning of the march, until the teams shake hands, the official song of the Unified World Cup will be played.
  - 17.4.2.3 Following the handshake, teams will proceed to the greeting area to line up horizontally facing the spectators, ensuring that the officials are in the middle.
  - 17.4.2.4 Once aligned, officials and players will first greet spectators facing them and then turn to greet the spectators facing away from them.
  - 17.4.2.5 Upon completing the greeting, referees will then ask the teams to walk toward each other to shake hands.
  - 17.4.2.6 After the handshake, each team will take the official picture with the banner/A-frame provided.
  - 17.4.2.7 Once all pictures are complete, officials will proceed to the middle of the field for the coin toss and the official picture "Captains – Referees"
  - 17.4.2.8 Teams will then get into position on the field for kick off.
  - 17.4.2.9 Please view the YouTube link for reference - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXca7A92Tnk>
  - 17.4.2.10 Starting athletes will have roughly two minutes before kick off to complete any final stretches.

#### 17.5 Half Time

- 17.5.1 The in/ out entrance will be the same used for the pre match parade.



- 17.5.2 Then they will get back to the field of play for the second half.
- 17.5.3 7 a-side teams will remain in the field of play for half time, and will receive 10 minutes for half time.

17.6 Match Duration

<b>Duration of Matches</b>		
<b>Competition Type</b>	<b>Match Time</b>	<b>Half Time</b>
<b>7 a-side – All Stages</b>	20 minutes per half	10 minutes
<b>If tied, teams go straight to penalty kicks if required (Finals only)</b>	5 minutes per half	
<b>11 a-side – All stages</b>	30 minutes per half	15 minutes
<b>If tied, teams will go straight to penalty kicks if required (Finals only)</b>		

17.7 Transition of Locker Rooms and End of Game

- 17.7.1 Once teams leave for the pitch to start the game, volunteers will transition the locker rooms. This entails cleaning, waste removal, refreshing the snacks offered, replenishing the hydration station and changing the team nameplate outside of the locker room.
- 17.7.2 Volunteers will take all personal items from each team to the transition tent.
- 17.7.3 Teams will have access to the locker room until the pre match parade starts.
- 17.7.4 Upon match conclusion, teams will proceed to the transition tent to retrieve their belongings and have some healthy snacks, fruit and water, located at the nutrition and hydration tables.. From there, teams will visit the Recovery Station.

17.8 Recovery Station

- 17.8.1 After high-level performance at competition, athletes should focus on a proper recovery in order to feel well rested and able to compete again at their best quickly. With multiple days of competition, athletes may encounter issues with cramping, tight muscles, strains or sprains, dehydration, etc., which are not noticeable or problematic until much later after competing. The Recovery Station offers a relaxed space where athletes can come to rehydrate, refuel, stretch, and if needed, received medical/athletic training services.
  - 17.8.1.1 At the field of play, it is recommended that the Recovery Station be in the same location as the transition tent to improve athlete flow and ensure they properly recover.
  - 17.8.1.2 Depending on venue spacing, the Recovery Station may be in a different area than the transition tent. In this case, a volunteer should escort teams to this location after they pick up their belongings, healthy snacks and water.
  - 17.8.1.3 All athletes should receive a proper cool-down, led by a fitness professional. A good cool-down allows the body to gradually return to a state of rest, which decreases muscle soreness and increases the rate of recovery.
  - 17.8.1.4 Following the cool-down, there may be some athletes who need additional support and medical attention. Athletic trainers and/or the medical team will be



located at the Recovery Station to provide treatment to these athletes. Injuries, illnesses, and the treatment provided should be recorded and tracked.

17.8.1.5 In a case of an emergency, athletes should receive medical attention immediately, rather than performing a cool-down first.

17.8.1.5.1 For all requirements for Medical Operations, please reference the Technical Manual for Medical Operations.

#### 17.9 Venue Departure

17.9.1 One hour post match the eight (8) teams competing within the same schedule will be escorted to their buses and return to their accommodations.

17.9.2 If additional support is needed with recovery later, an off-site Recovery Station will also be located at the accommodations.

### **18. UNIFIED SPORTS® COMPETITION OVERVIEW**

18.1 Unified Sports® teams need to incorporate the principle of meaningful involvement. This means that during competition, all members (athletes and partners) are presented with numerous opportunities throughout the course of a game / match to contribute to their team's performance.

#### 18.2 Unified Sports Competition Points of Emphasis

18.2.1 Player dominance and meaningful involvement may include both partners and athletes.

18.2.2 Sport officials on the field of play do not monitor or determine meaningful involvement. However, they may be asked for input.

18.2.3 The Technical Committee and its members are responsible for observations and sanctions.

18.2.4 The Unified Sports Competitive model combines approximately equal numbers of Special Olympics athletes (individuals with intellectual disabilities) and partners (individuals without intellectual disabilities) as teammates on sport teams for training and competition. Meaningful involvement of all teammates in training and competition is a fundamental requirement of this model.

18.2.5 All teammates on a Unified Sports Competitive team must have attained the necessary sport-specific skills and knowledge tactics to compete without modification of the current Special Olympics Official Sports Rules.

#### 18.3 Unified World Cup Age Requirement

18.3.1 Following the Unified Sports Competitive model rules, the age for the cup will be from 16 to 23 years old. The athlete and partner need to be this age by the day of the opening ceremony, so, if any player turns 24 after the opening is still eligible to participate in the competition.

### **19. TECHNICAL COMPOSITION OF FOOTBALL DEPARTMENT**

#### 19.1 Technical Committee

19.1.1 The Technical Committee serves as the main authority for all the aspects of competition, such as the technical area, sport venue operations, Unified Sport protocol, the medical area, the security area, HR, and any other area recognized as part of the sport competition structure.

## SPORT IMPACT STANDARDS

### UNIFIED FOOTBALL WORLD CUP



19.1.2 Its responsibilities include leading the planning process, creation of the training and competition schedule for the event and a successful execution. The technical committee is comprised of unified sports enforcement, officials, referees, medical officers and LOC staff.

Technical Committee	
Technical Area	1
Unified Sports Enforcement	1
HR (Volunteers & Staff) Operations	1
Venue Operations	1
Officials & Referees	1
Medical	1
Fitness and Performance Stations	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>

Level	Role	Quantity	Rotation	Comments
1	Technical Committee	6	None	
2	Match and Unified Commissioners	8	None	
2	Chief of officials	2	None	1 will be a member of the Technical Committee
<b>COMPETITION PROTOCOL</b>				
2	General Coordinator	1	None	
3	Field Coordinators	8	None (2 shifts)	
4	Official Entrance Parade	16	Can rotate in half-day shifts	Including ball retrievers
4	Scores	16	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
4	Balls Retrievers	24	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
<b>THE PRE AND POST MATCH PROTOCOL TEAM</b>				
2	General Coordinator	1	None	
3	Venue Coordinators	4	None	
4	Welcome Stage, Check-In and Departure Zone	12	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
4	Staging Area	8	Can rotate in half-day shifts	



<b>4</b>	Locker Rooms, Including Referees	20	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
<b>4</b>	Escorts to warm-ups on the field of play	8	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
<b>TRAINING CENTER</b>				
<b>2</b>	General Coordinator	1	None	
	Volunteers	12	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
<b>SPORTS VENUES OPERATION TEAM</b>				
<b>1</b>	General Coordinator	1	None	A member of the TC
<b>3</b>	Venue Coordinators	4	None	
<b>4</b>	Volunteers	20	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
<b>MEDICAL TEAM</b>				
<b>1</b>	Chief Medical Officer	1	None	Member of the TC
<b>3</b>	Venue Medical Coordinators	4	None	
<b>4</b>	Paramedics	16	TBD by LOC	
<b>4</b>	Medical Station	6	TBD by LOC	Medical Station should be staffed by at least 1 nurse and 1 physician. See TM for full details.
<b>4</b>	Recovery Station-Athletic Trainers	3	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
<b>4</b>	Sensory Space Volunteer	2-4	Can rotate in half-day shifts	Per space
<b>FITNESS TEAM</b>				
<b>2</b>	Fitness and Performance Stations Coordinator	1	None	Member of the TC
<b>3</b>	Warm-Up Fitness Professionals	6	Can rotate in half-day shifts	1 per warm-up area
<b>3</b>	Nutrition and Hydration Volunteers	6	Can rotate in half-day shifts	
<b>3</b>	Recovery Station Fitness Professionals	4	Can rotate in half-day shifts	Per Day
<b>3</b>	Game Day Minds Volunteers	4	Can rotate in half-day shifts	Volunteers for Training Day

<b>REFEREE REQUIREMENTS (Each Crew will referee 2 matches per day)</b>			
<b>Competition Type</b>	<b>Number of Crews</b>	<b>Number of People</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Men's Competition</b>	4	4	16



<b>Women's Competition</b>	4	3	12
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19.2 Football Job Descriptions

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
<b>Match Commissioner</b>	Highest Authority by match in all the aspects related to the sport competition.	8 Total (2) International to be appointed by SOI & (6) Local to be appointed by LOC
<b>Unified Match Commissioner</b>	Highest Authority by match in all the aspects related to Unified Sports.	2 Total Local to be appointed by LOC and approved by SOI
<b>The Chief of Officials (COO)</b>	In charge of the selection, training (in SO specifics), registration, allocation, and assessment of all the certified football referees required for tournament.	2 Total One to be appointed by SOI & One to be appointed by LOC
<b>Competition Protocol Team</b>	Group responsible for protocol of teams playing an official match in the Unified Football Cup. This includes the official entrance parade, score volunteers and ball retrievers.	
<b>Pre &amp; Post Match Protocol Team</b>	Group responsible to accompany and escort teams upon stadium arrival. This includes the welcome stage, staging area, lockers room, warm-ups, transition tent and Recovery Station.	
<b>Sport Venue Operations Team</b>	Group responsible for the logistics and adjustments of the sport venue in general, including sport equipment, access control by area, hydration, VIP – media - Families areas, etc.	
<b>Fitness and Performance Stations</b>	Oversees and supports the fitness elements of the	<i>Fitness volunteer requirements can be found in the Performance</i>



	<p>competition, including nutrition, hydration, warm-ups, cool-downs and recovery. This includes Performance Stations on the Training Day, and will be integrated in the warm-up areas, transition tents and Recovery Stations during competition.</p> <p>Using their expertise, they will ensure that they are providing proper education and the appropriate level of support for all athletes to ensure they have a safe competition where they are performing at their best.</p>	<p><i>Stations section of this document or the Performance Stations Technical Manual.</i></p>
<b>Medical Team</b>	<p>Group responsible for all medical services including on the field of play, minor injury treatment, venue medical station, and recovery station after matches, as well as liaise with medical authorities should a higher level of attention be required for injuries. Should be consulted from medical perspective for play conditions and decisions.</p>	
<b>Sports Information Team &amp; SO Connect</b>	<p>Group responsible for all data / statistics collected during matches. Also, responsible for distributing the data / statistics to the media and general public.</p>	
<b>Sports Information Coordinator</b>	<p>Responsible for determining the required information technology needs and ensuring a process for information flow regarding registration and match statistics for the Unified Sports Evaluation Committee team and media. The Sports Information Coordinator will also collect statistic reports</p>	



	from Observers for data entry and distribution.	
<b>SO Connect Staff</b>		
<b>Unified Sports Observer</b>	The Unified Sports Observer volunteer team will observe all matches. They will watch each match to note possible violations of the principle of meaningful involvement while recording key statistics (goals, assists, corner kicks, playing time of each player, etc.).	

**20. FITNESS AND PERFORMANCE STATIONS**

20.1 Fitness is an important element of sport. Fitness contributes to improved sport preparation and conditioning, greater sport performance, reduced injuries, quicker recovery, and overall better health and quality of life. In order to make a positive impact in these areas, there must be an intentional focus on the elements of physical activity, nutrition, and hydration throughout training and competition. Additionally, a focus on fitness through the lens of sport can help drive positive daily choices that increase lifelong, year-round fitness.

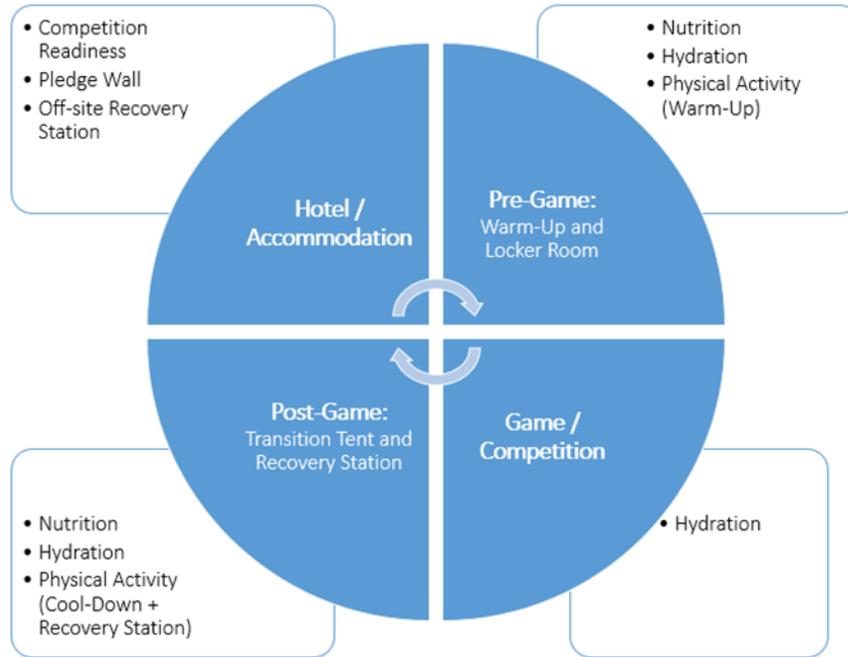
20.2 The Special Olympics Unified World Cup provides an excellent platform to promote the importance of fitness as part of the sports experience. Elements of fitness can be embedded in the training leading up to the tournament, as well as promoted throughout every aspect of the competition experience through the Performance Stations model.

20.3 Performance Stations educate and activate members of the movement in the tenets of fitness. Athletes will first experience the stations on Training Day when more time can be spent visiting each station and receiving education. On Competition Days, station participation will be much more succinct in order to flow seamlessly with the tight schedule of each day, and focus more on providing services and support. This provides a unique experience that directly impacts performance, prevents on-site injuries and illness, and promotes healthy lifestyle choices. Performance Station volunteers will be in sync with medical staff to ensure athletes who are showing signs of injury or illness are properly supported.

20.4 For more information, please reference the Technical Manual for Fitness Manual for Fitness and Performance Stations.



## Flow of Performance Stations within Competition



### 20.5 Performance Stations: Space Needs and Operations

Station	Location	Space	Equipment	Volunteers per shift	Hours of Operation	Additional Notes
<b>Nutrition &amp; Hydration</b>	Pre-Staging or Staging Areas; Locker Room (before and during competition)	1m <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Table</li> <li>• 1 Water Cooler or 2 Water Dispensers</li> <li>• Fruit</li> <li>• 1 Trash Can</li> <li>• Ice</li> <li>• Paper Towels</li> <li>• Trash Bags</li> <li>• Nutrition Poster</li> </ul>		Available at least 1 hour prior to competition (or when first team arrives)	Most of the emphasis should be on the Transition Tent, but some fruit and water should be available for



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hydration Poster</li> </ul>	Training Day: 2-3 with a background in nutrition		athletes in staging areas and/or locker rooms.
	Transition Tent	50m <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Tables</li> <li>2-4 Chairs</li> <li>Nutrition Signage</li> <li>Hydration Signage</li> <li>Tablecloths</li> <li>At least 3 different types of fruit</li> <li>Granola Bar or similar grain based bar</li> <li>Other healthy snacks for recovery (optional)</li> <li>Platter to hold snacks</li> <li>2 Water Cooler or 3 Water Dispensers</li> <li>Ice</li> <li>Paper Towels</li> <li>Trash Can</li> <li>Trash Bags</li> </ul>	Competition Day: 4-6 General Volunteers	Available at least 30 minutes after last competition.	
	General Warm-Up area and/or On-Field Warm-Up	225m <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical Activity (Warm-Up) Signage</li> </ul>	2-4 with a background in fitness/exercise	Warm-Up: Available once teams disembark buses; at least 1 hour prior to competition	Warm-up can be conducted on field of play if time allows in competition schedule; Sample WU and will be given to the LOC for fitness professionals



<b>Physical Activity</b>						to use as guidance.
	Recovery Station: space near field of play; may be combined with the Transition Tent	At least 300m <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise mats</li> <li>• Foam Rollers</li> <li>• Wipes for cleaning exercise equipment</li> </ul>	2-4 with a background in fitness/exercise	Cool-Down: Available at the end of the first game and until 45 minutes after the final game.	Cool-down should be included as part of the Recovery Station immediately following the match. Sample CD will be given to the LOC for fitness professionals to use as guidance.

**21. UNIFORMS**

21.1 Players are required to wear the following items:

- A jersey or shirt – if undergarments are worn, the color of the sleeve should be the same main color as the sleeve of the jersey or shirt.
- All jerseys or shirts must have sleeves
- Shorts – if undershorts are worn, they are of the same main color as the shorts.
- Long socks to cover shin guards
- Shin guards
- Footwear

21.2 A one-piece playing suit of a shirt and shorts is not permitted.

21.3 Goalkeepers



- 21.3.1 Each goalkeeper must wear a jersey with colors that distinguish him from the other players, the referee and the assistant referees.
- 21.3.2 If the jerseys of the two goalkeepers are the same color, and neither has another jersey to change into the team designated as the “home team” will have the goalkeeper wear a warm-up vest and the referee shall allow play to begin.
- 21.4 A player may use equipment other than the basic equipment provided that its sole purpose is to protect him/her physically or is for a medical condition and it poses no danger to him or any other player. The referees will inspect to determine their safety.
- 21.5 All items of jewelry (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather, rubber bands etc.) are strictly forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewelry is not acceptable unless it is a medical alert bracelet or necklace. These are allowed but must taped to avoid movement with medical alert information visible.
- 21.6 The Technical Committee could accept any other article of clothing, taking into consideration religious or cultural aspects of the team. The request for acceptance must be submitted in advance, together with a detailed description of the article.
- 21.7 FIFA protocols and sanctions established in the FIFA law 4 (Players equipment) will be followed by referees during the cup).
- 21.8 All Teams must submit samples to LOC of their playing attire for approval. Details will be at the registration information.
- 21.9 Each team shall have two (2) sets of uniforms. Their first uniform will be classified as the “HOME UNIFORM”, and the second or alternative uniform will be classified as the “AWAY UNIFORM”.
- 21.10 Each team’s socks, shorts and T-shirts, must be different colors for their uniform. Any uniforms that look similar will not be allowed.
- 21.11 The home and away uniforms should be similar in color, following the patterns of the team or national federation who is a partner of the SO team. The Technical Committee must approve all uniforms. Please see the following example below:



21.12 Team uniforms will be identified once the official draw for the group stage is determined. In the case that two uniforms look similar because of color, the host country will receive priority in choosing which uniform they prefer. For semi-finals and finals games, SOI will notify the teams a day in advance.

#### 21.13 Uniform Numbers

- 21.13.1 The numbers should run from 1-11 for the 7 a-side teams. Each player shall keep the same number jersey throughout the tournament. If, for any reason, a player wears a number outside of that range, the Technical Committee will sanction the player and/or team.
- 21.13.2 Goalies shall wear #1 and #11 for 7 a-side. The rest of the team shall use the remaining numbers. Should the goalie also be a field player, he must wear a regular field jersey with the same assigned number that he/she had been registered with from the beginning of the tournament. No exceptions.
- 21.13.3 When the numbers are displayed on the back of the jersey in the center the numbers should be between 25 cm. to 35 cm. high. Should the numbers be displayed on the front of the uniform, they should be between 10 cm. to 15 cm. high
- 21.13.4 The number must also be displayed also on either the right or left front side of all players' shorts. The must be between 10 cm. y 15 cm. high. The same number for each player must be on both sets of uniforms, shirt and shorts.
- 21.13.5 The color of the numbers should stand out from the actual uniform (clear over dark and vice versa) so they can be seen from a distance either in stadium or on television. This is critical when the uniform has either a solid color or stripes.
- 21.13.6 Every player (including the goalies) must wear shin guards on both legs at all times. The referees will not allow a player to enter the field without them.
- 21.13.7 The captain will wear the captain's band on the arm of his choice.
- 21.13.8 Player names may be placed on the back of jerseys.
- 21.13.9 If any part of the uniform submitted is not acceptable for any reason, SOI will require the team to take corrective action and resubmit to SOI the corrected item for further consideration.



- 21.13.10 The Match Commissioner shall have the right to check the playing kit at the match venue and refuse the use of any item not previously approved by SOI
- 21.13.11 Because teams could play in either natural grass or synthetic turf, players must wear molded cleats football shoes \* please see below. The use of metal cleats (also referred as “screw-in”) will not be permitted.
- 21.13.12 Uniforms shall meet the Section 4.08 of SOI’s General Rules about commercial message displays in game standards:

Identity In Action **Team Competition Uniforms**  
Unified Cup Identity



**21.14 Commercial Messages on Uniforms and Numbers**

- 21.14.1 To avoid commercial exploitation of persons with intellectual disabilities, no uniforms, and none of the bibs or other symbols that carry racing numbers, which are used by Special Olympics athletes in any competition or during any opening or closing ceremonies of any Games can be printed trade names or commercial messages. The only trademarks that can be displayed on uniforms of athletes during competitions and opening and closing ceremonies of the Games, are the normal manufacturing trademarks.

**22. SOI CONCUSSION AWARENESS AND SAFETY RECOGNITION POLICY**

**22.1 Objective for Concussion Awareness**

- 22.1.1 It is Special Olympics’ intent to take steps to help ensure the health and safety of all Special Olympics participants. All Special Olympics participants should remember that safety comes first and should take reasonable steps to help minimize the risks for concussion or other serious brain injuries.



#### 22.2 Defining a Concussion

22.2.1 A concussion is defined by the Centers for Disease Control as a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head as well as serial, cumulative hits to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth causing the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull. Although concussions are usually not life-threatening, their effects can be serious and therefore proper attention must be paid to individuals suspected of sustaining a concussion.

#### 22.3 Suspected or Confirmed Concussion

22.3.1 A participant who is suspected of sustaining a concussion in a practice, game or competition shall be removed from practice, play or competition at that time. If a qualified medical professional is available on-site to render an evaluation, that person shall have final authority as to the removal or return to play of the participant. If applicable, the participant's parent or guardian should be made aware that the participant is suspected of sustaining a concussion.

#### 22.4 Return to Play

22.4.1 A participant who has been removed from practice, play or competition due to a suspected concussion may not participate in Special Olympics sports activities until either of the following occurs (1) at least seven (7) consecutive days have passed since the participant was removed from play and a currently licensed, qualified medical professional provides written clearance for the participant to return to practice, play and competition or (2) a currently licensed, qualified medical professional determines that the participant did not suffer a concussion and provides written clearance for the participant to return to practice play immediately. Written clearance in either of the scenarios above shall become a permanent record.

#### 22.5 Required Training and Timeline

22.5.1 All Coaches are required to complete concussion awareness training, available at CDC Concussion Training and submit the certificate of completion to their state Program. Any concussion awareness training other than the CDC's Heads Up training must be approved by SOI. The SOI policy on "Return to Play" differs from the CDC's training because Coaches do not see the Special Olympics athletes daily. For Coaches registering for the first time on or after January 1, 2015, confirmation of such training must be provided to the U.S. Program prior to the individual beginning volunteer duties. U.S. Programs must implement a system for tracking completion of the concussion awareness training by Coaches.

#### 22.6 Frequency of Training

22.6.1 All Coaches must complete concussion awareness training at least once every three years.

#### 22.7 Communication with Parents and Guardians

22.7.1 U.S. Programs are required to communicate in writing to all participants and/or parents/guardians, the concussion awareness and safety recognition program, as



outlined in the Suspected or Confirmed Concussion and Return to Play sections of this policy.

22.7.2 The Centers for Disease Control website provides additional resources relative to concussions that may be of interest to participants and their families.

## 22.8 Concussion Frequently Asked Questions

22.8.1 Who is considered a “qualified” medical professional?

22.8.1.1 The definition of “qualified” medical professional varies by State. Each U.S. Program should consult local legal counsel to determine the Program’s definition of “qualified” medical professional.

22.8.2 Can a U.S. Program use a concussion awareness training system that is different from the CDC Head’s Up training?

22.8.2.1 Special Olympics, Inc. will consider alternative training systems. If you are interesting in utilizing an alternative training system, please provide a copy of the training (or link to the training) to Brianna Schreiner (bschreiner@specialolympics.org) for consideration.

22.8.3 What is the recommended approach for communicating in writing the concussion awareness and safety recognition program to participants/parents/guardians?

22.8.3.1 It is recommended that U.S. Programs provide the concussion awareness and safety recognition program with the athlete medical at least once every three years as part of registration, and also periodically distribute via newsletters, website, etc.

22.8.4 How often is the CDC training required?

22.8.4.1 After the initial training is completed (as outlined in the policy), all coaches must complete the training and provide confirmation of such training to their Program at least once every three years. Frequency of training is consistent with the requirements for coach’s certification, volunteer screening and Protective Behaviors training, so that the training can be incorporated into the current tracking processes.

22.8.5 How should parents/guardians be notified of a suspected concussion?

22.8.5.1 The Center for Disease Control’s website includes several tools that can be provided to parents/guardians of a participant with a suspected concussion. It will also be important to share with the parent/guardian next steps relative to the participant’s return to play, as outlined in the policy.

22.8.6 Is my Program subject to State law requirements?

22.8.6.1 At this time, most U.S. States have laws addressing concussions. The requirements of the laws of each State can vary significantly, so each Program should consult its legal counsel to ensure compliance with local laws. In addition, the following website provides an overview of concussion laws in each state:  
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/traumatic-brain-injury-legislation.aspx#1>  
(This website should not replace qualified counsel, but can be used as an initial resource)



### **23. DISCIPLINARY RULES AND PROCEDURES**

- 23.1 Players and members of the delegation cautioned or dismissed from the field of play
  - 23.1.1 A player, who receives two (2) cautions (yellow cards) during the group stage matches, shall automatically be suspended from playing in the match following the match in which he received the second caution.
  - 23.1.2 Single yellow card received in group stage will not be carried forward to semi-finals. However, if a player receives a second caution during the team's last match in group stage, the suspension will be carried forward to semi-final if this team has qualified.
  - 23.1.3 A player and/or official who receives a red card or is sent-off during the competition shall automatically be expelled for the rest of the match and will not be eligible to play in the team's next match. The technical committee makes the final decision on number of total suspended matches.
  - 23.1.4 For Unified Football matches, any player sent-off the field of play may stay on the bench unless the referee determines that the conduct of the player or his presence is not conducive to the on-going match. In this case, the referee may direct the head coach to ask his player to retire to the locker room immediately or be escorted to the stands. However, any other member of the delegation who is sent-off by the referee shall take no further part in the on-going match and shall retire to the locker room or the stands immediately.
  - 23.1.5 A suspended player and/or official shall not be allowed on the bench and technical area.
  - 23.1.6 Each coach shall bear the responsibility of monitoring the cautions and/or suspensions received by its players and officials and to ensure that all players and officials registered and/or fielded during the competition are eligible to play.
  - 23.1.7 All players and official delegation members must abide by the "Special Olympics Code of Conduct" on and off the field. Appropriate action may be taken by the SOI for any violation.
- 23.2 Indiscipline or Violent Conduct by Players and/or Officials
  - 23.2.1 Any player or member of the delegation reported for indiscipline or violent conduct anywhere within the stadium, including but not limited to the field of play, locker rooms, training sites and within the hostels or hotels shall be dealt with by the Technical Committee.
- 23.3 Protests
  - 23.3.1 Subject to the following provisions, protests are objections of any kind to occurrences that have a direct effect on matches in the competition (state and marking of the pitch, accessory, match equipment, eligibility of players, stadium installations, footballs, etc.) and any matter related to breach of these Regulations.
  - 23.3.2 Protests shall be submitted in writing by the head of delegation (on the protest form, copies of which will be delivered on the first coaches meeting) to the Match Commissioner, within one (1) hour of the match. Teams will have the right to submit one protest during the duration of the cup. If this protest has been accepted, they will recover the right to protest again in any other moment of the cup, otherwise, if the protest has been denied, the team will lose the right to submit any other protest.
  - 23.3.3 Protests against any incidents that occur during the course of a match shall be made to the referee by the team captain immediately after the disputed incident and before play has resumed. Such protest shall be confirmed and submitted in writing by the head of delegation (on the protest form, copies of which will be provided on the first



coaching meeting) to the Match Commissioner no later than two (2) hours after the match.

- 23.3.4 The Technical Committee shall consider any such protest as soon as possible and may interview the match referee or any other witnesses or review television footage or videos, etc. and then convey the outcome of the protest to the delegation leader in writing. The Technical Committee may also decide if a protest is accepted or denied.
- 23.3.5 No protest may be lodged against the referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play; such decisions being final. Unified Sports Meaningful Involvement cannot be protested either.
- 23.3.6 Appeal against a decision of the Technical Committee shall be submitted by the head of delegation in writing to the appeals committee, which shall be convened to consider the appeal. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and shall be conveyed in writing to the appellant.
- 23.3.7 Once the final match of the Competition has ended and the awards have been presented, any protests described in this Article shall be disregarded.

## **24. AWARDS**

- 24.1 The Final Round of the Men's and Women's Competition will consist of three different divisions. Division 1 for the all teams residing in 1st place during the Group Stage. Division 2 for all teams residing in 2nd place during the Group Stage, and Division 3 for all teams residing in 3rd and 4th place during the Group Stage.
- 24.2 The semifinal rounds will define each division. The winners will play in the finals. Additional matches for final standings would be offered as established in the format of competition chapter of this document.
- 24.3 Each division will have one winner (champion) as well as a runner-up or second place that will be decided by a final game.
- 24.4 The entire coaching staff of each team will also receive a special award for their participation. This will be different from what is distributed to athletes.
- 24.5 The winning team of the division 1 for the Men's and Women's Tournament will also receive a Unified Football World Cup (Trophy), to be displayed at the Special Olympics Program headquarters of the winning country.
- 24.6 Each team that wins the final match in every division will receive gold medals, including bench players. All team members of the second place team of any division will receive silver medals and the third place teams will receive bronze medals. The rest of the teams will receive ribbons that correspond with their final standing.
- 24.7 During the Unified Football World Cup the following outstanding players will be recognized:
  - 24.7.1 Golden Boot: Given to the player who scores the most goals during the Unified Football World Cup.
  - 24.7.2 Most Valuable Unified Teammate: Given to an Athlete and a Partner who, demonstration their understanding of the principle of meaningful involvement on and off the field of play.
  - 24.7.3 Fair Play Team: Given to the team based upon following FIFA guidelines and Unified Sports Philosophy.



24.7.4 Golden Glove: Given to the best goalkeeper of the tournament according to performance rather than goals conceded.

Awards Unified Cup										Coaches Special Medal	Unified Cup Trophy	Golden Cup Trophy	Most Valuable Unified Teammate	Fair Play Team	Golden Glove	
Division	# Goal Medals	# Silver Medals	# Bronze Medals	# 4th Ribbon	# 5th Ribbon	# 6th Ribbon	# 7th Ribbon	# 8th Ribbon								
M D1	16	16	16	16						256	1					
M D2	16	16	16	16								1	2	1	1	
M D3	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16								
F D1	11	11	11	11								1				
F D2	11	11	11	11									1	2	1	1
F D3	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	

## 25. CANCELLATION AND ABANDONMENT OF MATCHES

### 25.1 Cancellation of Matches

25.1.1 If a match cannot commence on time due to “Force Majeure” or any other incidents such as, but not limited to, the field is not fit for play, weather conditions, floodlight failure, etc. the following procedures must be followed:

25.1.1.1 The Match is automatically suspended for the duration of thirty (30) minutes to allow conditions to improve sufficiently to restart the Match, unless the referee decides that the Match can be resumed earlier. In the case of lightning there is a minimum delay of 30 minutes, from the last strike, before play can be started.

25.1.1.2 At the discretion of the referee, another delay of a maximum of thirty (30) minutes shall be allowed if in his opinion this extra period of delay will allow the match to commence. Otherwise, at the end of this second thirty (30) minute period, the referee must declare the match to have been cancelled.

25.1.1.3 In the case of a cancelled match, the Technical Committee shall decide within two (2) hours of the referee’s decision to cancel the match whether the match can be rescheduled, taking sporting and organizational considerations into account, or whether any other action and decision is needed to continue with the competition. Any disciplinary sanctions resulting from the cancelled match shall remain in force.

25.1.2 No protest may be lodged against decisions stated above.

### 25.2 Abandonment of Matches

25.2.1 If the match is stopped by the referee before the end of normal time or during any extra time because of any Force Majeure or any other incidents such as, but not limited to, the field is not fit for play, weather conditions, mass confrontation, referee abandonment, floodlight failure, etc. the following procedures must be followed:

- The Match is automatically suspended for the duration of thirty (30) minutes to allow conditions to improve sufficiently to restart the Match, unless the referee decides that the Match can be resumed earlier. In the case of lightning there is a minimum delay of 30 minutes, from the last strike, before play can be started.
- At the discretion of the referee, another suspension of a maximum of thirty (30) minutes shall be allowed if in his opinion this extra period of suspension will allow the match to be resumed. Otherwise, at the end of this second thirty (30) minutes period, the technical committee referee must declare the match to have been abandoned.



- In the case a match being abandoned as a result of Force Majeure (or any other incident) for any reason after it has already kicked off, the match shall recommence with the same score at the minute at which play was interrupted rather than being replayed in full.
- 25.2.2 The following principles shall apply to the recommencement of the match:
- The match shall recommence with the same players on the pitch and substitutes available as when the match was initially abandoned;
  - No additional substitutes may be added to the 'Match Starting List';
  - The teams can make only the number of substitutions to which they were still entitled when the match was abandoned;
  - Players sent off during the abandoned match cannot be replaced.
  - Any sanctions imposed before the match was abandoned remain valid for the remainder of the match;
  - The kick-off time, date (foreseen for the following day) and location shall be decided by the Technical Committee.
  - The Technical Committee shall treat any matters requiring further decision.
  - No protest may be lodged against decisions stated above.

**26. RESOURCES**

<b>RESOURCES</b>	
<a href="#"><u>FIFA - Laws of the Game – Federation Rules</u></a>	This provides an overview of the Laws that govern international competitions. The Laws (Rules) of the Game are the identical for all football throughout the world. These rules keep the game fair and are a crucial feature of the “spirit” of the game. The best matches are those where the referee is rarely needed as both sides play with respect for each other, officials and the Laws.
<a href="#"><u>Special Olympics Football Sports Rules</u></a>	Football Sport Rules provide background on the rules that govern all Special Olympics Football competitions.