



About Speed Skating: Speed Skating today is a lifetime fitness sport for individuals of all ages. Speed Skating provides both cardiovascular and aerobic benefits as well as improving muscle strength, balance, and coordination. Today, the sport can be enjoyed year round with indoor skating facilities found throughout the world. As a recreational and competition sport, Ice Speed Skating offers the potential for social integration for both training and competition experiences within multi-level Special Olympics competition experiences as well as training and competition experiences through this sport's National Governing Body.

Established at Special Olympics: 1977

Differences of Special Olympics Speed Skating: Special Olympics Speed Skating allows for the starter to give each skater a chance to do his/her best by: giving the skaters ample time to assume a balanced position after taking their marks, starting the sequence over if any skater is off-balance, not holding the skaters too long after the set signal, and starting the race over if a skater is interfered with and falls before the first apex block after the starting line. If a division consists of more skaters than the race distance allows on the line, then two division semi-final heats and two finals will be raced.

By The Numbers:

- In 2011, 14,496 Special Olympics Athletes competed in Speed Skating events
- In 2011, 48 Special Olympics Programs hosted Speed Skating competitions
- Speed Skating for men first appeared at the Olympic Games in 1924 and women made their first appearance in Speed Skating at the 1932 Games.
- In 2011, the East Asia Region of Special Olympics had the most Athletes competing in Speed Skating with 9,664 Athletes.

Events for Competition:

- 25 Meter Straightaway
- 55 Meter Half Lap Race
- 111 Meter Race
- 222 Meter Race
- 333 Meter Race
- 500 Meter Race
- 777 Meter Race
- 1000 Meter Race
- 1500 Meter Race
- 3000 Meter Race
- 3000 Meter Unified Sports Relay

Associations/Federations/Supporters: International Skating Union (ISU)

Divisioning at Special Olympics: Athletes in every sport and event are grouped by age, gender, and ability – giving everyone a reasonable chance to win. At Special Olympics there are no World Records because each athlete, whether in the fastest or the slowest division is valued and recognized equally. In every division, all athletes receive an award, from gold, silver, and bronze medals, to fourth through eighth place ribbons. This idea of equal ability groupings is the foundation for competition in Special Olympics and can be witnessed at all events, whether it's athletics, aquatics, table tennis, football, skiing, or gymnastics. All athletes are given an equal chance to participate, perform, and be recognized for doing their best by their teammates, family, friends, and fans."