



# Cross Country Skiing

## Sport Rules

*Special Olympics*





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**1. GOVERNING RULES**

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Cross-Country Skiing shall govern all Special Olympics competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon International Ski Federation (FIS) rules for cross-country skiing found at <http://www.fis-ski.com/>. FIS or National Governing Body (NGB) rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Cross-Country Skiing or Article I. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Cross-Country Skiing shall apply.

Refer to [Sport Rules Article 1](#), 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.

**2. OFFICIAL EVENTS**

The range of events is intended to offer competition opportunities for athletes of all abilities. Programs may determine the events offered and, if required, guidelines for the management of those events. Coaches are responsible for providing training and event selection appropriate to each skier’s skill and interest.

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

- 10 Meter Ski Race - Classical Technique
- 25 Meter Ski Race – Classical Technique
- 50 Meter Cross-Country Skiing Race - Classical Technique
- 100 Meter Cross-Country Skiing Race - Classical Technique
- 500 Meter Cross-Country Skiing Race
- 1 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Race
- 2.5 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Race
- 5 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Race
- 7.5 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Race
- 10 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Race
- 4x1 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Relay
- 4x1 Kilometer Unified Cross-Country Skiing Relay

3.1 If there are not enough athletes to properly division separate Classical and Free Technique events of similar distances, the events shall be combined and follow Free Technique.

**3. FACILITIES**

**Trails**

3.1.3 Cross-country trails should be suitable in length and terrain to accommodate skiers of beginning, intermediate, and advanced skill levels. Suitable trails will be safe and will test the skills and physical fitness of each athlete.

The trail system should include a trail that can be used for the 1 through 10 kilometer events, and which does not have sections that cross themselves for at least 1 kilometer. Ideally, the long courses (2.5 through 10 k) would have no sections which cross themselves.

Trails should be clearly marked with red flags or other such identifying banners, and monitors should be positioned at trail junctions to direct athletes onto correct trails where confusion could occur.



Trails shall be packed and tracks set prior to the events. After each day of competition, the course must be freshly prepared.

If more than one set of tracks are used, they should be 1 to 1.2 meters apart, measured from the middle of one track to the middle of the other. Individual ski tracks should be 20 - 24 centimeters apart, measured from the middle of one track to the other. Tracks should be at least 2-5 centimeters deep.

3.1.4

Consideration should be given to the ability level of the field of skiers when determining whether or not a skating lane or a second set of tracks should be set. At least one set of tracks should be set and the other lane, which is mandatory, shall be set as either a skating lane or a second set of tracks.

3.1.5

#### 3.1.6 Warming Facilities

A warming facility shall be readily accessible from the trails. It should be large enough to accommodate the Special Olympics crowd in case of extreme weather conditions.

3.2

Furthermore, waxing adjustments are easier to make inside a warm area than outside in the cold. Therefore, room in the warming facility should be reserved for waxing.

3.2.1

A warm-up area and a wax testing area shall be near the start area.

#### 3.2.2 Ski Area

3.3

A ski area parking lot should allow for enough parking spaces for event volunteers, Special Olympics staff, coaches and athletes. Emergency vehicle access is mandatory.

3.3.1

## **4. COURSE AND VENUE SPECIFICATIONS**

### 4.1 Trail Maintenance Tools and Requirements

4.1.1

Race organizers should know that trail maintenance equipment is available and adequate for preparing trails for the events.

4.1.2

A snowmobile, Grooming Cat, shovels, rakes, and a track-setter are mandatory items to have on hand before and during the competition to establish and repair the course should that become necessary due to course traffic or inclement weather.

4.2

4.2.1

#### Course Layout Equipment

4.2.2

Markers, all of uniform size and bright color, shall be placed around the trail at intervals such that the next marker may be seen clearly when standing at the one before it.

4.2.3

4.2.4

Poles and fencing shall be used to block off trails which might lead the skiers off the race course.

4.2.5

The start and finish areas should be marked off by fencing in order to restrict the presence of non-competitors and non-officials in those areas.

4.3

4.3.1

Snow fences shall establish a lap lane, if necessary.

4.3.2

Banners shall mark the start and finish lines as well as designate the site as a Special Olympics event.

#### Timing Equipment

Electric timing with a back-up hand-held timing system (four stopwatches, two at start and two at finish) shall be used for timing the 1 through 10 Kilometer events.

The 100 Meter event should be timed with a number of stopwatches equal at least to the number of athletes per division plus two. A watch should be assigned to each lane while the two extras should serve as back-ups. Each athlete should be timed in all events. Result sheets should reflect this policy. In the event that the finish referee disagrees with the order of finish as determined by times, the finish referee's decision shall be final.



#### Public Address System

Race venues must make use of a good quality public address system to assist in the staging of events, broadcast of information and assistance of race operations, as well as general race commentary. Music should also be available.

#### Information Boards

- 4.4 An Official Bulletin Board with skiers' names and bib numbers, arranged in order of start, as well as other critical race information updates (such as race start times, air and snow temperatures at course start/finish areas, air and snow temperatures of the high and low points of course, etc.) should be set up near the finish area for the convenience of athletes, coaches, and spectators.
- 4.5
  - 4.5.1 The time and place of the awards should be announced prior to the award ceremony.

#### First Aid

- 4.6
  - 4.6.1 First aid materials and a toboggan or a snowmobile with toboggan for evacuation purposes shall be available at all times near the start/finish area or at the information center.
  - 4.6.2 Qualified medical personnel must be on site.

#### Ski Equipment Repair Tools

- 4.7
  - 4.7.1 Ski equipment repair tools (screwdrivers, pliers, scrapers, files, wax, and P-tex) should be available.
  - 4.7.2 Waxing benches shall be provided.

#### Race Staff identification

- 4.8
  - 4.8.1 Windbreakers or arm bands can be used to identify course officials such as timers, course monitors, start officials and escorts / police, finish officials and escorts/police, and competition rules committee members.

#### Communications Systems

- 4.9
  - 4.9.1 Radios are necessary for communications to and from the Chief of Competition, Race Secretary, medical area, start and finish areas, results tabulation area, and Race Headquarters.
- 4.10
  - 4.10.1 Timing officials at the start and finish areas and results tabulation personnel should have their own channel as well as access to a general information channel. Timing officials should have their own building with a clear view of the start and finish.

#### 4.10.2 Temperatures

Thermometers should be available to record air and snow temperatures at the start/finish areas as well as at the highest and lowest points of the course.  
Temperatures should be announced throughout the competition.

## 5. COMPETITION STAFF

Race personnel shall include:

- Chief of Competition
- Race Secretary
- Chief of Course
- Chief Controller
- Chief Timekeeper
- Chief of Information
- Chief of Medical and Rescue Services
- Chief of Race Equipment



Chief Steward  
Forerunners

**6. RULES OF COMPETITION**

General Rules and Modifications

Events ranging from the 500 Meter Race through the 10 Kilometer Race should be conducted utilizing the interval start format described in section 351.1 of the FIS rules for Cross-Country Skiing. That is, one or two racers should start on intervals every 30 seconds.

- 6.1 The start command for Cross-Country Skiing events ranging from the 500 meter race through the 10 kilometer race shall be as follows: "Racer...15 seconds...10 seconds...5,4,3,2,1, GO!". For individual events of distances 100 meters and less, there shall be no preliminary warning. The start command shall be "Racers... Ready...BANG (i.e. pistol shot)." The start command for relay events shall be the same as for individual events for distances 100 meters and less except that there will be a 10 second warning: "10 seconds.. Racers... Ready...BANG (i.e. pistol shot). When racers arrive at the relay point, they shall not interfere with the start of other racers.

- 6.1.3 It is recommended that events ranging from the 1 Kilometer Race through the 10 Kilometer Race be conducted on courses which include uphill, downhill, flat sections, and sections with turns. It is further recommended that when possible the courses should include one-third uphill, one-third downhill, and one-third flat sections. The degree of slope of the uphill and downhill sections should be dictated by ability levels of the athletes entered in the events. Thus, the courses for 1 Kilometer events should have less severe terrain than courses for 2.5 kilometer events, and courses for 2.5 kilometer events should have less severe terrain than courses for 5 kilometer events.

- 6.1.4 It is recommended that for the 500 meter event that the course should be mainly flat. Uphills and downhills can be included in the course, but their degree should not exceed 5%. In addition, any downhill sections should not include turns and should be followed by a straight and flat section of at least 20 meters.

- 6.1.5 It is recommended that events ranging from 500 meters through the 10 kilometers race should be conducted on courses which are of a loop configuration.

- 6.2 Events ranging from the 500 Meter Race through the 10 Kilometer Race should be conducted on courses which are of a loop configuration. In long distance events, multiple loop courses are permissible. The start and finish areas should be as nearly adjoined as possible.

6.3 Jury and Sport-Specific Rules Committee

- 6.3.1.1 Refer to Article I SECTION G concerning composition of jury or sport-specific rules committee.

Event Specific Rules and Modifications

50 and 100 Meter Cross-Country Skiing Race

The 100 Meter event should be conducted in accordance with FIS rules for starting relay races with the following modifications to FIS rule in ICR, Book II, Sections 372.1:

- 6.3.1.1.1. The start line is a straight line. There must be eight lanes with tracks set in the center of each lane. These lanes must be a minimum of two meters wide.
- 6.3.1.1.2. Sections 372.2, 371.8, and 378.1 do not apply to Special Olympics.



The course for the 100 Meter event should be as flat as possible. In no event should a course slope more than 5 percent. In the event that the course is set on slopes, the start of the race shall be such that the skiers will ski uphill to finish the race.

**Cross-Country Skiing Relay Races**

- 6.3.1.2 Divisions for cross-country skiing relay races shall be established by computing Team Qualifying Times. A Team Qualifying Time is computed by combining the times of the members of a team in time preliminaries from the individual event of similar distance to one "leg" of the relay event (e.g. Times from the 1 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Relay).
- 6.3.2.1 Team members not entered in the individual event of similar distance to one "leg" of the relay event must enter and compete the preliminary event for that individual event.
- 6.3.2.2 Race officials may start a relay division once every minute.
- 6.3.2.3 When a 4x1 Kilometer Cross-Country Skiing Relay race has more than eight teams, race organizers should consider splitting the field and conducting two separate races in order to reduce/control start area exchange zone and course congestion.
- 6.3.2.4
- 6.3.2.5 In the event a team does not execute a proper exchange, an exchange zone referee shall notify the skiers involved in the exchange immediately. It is then the skier's responsibility to decide whether or not to re-execute an exchange.

**6.3.3 25 Meter Ski Race**

**6.3.3.1 Equipment**

- 6.3.3.1.1 Start/finish poles
- 6.3.3.1.2 Food coloring/Paint
- 6.3.3.1.3 Stopwatch
- 6.3.3.1.4 Whistle

**6.3.3.2 Whistle**

**6.3.3.2.1**

**Set-up**

6.3.3.2.2 Mark the start and finish lines 25 meters apart. Set the tracks on flat terrain.

**6.3.3.2.3**

6.3.3.3 Set poles on Mark the ends of the lines with appropriate start and finish gates.

**6.3.3.3.1**

The vertical drop of the course may be one meter.

**6.3.3.3.2**

**6.3.3.3.3**

**Rules**

Start command is: "racers ready...Whistle" or, racers ready..."GO" Timer starts clock when the official indicates that the athletes boot has crossed the plane of the start line.

**6.3.3.4**

**6.3.3.4.1**

Athlete skis the 25-Meter course (with or without poles).

**6.3.3.4.2**

Athlete may not receive assistance from coaches, officials, volunteers, etc., at any time after he / she crosses the start line, or before he / she crosses the finish line.

**Score**

Athlete is timed from when one boot crosses the start line until one boot crosses the finish line.

Athlete's final score and placement is determined by the elapsed time of one run.



10 Meter Ski Race without poles

Equipment

- Start/finish poles
- Food coloring/Paint
- Stopwatch
- Whistle

6.3.4

6.3.4.1

Set-up

- 6.3.4.1.1
- 6.3.4.1.2
- 6.3.4.1.3
- 6.3.4.1.4

Mark the start and finish lines 10 meters apart. Set the tracks on flat terrain.

Set poles on the ends of the lines to create start and finish gates.

6.3.4.2

6.3.4.2.1

Rules

Start command is: "racers ready...Whistle" or, racers ready... "GO" Timer starts clock when the official indicates that the athletes boot has crossed the plane of the start line.

6.3.4.3

6.3.4.3.1

Athlete skis the 10-meter course (without poles).

6.3.4.3.2

6.3.4.3.3

Athlete may not receive assistance from coaches, officials, volunteers, etc., at any time after he / she crosses the start line, or before he / she crosses the finish line.

6.3.4.4

Score

6.3.4.4.1

Athlete is timed from when one boot crosses the start line until one boot crosses the finish line.

6.3.4.4.2

Athlete's final score and placement is determined by the elapsed time of one run.

7.1 **UNIFIED SPORTS®**

7.1.1

7.1.2 Unified Relays

A relay team consists of two Special Olympics Athletes and two Unified Sports Partners. It is required that athletes and Unified partners are of similar age, and it is preferred that athletes and Unified partners are of similar ability. For more information on similar age and ability please see Sport Rules Article 1 Section 14.1.2

8.1

8.1.1

8. **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

8.1.3

A skier may be disqualified by the jury if he/she:

8.1.4

Does not follow the marked course or does not pass all the control check points or takes a short cut.

8.1.5

8.1.6

Receives unauthorized assistance.

Fails to give way to an overtaking skier when so requested or prevents another racer from passing.

Violates technique ruling regarding skating in classical races.

Does not finish with skis on his/her feet.

Falls or leaves the track: that individual has two minutes to resume racing, the skier must also advance forward a minimum of 20 meters within that time. Failing to resume advancement on the track within two minutes, and/or receiving unauthorized assistance. Skier may leave the track to complete or exchange equipment as allowed.





Procedures

FIS Rules governing protests will be in force for Special Olympics Competitions.

8.2

8.2.1