



1. GOVERNING RULES

- 1.1. The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Competitive Cheer shall govern all Special Olympics competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon International Cheer Union (ICU) rules for Special Abilities cheerleading found at www.cheerunion.org. ICU rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Competitive Cheer or Article I. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Competitive Cheer and SOI Article 1 shall apply.
- 1.2. Refer to SOI [Article 1](http://media.specialolympics.org/resources/sports-essentials/general/Sports-Rules-Article-1.pdf), <http://media.specialolympics.org/resources/sports-essentials/general/Sports-Rules-Article-1.pdf>, 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®.
- 1.3. SOI will follow the safety rules, as well as skill levels defined as Introductory, Beginner, Novice and Intermediate, as set forth by ICU. The ICU Rules and regulations have already instated modifications specifically for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics has created additional provisions to compliment the ICU's Special Abilities Rules. Coaches are responsible for following the safety rules and following the skills progression for athletes and Unified partners.

2. OFFICIAL EVENTS

- 2.1. Competitive Cheer – 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 athlete's skill and interest. The following is a list of official events available in Special Olympics.
 - 2.1.1. Individual Skills Competition
 - 2.1.2. Team Competition
 - 2.1.3. Unified Sports Team Competition
- 2.2 Non-Competitive Cheer – A Special Olympics Program may choose to offer a non-competitive cheer option which provides the opportunity for cheering and performing at Special Olympics competitions, special events and community-based events such as walks, races, high school games, etc. Providing non-competitive cheer opportunities can help generate awareness and contribute to the growth of a Competitive Cheer program.

3. INDIVIDUAL SKILLS COMPETITION

- 3.1. The purpose of the individual skills competition is to allow athletes to train and compete in basic cheerleading skills at the Introductory, Beginner, Novice, or Intermediate category. The skills assessed are motions, crowd leading, and incorporations.
- 3.2. Motion
- 3.3. Crowd Leading: Game Day – Sideline
 - 3.3.1. Athlete performs a situational and repetitive chant with motions and simple skills to encourage the crowd.
- 3.4. Incorporation
 - 3.4.1. Use of poms, signs, or megaphones.
 - 3.4.2. Use of skills as jumps, tumbling, motions, and dance.

4. TEAM COMPETITION

- 4.1. The purpose of cheerleading is to entertain and motivate a crowd to cheer for a team. These routines incorporate cheer, dance, stunts, and/or tumbling in a routine.
- 4.2. Team Size: Team roster size can be adjusted based on individual program preferences. SOI recommended team sizes are as follows:
 - 4.2.1. Small: minimum of 4 and maximum of 15
 - 4.2.2. Large: minimum of 16 and maximum of 24
- 4.3. Introductory (Pre-Level 0 | Non-Build & Non-Tumble)
 - 4.3.1. Routine
 - 4.3.2. Game Day
 - 4.3.2.1. Sideline
 - 4.3.2.2. Time Out
 - 4.3.2.3. Fight Song

- 4.3.2.4. Cheer
- 4.3.2.5. Band Chant
- 4.4. Beginner (Level 0)
 - 4.4.1. Routine
 - 4.4.2. Game Day
 - 4.4.2.1. Sideline
 - 4.4.2.2. Time Out
 - 4.4.2.3. Fight Song
 - 4.4.2.4. Cheer
 - 4.4.2.5. Band Chant
- 4.5. Novice (Level 1)
 - 4.5.1. Routine
 - 4.5.2. Game Day
 - 4.5.2.1. Sideline
 - 4.5.2.2. Time Out
 - 4.5.2.3. Fight Song
 - 4.5.2.4. Cheer
 - 4.5.2.5. Band Chant
- 4.6. Intermediate (Level 2)
 - 4.6.1. Routine
 - 4.6.2. Game Day
 - 4.6.2.1. Sideline
 - 4.6.2.2. Time Out
 - 4.6.2.3. Fight Song
 - 4.6.2.4. Cheer
 - 4.6.2.5. Band Chant

5. UNIFIED SPORTS TEAM COMPETITION

- 5.1. Team competing in this category should follow the Unified Sports Competitive Model. The ratio of athletes to Unified partners must be 1:1. In the event of an odd-numbered team, there must be one less Unified partner than total number of athletes. Refer to Section 14 of Article 1 for additional clarification of Unified Sports.
- 5.2. Team Size: Team roster size can be adjusted based on individual program preferences. SOI recommended team sizes are as follows:
 - 5.2.1. Small: minimum of 4 and maximum of 15
 - 5.2.2. Large: minimum of 16 and maximum of 24
- 5.3. Special Olympics Unified partners should not perform any skills above the level of the Special Olympics athletes on the team.
- 5.4. Introductory (Pre-Level 0 | Non-Build & Non-Tumble)
 - 5.4.1. Routine
 - 5.4.2. Game Day
 - 5.4.2.1. Sideline
 - 5.4.2.2. Time Out
 - 5.4.2.3. Fight Song
 - 5.4.2.4. Cheer
 - 5.4.2.5. Chant
- 5.5. Beginner (Level 0)
 - 5.5.1. Routine
 - 5.5.2. Game Day
 - 5.5.2.1. Sideline
 - 5.5.2.2. Time Out
 - 5.5.2.3. Fight Song
 - 5.5.2.4. Cheer
 - 5.5.2.5. Band Chant
- 5.6. Novice (Level 1)
 - 5.6.1. Routine
 - 5.6.2. Game Day
 - 5.6.2.1. Sideline

- 5.6.2.2. Time Out
- 5.6.2.3. Fight Song
- 5.6.2.4. Cheer
- 5.6.2.5. Band Chant

5.7. Intermediate (Level 2)

- 5.7.1. Routine
- 5.7.2. Game Day
 - 5.7.2.1. Sideline
 - 5.7.2.2. Time Out
 - 5.7.2.3. Fight Song
 - 5.7.2.4. Cheer
 - 5.7.2.5. Band Chant

Appendices:

- Appendix A: ICU Special Abilities Rules & Regulations
- Appendix B: ICU Division, Rules and Regulations
- Appendix C: Special Olympics Article 1 Sports Rules
- Appendix D: Competitive Cheer Scoresheets
- Appendix E: Competitive Cheer Routine Skills Reference Sheet
- Appendix F: Competitive Cheer Skills Reference Sheet
- Appendix G: Game Day Reference Sheet