



Unified Football Observers One Sheet

Unified Sports - MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT

Special Olympics Unified Sports combines people with and without intellectual disabilities on sports teams for training and competition. People with intellectual disabilities are classified as Special Olympics Athletes, and people without intellectual disabilities are classified as Unified Partners. At the World Games level, all Unified Sports are meant to be competitive.

Unified Sports teams need to emphasize the principle of meaningful involvement which ensures every member is presented with opportunities to contribute to their team's performance. Teams should be composed of players who are of similar age and ability levels. This decreases the potential for domination by higher ability teammates. A 2015 World Games Unified Competition Protocol will identify the steps that will be taken to minimize the risk of having poor quality Unified Sports competition at the 2015 World Games.

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Sport: 5,7,11-a-side **Unified Football/ Soccer**

How it works: Each Unified Football team should not consist of more unified partners than athletes on a team or on the field. Each team must have a minimum of three players for 5-a-side, five players for 7-a-side, and seven players for 11-a-side on the field at all times, including the start of a match. If a team cannot comply with the minimum roster size at the start of the game, the team must forfeit.

Role of observers: Unified Sports observers are in place to assist the Competition Management Staff and Sport Technical Delegate. Their role is to be an objective observer of the Unified Sports teams, with an emphasis on watching and noting patterns of meaningful involvement. The observers should never interfere with the competition or confront players, coaches or officials. All findings should be reported to Competition Management Staff.

Examples of when Meaningful Involvement NOT being followed:

1. One or more teammates consistently displays significantly higher ability levels than his/her teammate(s) by scoring virtually for their team, by not utilizing, ignoring or bypassing teammates, etc
2. The teammates do not interact with each other nor communicate with each other on or off the field
3. One or more players consistently serve in the role of "coach" instead of the proper role of being a teammate. They do not allow their teammates to make their own decisions or contribute on their own; rather they tell them what to do.

What to do if you see any of the above:

- Do not approach the players, coaches or officials
- Continue to observe and determine if this is a pattern of behavior, or an isolated occurrence
- Document what you observe in the notes section
- If you think an unfavorable pattern of behavior is identified, contact the Technical Delegate



Important Notes:

- ✓ Player dominance and meaningful involvement may include or exclude both athletes and partners.

Sport: Unified Football

Player Name(s)	
Country (if known)	
Shirt Color	
Comments	

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Country (if known)	
Shirt Color	
Comments	

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