

# UNIFIED SPORTS® COACHES HANDBOOK

CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE  
SPECIAL OLYMPICS CONNECTICUT



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# What to Do to Get Your Unified Team Up and Running

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Get Faculty on Board.
  - a. principal \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. special education department \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Athletic Department \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Choose Coach and Assistant Coach or Aid.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Determine practice time and place via. Athletic Department.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Identify Athletes with Special Education Department.  
(Eligibility Criteria, age etc.).
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Hold Organizational meeting with parents, athletes and coaches.  
(Discuss Unified Sports Guidelines.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Have the coach, AD, or assistant coach attend a Coaches Training clinic.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Get partners on Board. (National Honor Society, Student Counsel,  
Best Buddies etc.).
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Order T- Shirts, Uniforms. (Athletes even numbers / Partners odd numbers)
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Order Banner (Unified Sports with name of school on it).
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Go on line to [www.casciac.org](http://www.casciac.org) and fill out intent to enter.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Secure transportation to tournament (Bus or Parent drivers).
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Submit roster on line.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Have a blast at a tournament!
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Call us with any questions 1-203-250-1111.



The following documents are the rules and regulations of the Unified Sports® School Based program in Connecticut.

These rules reflect and adhere to the guidelines set forth by the (CIAC) Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference and (SOCT) Special Olympics Connecticut. They are established with the best interest of our school based athletics and partners.

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# **Divisioning Criteria with Appropriate level accommodations Unified Sports® School Based Soccer Rules**

revised 12/10

## **DIVISION 5 -- 3 on 3 play / skills opportunity**

- \* No team concept
- \* Special athletes need a one-on-one aide at all times
- \* No understanding of game play
- \* Manual wheelchair allowed
- \* All rules are modified for success
- \* Smaller goal used
- \* At least one partner participates at all times, but only to encourage the special athlete
- \* No score is kept
- \* Challenge medals issued
- \* We will ask for total number of wheelchair entries on our entry forms

## **DIVISION 4 -- MENTOR (formerly Training Level)**

- \* No team concept
- \* All players -- limited ability to dribble
- \* All players -- low understanding of rules
- \* No score is kept.

If only one real good player dominates the game, you could still possibly be a Division 4 team.

## **DIVISION 3**

- \* Slightly better ability to dribble, but will see one dominant foot used.
- \* Limited concept of rules
- \* Pass ball only to get rid of ball
- \* One or maybe two players stand or score all goals
- \* Low understanding of penalties
- \* Limited team concept

## **DIVISION 2**

- \* Basic understanding of rules
- \* Ability to dribble and pass on the run
- \* On starting team, typically 2-4 good players
- \* Most players know where to go and where to be
- \* Understand concept of teamwork
- \* Understand side-line throw-in rule

## **DIVISION 1**

- \* Good understanding of rules -- at least top 7 players
- \* Better athletes -- physical ability
- \* Can play by high school rules

IN ORDER TO PROPERLY DIVISION YOUR TEAM, USE THE ABOVE CRITERIA KEEPING YOUR FIVE BEST PLAYERS IN MIND.

Utilizing the individual skills assessment will assist you in determining the level of play for each athlete. However, keep in mind soccer is a team sport and teams will be divisioned based on total team composition.

- \* A. Coaches will have choice of placing their wheelchair at whichever level (5-4-3) they feel is appropriate.
- \* B. Wheelchairs will not be allowed in the goal area for safety reasons at levels 4 or 3.

## **Unified Sports® School Based Soccer Rules**

### ***(5-A-SIDE)***

1. A team roster should have a maximum of ten (10) players, at least 50% of whom shall be intellectually disabled students. A team may consist of both male and female athletes. Coaches may not involve varsity or junior varsity soccer players on a Unified Sports team.
2. Three (3) intellectually disabled students and two (2) non-disabled students must be on the field at any given time. Unlimited substitutions can be made, as long as the ratio of Special Athletes and Special Partners remains unchanged.
3. A yellow card will be given to any athlete who is judged with domination of the game. A red card will be given to the athlete upon his/her second offense.
4. Athletes must be appropriately attired in numbered uniforms. Sneakers or rubber cleats must be worn. Special athletes must wear even numbers, partners must wear odd numbers. No jeans, hats or jewelry may be worn.
5. High school rules will be followed with the following modifications:
  - A. Duration of Games -- The length of the games will be shortened in accordance with the physical condition / ability level of the athletes and the number of teams competing. (2 x 10 minute halves to 2 x 8 minute halves)
  - B. Field of Play -- The size of the field will be modified with the possible dimensions of, at maximum, 50mx 35m, and, at minimum 40m x 30m. A smaller field may be used for lower ability teams.
  - C. Tie-Breaker -- A tie-breaker in Level 3 and 4 will have five (5) goal kicks per team, by special athletes only. No goalie would be used (to relieve pressure on that person. Distances would be adjusted by skill level - level 4 would be from 15 feet, level 2 from 21 feet, etc. In Level 1 and 2, five (5) goal kicks per team. Goal kicks will be performed by Athletes with an athlete in goal from the opponents' team.

## Unified Sports ® School Based Soccer Tournaments Rules For Lower Divisions

These modifications of the official sport rules are made for teams, who because of a disparity in skill level between special athletes and special partners, are placed in the non-competitive division (level 4 and 5).

### All Unified Sports

No score will be kept in level 4 or level 5 game.

The following modifications were approved because of safety:

Wheelchair athletes may compete in level 3, 4 or 5. Wheelchair and partner will count as one person. No wheelchair athlete will be allowed as goalkeeper. Chairs may be modified to allow inclusion of athlete for dribbling. No motorized chairs may be used. Ball caught under a wheelchair will be a side out for team who had possession

### Soccer

**Level 4 --** Special athletes are the only players to score, block shots on goal, and/or steal the ball from opponents. Special partners are to supplement the playing action and keep the game moving. ***Goalkeeper MUST be a special athlete.*** He/she is not allowed to kick the ball the length of the field. Once the goalkeeper picks up the ball, it must be thrown, but no further than the halfway line. Ball over end-line must be restarted with a throw by the goalie. All balls over the sideline are restarted with a kick-in or thrown in.

**Level 5 --** Will allow one-on-one aides, as needed. There will be no goalie in level 5.

# **Divisioning Criteria with Appropriate level accommodations Unified Sports® School Based Basketball Rules**

Revised 12-10

## **DIVISION 5 -- 3-on-3 play / skills opportunity**

- \* Special athletes need a one-on-one aide at all times
- \* No understanding of game play
- \* Manual wheelchair allowed
- \* **All rules are modified for success**
- \* Smaller baskets are used
- \* At least one partner participates at all times, but only to encourage the special athlete
- \* No score is kept
- \* Challenge medals issued
- \* Coaches will have a choice of placing wheelchair athletes at whichever level (5-4-3) that they feel is appropriate
- \* Modification with basket and ball as needed

## **DIVISION 4**

- \* All players -- limited ability to dribble
- \* All players -- low understanding of rules
- \* Special athletes are the only players to score, steal the ball, block shots, or aggressively rebound the ball.
- \* No score is kept.
- \* Basket is regulation height with modifications as needed.
- \* Manual wheelchair allowed - athlete must have use of hands. Wheelchair will not be allowed in the "key" area for safety reasons
- \* Challenge medals issued
- \* A 10 second count will be used for all athletes and partners to avoid tying up the ball.

## **DIVISION 3**

- \* Slightly better ability to dribble, but will see shuffles, double dribbles, etc.
- \* Limited concept of rules
- \* Only special athletes can score
- \* Partners may rebound and steal the ball only from other partners
- \* Score is kept
- \* Various medals awarded
- \* Wheelchairs will not be allowed in the "key" area for safety reasons.
- \* A 10 second count will be used by all athletes and partners to avoid tying up the ball.

## **DIVISION 2**

- \* Basic understanding of the rules
- \* Ability to dribble
- \* On starting team, typically 2-4 good players
- \* Most players know where to go and where to be
- \* Understand concept of 3 second lane violation
- \* Both partners and athletes can score
- \* 50% rule - partners may not score more than 50% of the points
- \* Various medals awarded
- \* A 10 second count will be used by all athletes and partners to avoid tying up the ball

## **DIVISION 1**

- \* Good understanding of rules -- at least top 5 players
- \* Better athletes -- physical ability
- \* Can play by high school rules
- \* Both partners and athletes can score
- \* 50% rule - partners may not score more than 50% of the points
- \* Various medals awarded

## **Unified Sports® School Based Basketball Rules**

**ROSTER:** Maximum of 12 per team. Fifty percent of the team must be non-disabled. The team may have males and females. No one who has ever played varsity or junior varsity basketball may participate as a partner.

**PLAYERS ON COURT:** There will be two (2) partners and three (3) intellectually disabled players on the court at all times, except in Level 5, where there will be two (2) special athletes and one partner, plus any one-on-one aides as needed. Partners must be players without disabilities.

**UNIFORMS:** Teams must wear appropriate attire. All uniforms must be the same. Shirts must be numbered. Sneakers must be worn. No sponsor names may appear on uniform. Only digits 1-5 should be used with highest number being 55. Athletes must wear even numbered shirts. Partners must wear odd numbered shirts.

**RULES:** High School rules will be followed, with appropriate accommodations

**THE GAME:** Games will be 20 minutes running time for levels 1, 2, 3, & 4. Middle schools will play 16 minute games. The clock will stop for the last minute of each game for all dead ball situations.

Level 5 will play 10 minute running time games.

Each team is entitled to one time-out per game and one additional during overtime. Overtime periods will be two minutes. In overtime the clock will stop in dead ball situations.

**No back court pressure will be allowed in any level.** Substitutes can be made whenever deemed appropriate. No dunking is allowed at any level.

Each player will be allowed five (5) fouls per game.

Credit will be given for 3-point shots at the official's discretion as many courts are not properly marked.

**FOULS WILL BE CALLED IN ALL DIVISIONS:** Referees shall have the power to make all decisions on any point not specifically covered in the rules. Coaches are asked to give partners odd-numbered uniforms and special athlete's even-numbered uniforms to assist the referees with calling partner domination.

Coaches are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules of the game, not only the modified rules listed here. The National Federation of State High School Associations provides the required rule book.

**SCRIMMAGE/PRACTICE:** Each team should schedule or host a scrimmage or practice game prior to tournament entry.

**MEDICAL:** Each Special Olympic athlete is required to have a medical filled out by a certified physician in order to participate. Also, each special partner and athlete must fill out a Unified Sports partner release form in order to participate. This is in accordance with Special Olympics general rules.



# **Divisioning Criteria with Appropriate level accommodations**

## **Unified Sports® School Based Volleyball Rules**

Revised 12-10

### **DIVISION 1**

- \* Good understanding of rules -- at least top six (6) players
- \* Better athletes -- physical ability
- \* Can play by High School rules
- \* Overhead serving and spiking allowed
- \* Various medals awarded

### **DIVISION 2**

- \* Basic understanding of rules
- \* Ability to set
- \* On starting team, typically 2-4 good players
- \* Basic understanding of court presence
- \* Understand concept of serve
- \* Overhead serving and spiking allowed
- \* Various medals awarded

### **DIVISION 3**

- \* Lower athletic ability
- \* Limited concept of rules
- \* Low ability to serve
- \* 2 or maybe 3 players bump all balls
- \* Low understanding of violations
- \* No spiking or overhead serving allowed
- \* Various medals awarded
- \* Two (2) service tries allowed

Limited Team Concept

### **DIVISION 4**

- \* All players -- limited ability to bump and serve
- \* All players -- low understanding of rules
- \* No scoring for place
- \* Two service tries allowed
- \* No overhead serving or spiking
- \* Wheelchair division
- \* Challenge medals awarded to all

## Unified Sports® School Based Volleyball Rules

**ROSTER:** Maximum of twelve (12) per team. Fifty percent (50%) of the team should be non-disabled. The team may have males and females. No student who ever played on the school's varsity or junior varsity volleyball team can participate.

**PLAYERS ON COURT:** There will be three (3) non-disabled and three (3) intellectually disabled players on the court at all times.

**UNIFORMS:** Team must wear appropriate attire. All uniforms must be the same. Shirts must be numbered. Sneakers must be worn. Special athletes must wear even numbers, partners must wear odd numbers.

**RULES:** High School rules will be followed.

### **MODIFICATIONS:**

**High School:** The court will be regulation size (18m x 9m) with a net of regulation height (2.24m) (7' 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "). A slightly lighter ball may be used for Level 4 teams. Wheelchair athletes must compete in Level 4. Wheelchair and partner will count as one person. No score will be kept in Level 4.

For lower ability teams, and only if necessary, the serve line may be moved closer to the net, but no closer than 4.5m (14' 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ "). The serve line may also be moved toward the middle of the court, but no more than three (3) meters (9' 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ") from the sideline. A second serve will be allowed in Levels 3 and 4 if the first serve is unsuccessful.

**Middle School:** The serve line may be moved closer to the net, but no closer than 4.5m (14' 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ "). The serve line may also be moved toward the middle of the court, but no more than 3 meters (9' 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ") from the sidelines.

The height of the net shall be 2.24m (7'4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "). Middle school divisions will use an 81cm (32") circumference ball that weighs 8 ounces.

Wheelchair athletes must compete in Level 4. Wheelchair and partner will count as one person. No score will be kept in mentor level.

### **High & Middle School:**

Multiple substitutions will be allowed as follows:

- A. Three (3) entries per position.
- B. Maximum twelve (12) substitutions per game.

A three (3) point serving rule will be used. Once the player has scored three (3) points, there will be an automatic side out (rotation) rule.

**Due to the nature of the game, it is difficult to be specific as to who can hit the ball and when. It must be remembered that Unified Sports Volleyball, especially at levels 3 & 4, must not be dominated by special partners. They are there to compliment the athlete and to keep the game moving as smoothly as possible. Special partners cannot spike the ball, overhead serve, or hit it three consecutive times during each volley. If the ball is hit three times on one side, at least one of those hits must be by a special athlete. The special partner must set the ball to a special athlete whenever possible except in the case of a third hit.**

*Different types of balls may be used for skill acquisition and at practice games. A regulation volleyball must be used at all tournaments in levels 1 and 2. A training ball may be used at levels 3 and 4 upon agreement of the coaches. If the server in level 3 or 4 misses his/her first serve, a second serve will be allowed. All scoring will be rally scoring to 25 points. A minimum of three (3) games will be played.*

## Unified Sports® School Based Track & Field

### Divisioning Criteria: Track & Field with appropriate level accommodations

#### DIVISIONING:

Divisioning will be done by qualifying times and distances.

**Skill events** -- designed for athletes of limited ability -- to propel or move on their own -- for athletes that need to be assisted are non-scoring events. Non-scoring events include the tennis ball throw and the 2 x 25m relay. Only limited ability athletes should be registered for non-scoring events.

**Unified track & field events** -- athletes must be able to throw, jump, and run/walk on their own. Wheelchair athletes must be able to propel their own wheelchair.

All events will be scored, except the 2 x 25 meters, and the tennis ball throw.

For running events, athletes will be grouped based on the following -- seed time, wheelchair/walker or running/walking.

Wheelchair and walkers could be in the same heat.

#### EVENTS:

##### Scoring events -- Running

2 x 50 meters  
2 x 50 wheelchair  
4 x 100 meters  
4 x 100 wheelchair  
4 x 200 meters  
4 x 400 meters

##### Field event: Jumping

2 x Standing long jump  
2 x Running long jump

##### Field event: Throwing

2 x turbo javelin - 300 gm javelin  
2 x shot put -- 6 lb. for high school  
4 lb. for middle schools

##### Non-scoring events

2 x 25 meters  
Tennis ball throw

#### ENTRIES:

**Entering Athletes** -- Entries will be entered online by listing event, school, names of all athletes in relay, then score.

**How to enter times or distance** -- List time in minutes, seconds and tenths. Example 4 x 100 relay may be 1:20.9. All times should be rounded up to tenths. Running events will be the total time of the relay team scores. This score is a total of each athlete/partner combination which makes up the relay.

Distances for throwing and jumping events will be written in feet and inches -- round to nearest inch. Example: A total score of 10 feet, 2 inches will be written as 10-2.

**ROSTER** -- Only athletes who are listed on the Intent-to-enter form may compete on the day of the meet. To equalize the opportunity for scoring, maximum of twenty (20) per team. Schools entering more than twenty (20) must separate into squads (example - red and blue). Team must be composed of both special

athletes and partners. No student who ever played on the school's varsity or junior varsity track team can participate as a partner. Special Olympic athletes who participated on a middle or high school team may compete. Teams may consist of both males and females.

**UNIFORMS** – Team must wear track attire (no jeans or cut-offs). All uniforms must be the same. Appropriate footwear should be worn, sneakers, running shoes, throwing shoes as dictated by the surface at the event venue. Numbered bibs will be used for staging athletes for events.

**POINTS OF**

**EMPHASIS** – Only athletes listed on the seed card may compete in that relay.

No jewelry, hats, headgear. Contestants shall not wear jewelry with the exception of religious/medical medals. If such medals are worn, they shall be taped to the body.

**RULES**

**MODIFICATIONS** – High school track and field rules will be followed.

All entries must be submitted in advance on line.

Athlete may compete in a maximum of three (3) events with no more than two entries in either track (running) or field (throwing or jumping). All seedings will be computerized in advance of the meet to maximize scoring opportunities and the fairness to the athletes and teams..

Events that will be offered are:

Opening Ceremonies -- 3:15 p.m.

- \* Throwing Equipment -- High school athletes will use a 6 lb. Shot, middle school a 4lb. Shot. All athletes will use a 300g turbo javelin. Tennis ball will be used for tennis ball throw.
- \* All relays will consist of both special athletes and partners. In a two person relay, the order will be partner then special athlete. In a four person relay, the order will be partner -- special athlete -- partner -- special athlete.
- \* Throwing and jumping event will be done as two person relays. The distance for each athlete will be added together to create a relay score.
- \* Scoring -- Skill events designed for athletes of limited ability -- (to propel or move on their own) -- for athletes that need to be assisted are non-scoring events. These events include tennis ball throw and 2 x 25m relay. All other events will be scored.

All events will be relay events. Total time or distance of the relay is what will count toward scoring. All competitors must complete his/her leg in order to score. All events and divisions will be scored except the 2 x 25m relay and the tennis ball throw.

Scoring by division -- each heat is a separate division as determined by your times/distances submitted to CAS/CIAC Unified Sports by the specific deadline. If you fail to enter the times/distances by the deadline date, you/your school team/squad cannot participate. First place in each heat -- 5 points, second place in each heat -- 3 points, third place in each heat -- 1 point.

- \* Team Awards -- Team with highest total points is the meet champion, second highest the runner-up. All participants will receive a medal for sportsmanship and participation.
- \* Only athletes listed on the seed card may compete in a relay. (Note: same in high school)
- \* Definition of special athlete and partner

Special athlete -- A person is eligible to participate in Unified Sports as a special athlete, provided that he/she:

- a. Is considered to have intellectual disabilities \* as determined by his/her locality.
- b. Has closely related developmental disabilities \*\* such as someone who has functional limitations, both in general learning and in adaptive skills such as recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care.

Note: People with functional limitations based solely on a physical, behavioral, emotional, specific learning disability, or sensory disability are not eligible.

\* Any person who is identified as having intellectual disabilities by an agency or a professional in any given local area is considered eligible for Special Olympics. Other terms that may be used synonymously with intellectual disabilities include: cognitive disabilities, and mental handicaps.

\*\* When the term "intellectual disabilities" or other similar descriptor is not used to identify the person in a local area, eligibility should be determined by whether or not the person has functional limitations in both general learning and adaptive skills. "Development disability" is the term most often used to describe persons with both limitations. Other terms that may be used synonymously with development disabilities are developmental handicap, developmentally delayed, or severe disabilities.

Partner -- Special Olympics Unified Sports is a program that combines approximately equal numbers of Special Olympics athletes and athletes without intellectual disabilities (partners) on sports teams for training and competition. Age and ability matching of athletes and partners is specifically defined on a sport-by-sport basis.

Though the above definition allows for partners with disabilities other than intellectual disabilities, Unified Sports was developed to provide Special Olympics athletes with the choice of a sports program that brings about meaningful inclusion with their non-disabled peers.

Effective immediately, SOCT will adopt this Partner Eligibility Statement and not allow unified teams comprised solely of persons with disabilities. This statement will apply for both the Special Olympics Connecticut program and Unified program run through CAS-CIAC.

\* Practice -- Each team must have at least eight (8) practices before competition. Practice meets may be held prior to the championship. If no practice meets are held prior to the championships a team may run an intersquad meet or time trials to obtain scores for entry into the championship. Relays cannot be entered into the championship without a score.

**SUPERVISION** -- An athlete may not compete in the tournament unless accompanied by his/her coach or a properly certified representative of the school designated by the principal in writing. Coaches are expected to provide proper supervision for their athletes and spectators during all meets.

Contestants, not actual competing, must remain in assigned areas. Jumpers and throwers may not practice or compete without adult supervision present. Implements are to be secured immediately following the completion of the event and any athlete throwing the implement thereafter will be disqualified from the event.

## Order of Events

After the Opening Ceremonies, the **Field Events** will take place **first** on a rotation basis as determined by school/team rosters for each Field Event:

Station I **2 X Standing Long Jump** – upon completion will rotate to Station I  
Station II **2 X Running Long Jump** – upon completion will rotate to Station III  
Station III **2 X Javelin Throw** – upon completion will rotate to Station IV  
Station IV **2 X Shot Put** – upon completion will rotate to Station I

Non scoring Tennis Ball Throw will commence during the first Station I activity. Coaches will be responsible to be present or send a responsible person to accompany the Special Athlete and Special Partner to the Tennis Ball Throw.

Coaches, you will be at each station with your team/squad and the host school running that station will have a school/squad roster for that specific event. They will call out the two person teams, Special Partner/Special Athlete to compete. Your team/squad may not all participate in that venue but you will remain there until all that are on the specific Station seedings compete.

After the Field Events are all through, the Track events will take place next in the following order:

Non-scoring 2 X 25 meter relay  
4 X 200 meter relay  
2 X 50 meter relay  
4 X 100 meter relay  
4 X 400 meter relay