

Level 2 Volleyball

The Level 2 Volleyball training is designed for Special Olympics Minnesota coaches who would like to become a Level 2 Volleyball coach and/or for volunteers who would like information about Special Olympics Minnesota volleyball. This training counts as Level 2 certification and/or recertification for three years from the date this training is completed.

This training will cover Special Olympics Minnesota's volleyball events, rules, competitions, the divisioning process, registration and volleyball resources.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Coaching Special Olympics Athletes

Coaching Special Olympics Athletes prepares Special Olympics coaches to use their sport-specific knowledge in coaching athletes with intellectual disabilities. This course meets the Special Olympics standards and competencies for coach certification. For veteran Special Olympics coaches, this course serves as a reminder of the essentials sometimes forgotten after years of coaching. For new Special Olympics coaches, this course will help prepare you for your first role in coaching Special Olympics athletes.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Coaching Special Olympics Athletes

*The better the coach ...
the better the experiences ...
the better the athlete!*



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Course Overview

This course will cover specific topics related to:

1 - The Athlete

3 - Preparing for & Coaching During Competition



2 - Teaching & Training

4 - Managing the Program



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - The Athlete

Important Considerations concerning Special Olympics Athletes

Psychological Issues
(*Learning*)

Medical
Issues



Social
Issues

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Psychological Considerations

Motivation – helping athletes maintain interest

- May have shorter attention span; harder to keep independently “on task”.
- May be motivated more by short-term rather than long-term goals.
- May learn better with more frequent positive reinforcement.

Perception – helping athletes understand the sport in which they are participating

- May have impairments in sight or hearing.
- May have difficulty focusing attention on the appropriate object or task.



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Psychological Considerations

Comprehension – helping athletes remember and perform the skill they have learned (*Understanding*)

- May find it difficult to understand purely verbal explanations of new skills. Often find it easier to learn through visual demonstrations and physical prompts.
- May have difficulty in understanding complex, multi-part actions or explanations.
- Often take a longer time between learning one piece of information and the next (learning plateau)
- Less able to generalize skills learned in one situation to a different situation.

Memory

- May need frequent repetition and reminders in order to remember a concept or skill



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Psychological Challenges

Each psychological item has it's challenge and action:

Psychological Item	Challenge	Action
Perception	Easily distracted by noise	Control surroundings
Motivation	History of neglect & negative reinforcement, feeling of failure	Focus on positive, appropriate reinforcement, catch the athlete doing well
Memory	Difficulty applying skills in different environments	Practice in different settings
Comprehension	Difficulty learning through verbal explanation only	Add demonstrations and/or physical manipulation

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Down Syndrome

- Approximately 10% of individuals with Down Syndrome have a condition called atlanto-axial instability, which is a mal-alignment of the cervical vertebrae C-1 and C-2 in the neck. This condition may cause possible injury if they participate in activities that hyper-extend or radically flex the neck or upper spine.
- Prohibited sports – equestrian, gymnastics, diving, pentathlon, butterfly and dive starts in aquatics, high jump, alpine/snowboarding, squat lift and soccer.

Medications

- Understand the physical side effects of an athlete's medication
- Very important to know the medications athletes are taking



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Seizures

- Incidence tends to be higher with Special Olympics athletes
- Athlete safety to minimize the adverse effects of a seizure



Physical Disabilities

- Some athletes also have physical disabilities which may affect the sports they can participate in or the methods of teaching a coach must use. Special Olympics has events for individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers or other assistance.
- Muscle strength may be needed for particular sports and some athletes may not have the strength for those sports. This is often due to lack of use rather than a permanent disability.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Autism

- 20% of athletes exhibit one or more of the autism spectrum disorders
- Over arousal



Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

- These athletes consistently function better on performance tasks compared with verbal tasks. The more concrete the task, the better the performance.
- Tend to have poor verbal comprehension skills, despite being comfortable and chatty around people. These athletes will also tend to have attention and memory deficits and often display poor judgment in distinguishing right from wrong.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 – Medical Consideration for each Action

Action	See the challenge that correlates with the appropriate action.
1 Down Syndrome	Ensure the athlete is screened for atlanto-axial instability
2 Seizures	Be prepared to protect the athlete and minimize adverse affects
3 Autism spectrum disorders	Control and/or block self-stimulatory behavior and set up a behavior support plan
4 Attention deficit/hyperactivity	Shorten drills and provide one-to-one assistance when needed
5 Fetal alcohol syndrome	Provide concrete performance tasks

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Social Considerations

Social Skills

- May lack basic social/adaptive skills due to a lack of opportunity or training
- Lacking communication and positive interaction with others

Recreation at Home

- Lack of physical activity
- Lack of encouragement

Economic Status

- May lack financial means
- May not have access to independent transportation



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 1 - Social considerations

All of the following social consideration(s) may impact an athlete's participation in Special Olympics:

- Inappropriate responses to social situations
- Physical inactivity being modeled
- Lack of endurance
- Lack of access to transportation

Our challenge as coaches is to develop a full understanding of our athletes and the strengths and weaknesses they bring with them to a Special Olympics program. By doing so we can begin to develop a training and competition program that they will benefit from and enjoy.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 2 – Teaching & Training the Athlete



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 2 - Teaching & Training the Athlete

There are many ways to organize a training session for Special Olympics athletes. Because of some of the things previously identified concerning comprehension and memory, there is considerable value in developing a consistent training routine that provides familiarity, stability, and comfort.



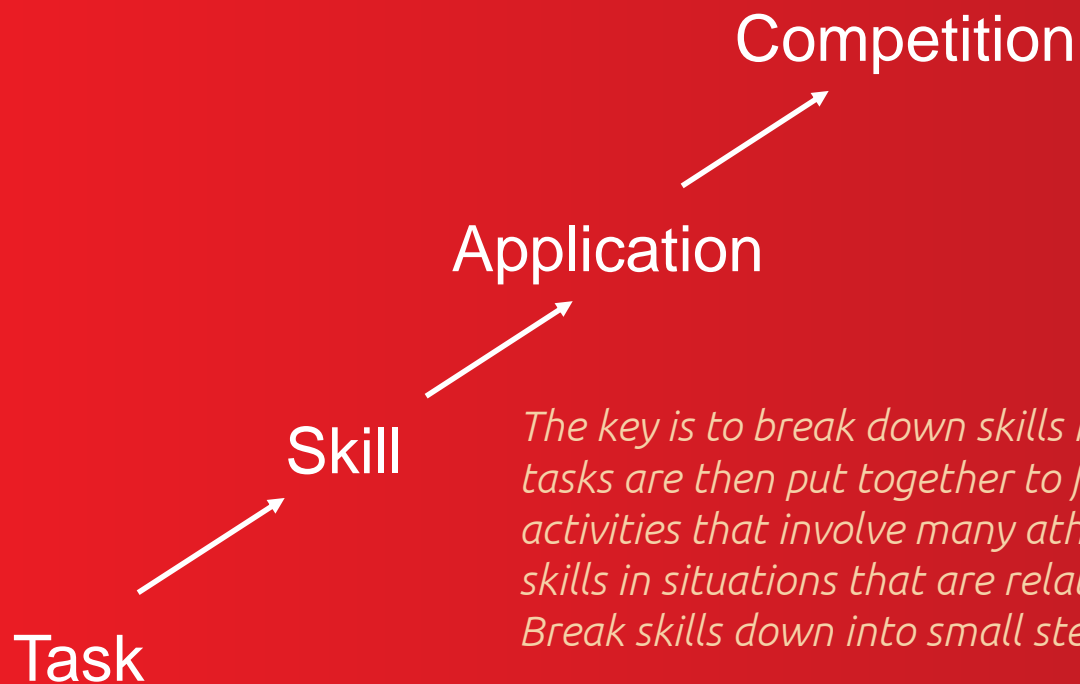
Unit 2 - Organizing a Training Session

Component and Details	Layout of Drill or Activity
Warm-Up & Stretching	Specific to the sport, repetitive and involve athletes in leading activity
Skills Instruction	Break skills into smaller tasks, involve many athletes at a time and practice skills related to event situations
Competition Experience	Scrimmage, simulate event/game situations and work towards what the competition will look like
Cool-Down, Stretch, & Reward	Playing a game related to that sport and ending each training with a cool down activity and stretch

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 2 - Training Sequence



The key is to break down skills into small tasks or steps; tasks are then put together to form skills. Use drills and activities that involve many athletes at all times. Practice skills in situations that are related to the game or event. Break skills down into small steps.



Unit 2 - Training Sequence

What's the challenge and how to fix it?

Training Sequence Element	Challenge	Action
Application	Acquire ability to repeatedly demonstrate sport competencies in different situations & environments	Provide gamelike drills or situations
Skills	Acquire ability to perform series of sport competencies effectively and necessary to perform a sport	Work on essential sport competencies to perform the sport
Competition	Acquire ability to put essential sport competencies into practice	Provide scrimmage opportunities in practice
Tasks	Acquire ability to perform essential sport competencies	Break essential sport competencies down into individual parts

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 2 - Communication

Communication is key to immediately reinforcing desired behavior; there are several key words that begin with a “C”, which address what a coach should say.

- Clear
- Concrete
- Concise
- Consistent
- Command-oriented



Special Olympics
Minnesota



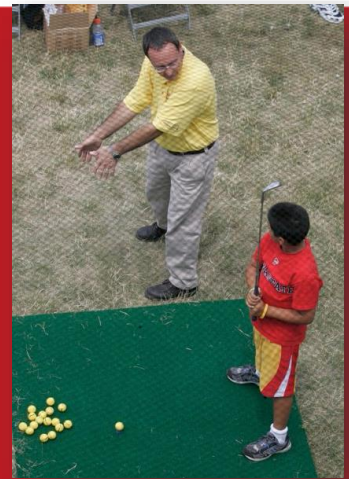
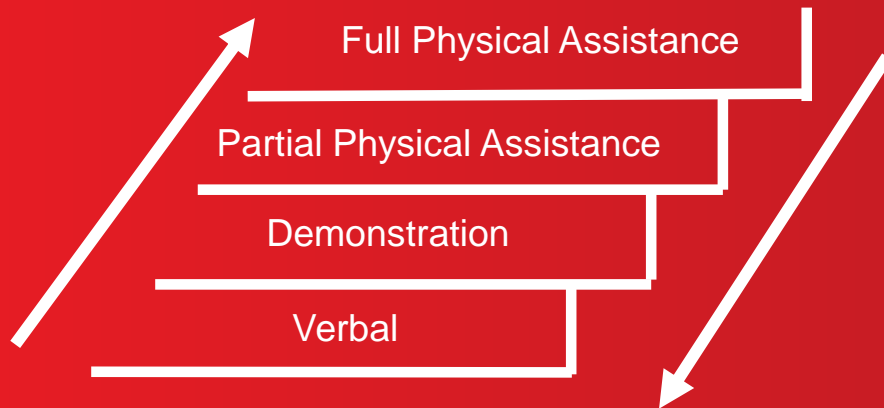
Unit 2 - Communication

Communication Criteria	Description	Sport Example
Concise	Use a few key words that cue a desired action	"Go to the free throw line" Showing an athlete where to stand on defense
Consistent	Use the same word or phrase for the same action	Coach constantly say "Breathe" – teaching an athlete when to take a breath in aquatics
Clear	Use easy to understand words that have one meaning	"Swing the bat" teaching how/when to swing.
Command-Oriented	Use words that elicit or reinforce a desired action	"On your mark. Set. Go." Using this phrase for starts in athletics.
Concrete	Connect words to something defined or tangible	"Jump forward" when coaching an athlete in the long jump.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 2 - Levels of Assistance



Each athlete needs to be met where he or she is and with what each individual is ready to do. It is important to use the appropriate level of instruction and assistance.

- The lower the ability athlete, the more assistance may be required
- Verbal should always be accompanied by demonstration
- Partial physical assistance may be needed to help the athlete get positioned properly
- When all else fails, take the athlete through the complete motion



Unit 2 - Level of Instruction or Assistance

Level of Instruction or Assistance	Description	Sport Example
Full Physical Assistance	Help the athlete through the entire motion of the skill	Volleyball: coach makes an adjustment to the athlete's arm swing by moving the athlete's arm through the entire spiking movement
Verbal	Tell the athlete what to do	Footwork: "run forward to the line; then return, running backward"
Demonstration	Show the athlete the proper technique	Soccer: one athlete shoots on goal while another watches
Partial Physical Assistance	Place the athlete's hands in the proper position	Golf: coach physically adjusts the athlete's hands on the golf club with the correct grip

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior

The goal is for coaches to meet each athlete where he/she is and treat him/her accordingly. However, a coach may often have certain expectations of an athlete that may not be realistic ... not because the coach does not care, but because the coach does not understand or appreciate the differences that may exist.

When an athlete exhibits what is generally perceived as inappropriate behavior, the inappropriate behavior may not be defiance, acting out or silliness. These behaviors may simply be a reflection or part of the person and/or what is operating in the moment.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior

Athlete Behavior Characteristics	Strategies to Improve Learning
Swimmer has a short attention span	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dwell on a stroke or activity for short periods of time; provide numerous activities focusing on same task2. Provide different opportunities for repetition and review, which is the key to gaining new skill.3. Work one-on-one to gain full attention.
Basketball athlete yells if he/she misses a shot	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Emphasize the other aspects of the game besides shooting2. Work on shooting drills without a hoop3. Begin to shoot at a hoop but in a non-game setting with a one-on-one coach
Bowler doesn't wait their turn	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is2. Have the bowler wait with a coach behind the bowling area until their turn is up3. Emphasize the order and that the bowler will always follow the same individual



Unit 3 - Preparing & Coaching for Competition

A key goal of Special Olympics is to provide an opportunity for all athletes to experience success in competitions.

A Special Olympics athlete can benefit from many aspects of a competition (including meeting new people, participating in the festivities of Opening Ceremonies and other social events, the excitement of traveling to new places and staying away from home, etc.). None of these things, however, should be as important to the coach as the focus on the participation in the competition itself.

This section highlights ways to improve the quality of an athlete's competition experience.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

Registration

- Provide accurate entry and team roster information, qualifying times, and skills assessment scores.
- Help the Competition Committee prepare a successful competition for your athletes by meeting their registration deadlines.

Official competition rules

- A good Competition Committee will instruct its officials/referees to enforce the Official Special Olympics Rules. Make sure you know them.
- Teach your athletes the rules and, during training, phase out your verbal reminders about rules. At competition, coaches may have little or no opportunity to assist athletes when they are not following the rules.

(A coach cannot be on the track with them!)



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

Supervision

- Discuss the challenges associated with participating in competition away from home, and why adequate, non-coaching support personnel are needed.
 - Transportation
 - Lodging (need for same-sex supervision)
 - Social activities
 - Coaches meetings (who will supervise athletes during these?)
 - Multiple events to supervise, awards ceremonies, etc.
- Design a supervision worksheet with the essential elements covered.



Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

Travel and overnight

- Discuss overnight concerns with parents or group-home supervisors.
- Write up a simple checklist of items to bring and distribute to athletes and parents
- Make sure that all special medication needs are understood. Coaches may have to assist with handling medications. Have all medical forms and information readily available at all times.
- Work out the most effective rooming arrangements, taking into account athlete choice, behavioral and personality clashes, etc.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

Guidelines for success:

Teach responsibility & independence

- Assist athletes in dressing appropriately, understanding what is happening at the competition site, maintaining a focused attitude and appropriate behavior.

Arrive early

- Allow time for putting on uniforms, warm-up and stretching routine and focusing on the competition.

Encourage maximum effort in divisioning & competition

- Applying the “honest-effort” rule from the Special Olympics Rule book

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

Guidelines for success:

Let athletes compete without direct supervision

- Not running down the side of the track shouting instructions, allowing the competition officials to conduct the competition and allowing athletes to make mistakes and helping them learn from their mistakes.

Make any official protests calmly

- If you think there is a valid reason to protest the outcome, do so in a calm manner, following the competition guidelines and not involving athletes in disputes with officials.

Help athletes learn from winning & losing

- Deal graciously and realistically with winning and losing. Focus on effort made, recognize accomplishments and new skills that were performed and taking something positive away from the experience.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

The coach can be the key person who makes any competition experience a good one.

Taking time to adequately prepare for competition and plan for on-site supervision and that coaching is time well spent.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 4 – Managing the Program

The successful Special Olympics coach:

Is sports and coaching knowledgeable

- Special Olympics is a sport organization
- Technical knowledge of the sport and how to teach it is essential if coaches are to effectively help athletes improve their sport skills and truly benefit from Special Olympics.
- Successful coaches are constantly looking for opportunities to learn more about the sport.

Is Special Olympics knowledgeable

- Special Olympics has a clearly defined mission, philosophy, and rules that have been developed through years of worldwide experience with athletes with intellectual disabilities.
- A better understanding of these will benefit your athletes.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 4 – Managing the Program

The successful Special Olympics coach:

Recruits and trains assistant coaches

- Individualized coach-athlete teaching is key to successful training in Special Olympics.
- Assistant coaches can be recruited to help provide individualized attention.
- Assistant coaches are useful only if they are trained and coordinated at practice.

Recruits and trains athletes

- A coach is also a promoter and recruiter; always tries to expand participation

Assists with appropriate sport selection

- Age appropriate, is the athlete able to participate safely and successfully and does the athlete have a choice of participating in a different sport or event.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 4 – the successful Special Olympics coach:

Offers activities for all abilities

- In order to accommodate a range of abilities

Puts a priority on safety

- This is the coach's number one priority

Conducts high-quality training and competition

- Appropriate training, activities such as training days or camps, helps develop pride in being an athlete and organizes competition opportunities if none exist

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 4 – the Successful Special Olympics Coach:

Involves families

- Educates families and group-home providers about the benefits of Special Olympics, appropriate nutrition and food choices and training at home.

Assists with community inclusion

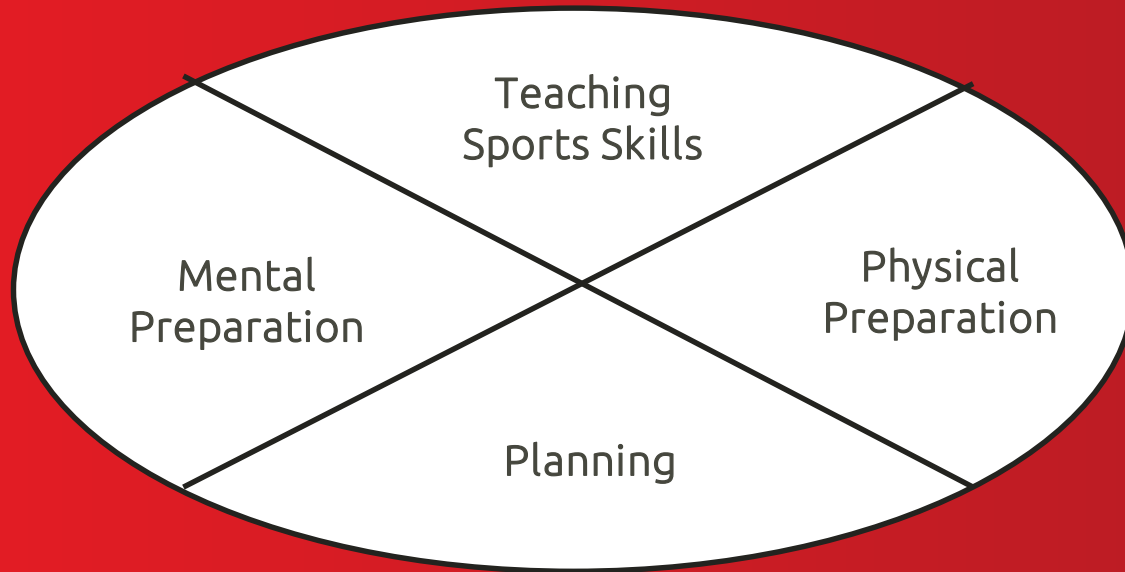
- Improves social and communication skills, opportunities to talk about Special Olympics at civic functions and assistance in joining non-Special Olympics sports opportunities

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 4 – Area of Focus

Athlete Safety



Coaching Philosophy

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unit 4 – Preparation

Assessment



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Improved Performance & Well-Being

- TRAINING → the key
- COMPETITION → the means
- OUTCOMES → skill, confidence, courage, & joy
- GOAL → better preparation for life
- RESULTS → lifelong skills, acceptance & increased independence



Let's Get After It and Get It Done!

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Level 2 Volleyball

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Level 2 Volleyball

Coach ratio per team:

Athletes	Level II	Level I
3-4	1	0
5-8	1	1
9-12	1	2
13-16	1	3

Roster size: (traditional and Unified)
6-16 athletes

All Coaches and Unified Partners must complete the Level 1 certification prior to their participation with a team. Level 1 certification requires a Volunteer Application and Level 1 online training and both items are found [here](#).

Special Olympics
Minnesota



SOMN Volleyball Events

Special Olympics Minnesota volleyball events:

- **Traditional Volleyball** - 6 vs 6 (roster 6-16 athletes per team)
- **Unified Volleyball** - individuals with and with out intellectual disabilities compete on the same team, 6 vs 6 (3 athletes and 3 Unified partners on the floor at all times; roster 6-16 athletes/Unified partners)

Area 9 offers a volleyball competition. To contact the Program Manager for information about your Area adding a competition please see the map and contact list below.

Areas 1, 2, 3- Dani Druse dani.druse@somn.org | 763.270.7193

Areas 4, 5, 6, 8 - Leah Wolkow leah.wolkow@somn.org | 763.270.7195

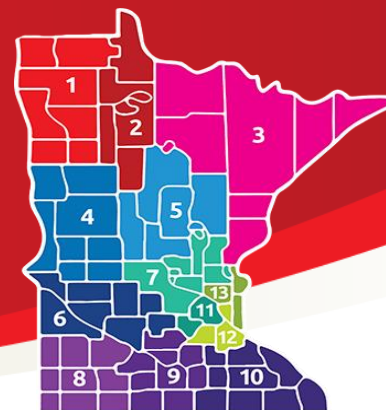
Area 7 – Kelly Monicatti monicattik@somn.org | 763.270.7168

Areas 9,10 – Zak Armstrong zak.armstrong@somn.org | 763.270.7173

Area 11- Jake Krier jake.krier@somn.org | 763.270.7178

Area 12- Sarah Richardson sarah.richardson@somn.org | 763.270.7175

Area 13- Emily Garness emily.garness@somn.org | 763.270.7179



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Traditional & Unified Volleyball Rules

Game Length and Matches

- **Tournament Format** – Teams are guaranteed two matches/games. A third game may be played if time allows.
- **Matches** – The winner is declared after best two out of three sets. Rally scoring to 25 used. If a third set is needed rally scoring to 15.
- **End of Set** – First two sets a team needs to win by two points. The third set does not require a two point win; it is simply first to 15.

Gameplay Rules - Traditional and Unified

- **Roster Size** – Minimum six, maximum 16.
- **Serving** – The serve shall be from the serve area. Stepping on or over the line before the ball is contacted shall constitute a violation.
- **Modified Serving** – A modified serving line will be placed 4.5 meters in from the net only for those athletes who absolutely need it. Stepping on or over the modified line before the ball is contacted shall also constitute a violation. Athletes using the modified line must be identified in advance. You will receive a form in your registration bag on which to identify these athletes.
- **Serving Limit** – Five-serve limit for each server. Serving team maintains possession after the five serve limit.
- **Coaching** – Coaches may assist athletes into positions for substitutions only, but must coach from the bench.



Special Olympics
Minnesota



Unified Volleyball Specifics

Unified Specific Rules

Line-up - three athletes and three Unified Partners must be on the floor at all time

Serving - See serve limit above. Additionally, Unified Partners are requested to serve at a level that accounts for the safety of athletes on the opposite team.

Passing - If the ball is touched more than one time on a side, an athlete must touch the ball before it is returned. If the ball is touched only once, a Unified partner or an athlete may return the ball.

Unified Partner Dominance - If a Unified Partner dominates every play, Unified partner dominance may be called resulting in a point and the serve awarded to the opposing team.

Coaches or Unified Partners - If you register as a coach you cannot play. Only registered Unified Partners can play.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Divisioning and Registration

Volleyball Divisioning

Divisioning is based on age, athlete skill assessment scores and team information from coaches. Each team is required to submit an assessment score for each athlete as well as a team information page.

Assessment Score - Skill assessment scores are based on a coach rankings in serving, blocking, passing, attacking, communication, game awareness and movement. Please click [here](#) for a blank copy of the assessment scoresheet.

Team Information - Information is provided based on any recent scrimmages, changes in roster from previous years or whether or not a team is stronger or weaker than previous years. Please click [here](#) for a blank copy of the team information page.

Registration

Registration is done [online](#) by Heads of Delegation or Head Coaches. In order to register online the coach must have a username and password. If you need help with registration please contact your [Program Manager](#).

When a coach registers a team they must submit the following:

1. Assessment score for each athlete/Unified partner (see above)
2. Coaches on each team
3. Athletes/Unified partners must have appropriate paperwork submitted in order to register

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Team Sport Divisioning Philosophy

The divisioning process for team sports is much different, and much harder, than individual sports. Unlike most individual sports, team sports do not have concrete distances or times that can be used, although we do have teams submit assessment scores for individual players. Once a game starts, however, the information contained in the assessments often takes a back seat to the dynamics at play minute-by-minute, play-by-play on the court or field.

The challenge with divisioning team sports is that there are many factors that affect how a team performs on any given day — missing players, illness, penalties, behavior, coaching, who's hot and who's not, individual match ups, etc. With divisioning in team sports, much more emphasis is put on game results, common opponents, coach rankings and coach notes. There is not a perfect science to ensure that all divisions will have close games, which is why we have developed a process for team sports that includes divisioning committees. The divisioning committees allow for more coach involvement, better team evaluation and improved divisioning. We recognize there may be some games during a competition that are not competitive, but we hope that the team sports divisioning process creates the most equal divisions possible.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Competitions

Area	Date	Location	City	Register By	Contact
Area 9	May 18	St. Clair High School	St. Clair	May 5	zak.armstrong@somn.org

No State Competition

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Practice, Skill Development & Resources

Special Olympics Minnesota wants to make sure that you have confidence in your knowledge of volleyball rules, skills and practice ideas. Listed below are Special Olympics volleyball resources that can help with the training and skill development for athletes.

Special Olympics, Inc Volleyball Resources

[Special Olympics Minnesota Volleyball Page](#)

[Volleyball Coaching Guide](#)

[Planning a Training Season](#)

[Teaching Volleyball Skills](#)

[Volleyball Quick Start Guide](#)

[Special Olympics, Inc Volleyball Rules \(2014\)](#)

For additional resources and video tutorials on Special Olympics volleyball please visit <http://www.specialolympics.org/Volleyball.aspx>

For any questions regarding Special Olympics Minnesota volleyball please contact coacheducation@somn.org

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Coach Recognition Item

Each coach that becomes Level 2 certified or recertified in a sport is able to order one coach item per calendar year. Information can be found [HERE](#).

Please note that if you have not completed a Level 2 training or recertification course, or you have already received an item for the year, you will not be shipped an item.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Level 2 Volleyball Quiz

Level 2 certification is not processed until you have completed the Level 2 quiz.

To take the Level 2 Volleyball quiz please [click here](#).

Special Olympics
Minnesota

