

Beginning with 2017 Spring Games Unified Basketball, Special Olympics Minnesota will offer three different types of Unified Sports experiences and levels. Since the addition of Unified Basketball in 2011 we have seen significant growth in the number of athletes and unified partners playing team Unified Sports. With the increase in participants we have seen a wide variety of approaches to what Unified means to each individual and team. To some Unified Sports is a chance to play sports at high level and showcase the equal abilities between athletes and partners. To others Unified Sports is a place to play alongside an athlete or partner with a different skill level and to coach and mentor while participating in the same game.

Since neither of the approaches to Unified Sports listed above are wrong we wanted to instead create different types of Unified Team Sports experiences so that teams can register for the experience that is the best fit for them. The three Unified Team Sports experiences are GREEN, YELLOW and RED and have specific rules tied to each color. In general, the GREEN level means athletes and partners are at a similar skill level and ability and there is no rule modifications, YELLOW means the partners are at a higher skill level but the partners can still score points during a game and RED means the partners are at a much higher skill level than the athletes but are there to mentor more than score points.

Registration – HOD/Coaches register for their color level on the quota form. Once registration closes we may need to move a team to a different color level based on divisioning and the number of teams that registered; but our emphasis will be to make sure that a team's experience and skill level are similar to the teams they will compete against.

GREEN – no scoring ratio

Athletes and partners should be of similar skill level and ability. Does not matter how many points are scored by the athletes or partners. Athletes or partners may score a majority of a team's total points.

YELLOW – Unified Partners 50% max

In general, Unified Partners are at a higher skill level. Partners can score up to 50% of their team's total score. At the conclusion of the game, if partners score more than 50% of their team's total points then the scorer's table will subtract partners' points from the team's total until it is a 50-50 ratio with the athletes points scored.

RED – Unified Partners 25% max

Unified Partners are at a higher skill level. Partners can score up to 25% of their team's total score. At the conclusion of the game, if partners score more than 25% of their team's total points then the scorer's table will subtract partners' points from the team's total until it is a 25-75 ratio with the athletes points scored.

What if a Unified Partner scores more than the approved max?

A team will not automatically forfeit a game if a partner falls outside of the approved ratio (which has happened in previous years). Now if teams fall outside of their designated color level's scoring ratio their team's total points will be adjusted according to the color they are in.

- **EXAMPLE:** Team A is in the YELLOW level and partners score 18 out of their teams 30 total points. At the conclusion of the game event staff would subtract points from the partners until they fall in the approved ratio. As a result, Team A's final score would be 24 points (*6 pts subtracted from the partners original 18 scored means the updated approved scoring allows the partners to score 12 of the teams total 24 points*).