BOWLING
2011 GENERAL RULES

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Bowling shall govern all Special Olympics competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon Federation Internationale des Quilleurs (FIQ) Rules as well as World Tenpin Bowling Association (WTBA) Rules for bowling found at www.worldtenpinbowling.com. FIQ, WTBA or National Governing Body (NGB) rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Bowling or Article I. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Bowling shall apply. The NGB for the United States is the U.S. Bowling College at www.bowl.com.

OFFICIAL EVENTS OFFERED

1. Individual Ramp (singles) ****ATHLETES CAN COMPETE IN ONLY ONE EVENT!****
2. Individual (singles)
3. Developmental Individual and Individual Ramp (Regional-level only, non-advancing)
4. Mixed Doubles – Any combination of males and females (no ramps allowed)
5. Mixed Team – Any combination of males and females (no ramps allowed)

SECTION A – GENERAL RULES

1. Athletes will bowl three games. Warm-up/practice balls may be granted at the discretion of the venue manager depending on schedule, time constraints, etc. An athlete(s) may be moved to a different set of lanes due to mechanical malfunction or other issues, such as slow play at the discretion of the venue manager. Situations involving an athlete bowling out of order or on the wrong lane shall be handled at the venue manager's discretion.
2. A scratch score based on a 15-game average shall be used for determining handicaps. For advancement to the next level of competition (Regional to Sectional, Sectional to State) the three-game average score from the previous level of competition will be used.
3. Athletes will alternate lanes after each frame (individual, doubles and team bowling).
4. From the approach, athletes have 45 seconds to deliver the ball. If the athlete fails to release the ball after 45 seconds, a zero is recorded for that ball.
5. Ramp bowlers may be allowed to bowl three consecutive frames (at discretion of event manager) and will not alternate lanes.
6. In tournament play, 100% of the difference of the bowler's average from 200 will be used to determine the athlete's or team's final score. (The handicap will be added to the three-game scratch total to provide the final score). Special Olympics is not considered a bowling league and does not follow all league rules; however, we do use handicaps to level the playing field.
7. Legal line up for doubles and team competition:
   a. A team must register four players to be eligible. However, if a team is short-handed, a legal line-up shall consist of three or more eligible players on a four-player team. If a bowler is absent from Regional or Sectional competition, the team or double is unable to advance to Sectional or State.

   b. A team must have one eligible player on a two-player doubles team.

8. Double or team scores will be determined using scores for present team members only. Missing team members' scores will be reflected as zero and no handicap will be applied. The team or double may receive a place based on this score, but will be ineligible to advance to the next level of competition.

9. Any player or team arriving late (less than one hour) may start anytime before his or her division reaches the fourth frame of the first game; otherwise, they will be scratched. The bowler or team may not make up frames that have been missed and will receive zero points on the missed frames.

10. Once an athlete has started to bowl, the athlete must complete all remaining frames of all games to receive a place; otherwise, a participation ribbon will be given.

11. If a lane must be moved due to equipment malfunction (at the discretion of the venue manager), athletes will start in the frame they left off on.

12. Any protests or rules infractions must be brought to the attention of the sports rules committee.

13. Coaches, chaperones, parents, etc., are not allowed on the lanes during competition. Once competition begins, coaches are allowed to coach, but must stay behind designated barriers. The athletes must also stay seated in the lane and still continue to bowl within the 45 seconds allotted. No coaching will be allowed once the athlete is on the approach and until completing the frame. The games management team holds the right to determine if the situation becomes problematic.

NOTE: "Special Needs Athlete" - A "special needs athlete" is one who has a communication limitation, hearing impairment, visual impairment, special equipment adaptation or behavioral need. If Special Needs is noted on the lane card, then this athlete's coach will be allowed on the lanes for consultation with the volunteer during a special time period set up just prior to the beginning of competition. All SOWI competitions should have a 5-10 minute period before competition starts when coaches can interact *with lane helpers* to aid in proper procedures for their assisted ramp bowlers.

14. Athletes and volunteers are not allowed to smoke, eat food or drink during competition. Water will be provided for hydration. (The only other exception is for athletes with a medical condition requiring a regular intake of food or beverage. A special needs form is required for such circumstances).

15. Athletes, coaches, volunteers or any other Special Olympics supporters are not allowed to drink alcoholic beverages or smoke at the competition site.

16. Athletes must be neat in their dress and wear proper bowling uniform/clothing. No cut off shorts or shirts with advertising are allowed. Team and doubles bowlers must wear identical shirts.

17. See SOI rules regarding official bowling balls, ramps and special equipment. Bowling shoes must be worn.

18. Anyone placing 1st, 2nd, or 3rd at Regional or Sectional bowling is eligible to advance to the next level. There is no quota for bowling. There are now two State bowling tournaments.

SECTION B – RAMP BOWLING

1. Ramp bowlers include those athletes in wheelchairs, the visually impaired, and only those ambulatory athletes with severe CP or other conditions too severe to allow for sufficient balance. Ambulatory athletes who are unable to bowl correctly due to lack of strength are ineligible for ramp bowling.

2. **Ramp bowlers will compete only against other ramp bowlers in singles competition**. Ramp bowlers may not be part of a doubles or a team.

3. Athletes using ramps shall be placed in separate divisions from other bowlers. **NOTE:** SOWI only offers one ramp bowling event in which all athletes using a ramp will compete. For athletes who need physical assistance setting the ramp, the coach must supply that information on the special needs form. The athlete's coach may want to give further verbal instructions to the volunteer lane helper prior

to the start of competition. In the case where the bowling ramp must be set, the volunteer will stand with his/her back to the pins and aim the ramp according to the athlete's verbal or physical cues, or if no cue is given, the ramp will be set to center of the lane.

4. Athletes must initiate the forward motion of the ball with his/her hand touching the ball.
5. All SOWI competitions should have a 5-10 minute period before competition starts when coaches can interact with lane helpers to aid in proper procedures for interacting with their athletes.
6. A volunteer can hold the ramp in order to stabilize it (the specific information must be written on the special needs form). A rubber mat can be placed under the ramp in order to keep the ramp from moving.
7. All parts of the ramp must be behind the foul line; it is considered an extension of the bowler.
8. Special Needs: The Special Needs Form is to be used to give information to the volunteer(s) on how to deal with an athlete's behavior, and/or special needs. It is not to be used for coaching tips or instructions on how the volunteer should place the ramp.

SECTION C – DEVELOPMENTAL BOWLING

1. This transitional event is intended for use by those athletes who are not ready to participate fully in the competition experience. Athletes registered in these transitional and non-advancing events are ineligible to register and participate in any other event or sport during the season. Host Regions will determine how these transitional events will be implemented during existing tournaments. Contact your host Region for details.
2. Individual and Ramp athletes with a 3-game average of 30 or lower, or athletes ages 8-15 may register for this event. Athletes will only bowl one complete game instead of three.

SECTION D – FOULS

1. A foul occurs when a part of the player encroaches on, or goes beyond, the foul line and touches any part of the lane, equipment or building during or after a delivery. A ball is in play after a delivery until the same or another player is on the approach in position to make a succeeding delivery.
2. Foul lights shall be used for all bowlers (individual, mixed doubles, team and ramp).
3. When a foul occurs on the first ball of a frame, an "F" should be placed in the box (pins down will not count) and the pins will be re-racked. The number of pins knocked down on the second ball will be scored.
4. When a foul occurs on the second ball of a frame, an "F" should be placed in the box and the pins knocked down will not be scored for that ball.
5. If all pins are knocked down on the second ball, after a foul with the first, it is scored as a spare.