

FOOTBALL (SOCCER)

GENERAL RULES

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics football (soccer) competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has developed these rules based upon Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) rules for football (soccer). FIFA rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules. For more information, visit www.fifa.com.

OFFICIAL EVENTS OFFERED:

1. Five-a-Side Soccer

NOTE: Adjustment for 2021: In order to limit contact between programs from around the state, scrimmage games will not be required for the 2021 State Soccer Tournament. Coaches are to submit FSAT scores on their registrations forms (see end of rules). These assessments and previous years' team data will be used to determine divisioning for competition.

COVID Protocols: SOWI Return to Play protocols will be in place including screening prior to practices and competition. Masks will be required, including in the field of play. This may differ from the standard Return to Play protocols.

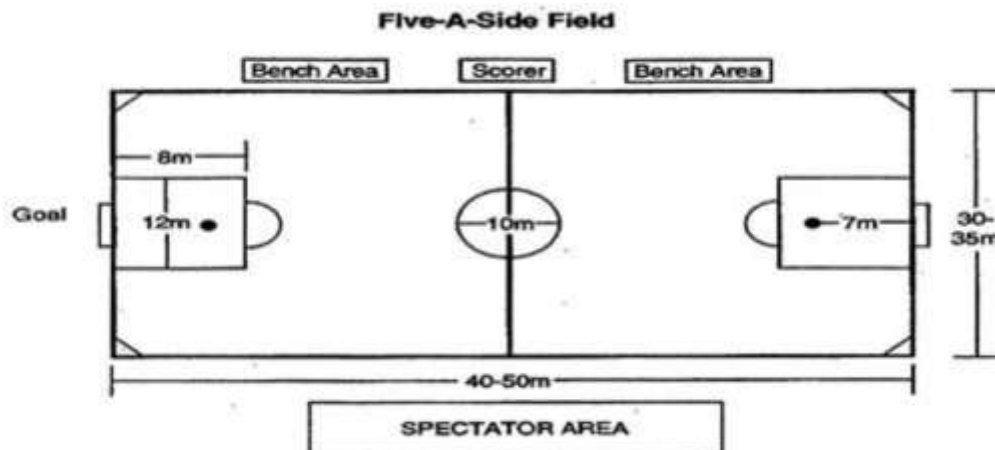
SECTION A – RULES FOR COMPETITION

1. Team Competition
 - a. Divisioning
 - 1) FSAT scores and previous years' data will be used for divisioning.
2. Modifications
 - a. The playing time of the game shall be 30 minutes. There shall be two equal halves of 15 minutes each with a five-minute interval between halves. Teams must be ready to field a legal team within 10 minutes of the official declaring the game started or the game will be forfeited.
 - b. Offsides will not be called.
 - c. In tournament play, if the score remains tied at the end of regulation time, one five-minute period shall be played to completion (not sudden death). If at end the score is still tied, then a second five-minute period will be played to completion. The winning team will be awarded three points and the losing team zero points, or if a tie each team will be awarded 1 point.
 - 1) If the score remains tied after the second overtime period, penalty kicks shall determine the winner.
 - a) Five players are selected from each team. Only players on the field at the end of the second overtime can be used. Each team must select the order in which the players will take the penalty kick.
 - b) Each player takes a penalty kick, alternating teams with each shot.
 - c) The highest score after five penalty kicks is declared the winner.
 - d) If the game is still tied after five penalty kicks, the penalty kicks continue on a "sudden death" basis. Kicks continue to be taken in the same team order, using the same players in the same kicking order until a winner is decided and one team has scored a goal more than the other from the same number of kicks.

- e) The game is recorded as a victory by one point over the team defeated.
3. Team and Players
- a. Each team roster shall consist of a minimum number of five players with a maximum of 12 players. A team must have five players to start a game. Failure to start with five players will result in a forfeiture of the game(s). Teams must be ready to field a legal team within ten minutes of the declared start of the game or the game will be forfeited.
 - b. During play, due to injury or player disqualification, a team may play with as few as three players. However, if a team is unable to field at least three players, the game shall be forfeit. At no time can play continue with less than the minimum number of players.
 - c. Substitutions are unlimited in number (players may return to the field after being substituted). Substitutions can be made anytime the ball is out of bounds, between periods, after a goal is scored, or during a timeout for an injury. The coach must signal the referee or linesman in order to make a substitution. The player must come to the center line near the scorer's table in order to enter the game as a substitute (the player cannot enter as a substitute directly from the bench area). A substituted player can only come on to the field when given a signal by the referee.
 - d. There are no timeouts (except official due to injury or rules/score clarifications) allowed at anytime during competition.
 - e. A maximum of three coaches will be allowed on the bench during games.
4. Start of Play
- a. All players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field of play.
 - b. The ball must be stationary on the center mark.
 - c. The referee gives a signal.
 - d. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.
 - e. A goal can be scored directly against the opponent from the kick-off; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.
5. Ball in and Out of Play
- a. Ball over the sideline results in kick-in
 - b. Ball over the end line results in a goal-clearance or a corner kick
 - c. The ball must be clearly over the line to be considered out of play.
6. Goal Clearance
- a. When the ball passes over the goal line (not in the goal), having last been played by an attacking player, the goalkeeper, standing within his own penalty area, shall throw the ball back into play beyond his own penalty area, but not further than the halfway line (i.e. the ball must touch the ground or another player before crossing the halfway line). The ball shall be deemed in play as soon as it passes outside the penalty area.
 - b. The above rules of goal clearance also apply when a goalkeeper gains possession, with his hands, of a ball that is still in play.
 - c. Infringement penalties
 - 1) If the ball thrown by the goalkeeper passes beyond the goalkeeper's half of the field without first having been touched by a player or without having touched the ground, the referee shall award an indirect free kick for the opposing team from any point on the halfway line.

- 2) If the ball is touched by an opposing player inside the penalty area, from the goalkeeper's throw, the throw shall be retaken.
7. Method of Scoring: the whole ball must have completely crossed the line inside the goal to count as a goal.
 8. Officials shall have full authority to interpret rules. For further questions, the tournament rules committee shall be consulted.
 9. Officials shall have the power to make all decisions on any points not specifically covered in the rules.
 10. Fouls and Misconducts: Slide tackling, whether intentional or unintentional, pushing, handball or charging results in a direct free-kick. Obstruction or dangerous play results in an indirect.
 - a. If a player is expelled from the game (receives two yellow cards or a red card), this player may not re-enter the game or play the following game. His team must play a player down for two minutes unless a goal is scored before the two minutes have elapsed. In this case the following shall apply:
 - 1) Keeping check of the two minutes shall be the task of the referee.
 - 2) The player who enters the game as a substitute after two minutes may only do so with the consent of the referee and when the ball is out of bounds.
 - b. Restart exception:
 - 1) Any free-kick that is awarded to the defending team inside their own penalty area will be restarted with a throw from the goalkeeper.
 - c. Free-kick
 - 1) Opposing players must retire at least 5m from the ball for all free kicks.
 - d. Penalty
 - 1) Penalty is taken from the 7m line. All players except the kicker and the goalkeeper must retire outside the penalty area and arc. The goalkeeper must stand on his/her goal line until the penalty kick is taken.
 - e. Kick-In (Equivalent to the throw-in)
 - 1) When the whole ball passes over a sideline, it shall be kicked back into the game from the place where it crossed the line (on the sideline) by a player from the opposing team to that of the player who last touched it. The ball must be stationary before being kicked. It shall be deemed in when the ball is kicked and clearly moves. The ball cannot be played again by the kicker until it has been touched by another player. The players from the opposing team must retire at least 5m from the spot where the kick is being taken.
 - 2) A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in unless touched by another player from either team (including the goalie). If the ball goes in the goal without being touched, no goal is allowed.
 - 3) A goalkeeper may not touch the ball with hands receiving it directly from a kick in by a teammate.
 - 4) A goalkeeper may not touch the ball with hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a teammate. If the pass was made from within the box, the opposing team gets a penalty kick. If the pass was made from outside the box, the opposing team gets a free kick from the spot the pass was made.
 - f. Infringement penalties

- 1) If the player taking the kick-in plays the ball for a second time before it has been touched by another player, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the point where the infringement occurred.
11. Corner Kick is awarded to the attacking team when a player from the defending team kicks the ball over his/her own end line.
 - a. Opposing players must retire at least 5m from the ball.
 12. Coaching from the bench area:
 - a. A team bench area will be provided for each team within each area.
 - b. Each bench area will be defined by a marked off rectangle, 15m in length, located on the sideline at least 5m away from the sideline and within 10m of the halfway line.
 - c. Substitute players and coaches are expected to remain seated within the bench area at all times except when making a substitution.
 - d. Coaches are expected to restrict their coaching to simple verbal encouragement. A maximum of three coaches will be allowed on the bench during games.
 - e. Coaches must remain within the bench area while coaching.
 - f. Verbal abuse of players or officials, or excessive and explicit coaching from the sidelines will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and may result in a warning from the referee. If such behavior persists, the referee may eject the offending coach from the field.



SECTION B – FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

1. Field Dimensions
 - a. The size of a five-a-side field is **50m x 35m**.
 - b. Both goals shall be of equal size. The area of the goals should be 5m by 2m.
2. Equipment - A number five size soccer ball is to be used for SOWI competitions.
3. Players with illegal uniforms will not be allowed to play. Players with non-matching uniforms will be penalized accordingly. Legality of a uniform may be determined by the referee or by the event coordinator.
4. Proper uniforms and uniform numbering will be enforced! Individuals who do not adhere to uniform regulations will not be allowed to enter a game. Uniform tops must have a number on the back a minimum of six inches high – a front number of a minimum of four inches high is optional but numbers are to be in direct contrast to the color of the top. No taped on numbers will be allowed. If there are

duplicate numbers, then one player will not be allowed to participate until the issue is rectified. Legal numbers are 1 – 99. An individual may wear leg tights, leotards or sweat pants but they must be the same color of the team's uniform shorts. Athletes wearing improper uniforms will not be allowed to participate.

5. The basic compulsory equipment of a player shall consist of a jersey or shirt, shorts, stockings, shin-guards and footwear which consists of tennis shoes or soccer shoes with rubber cleats. A player shall not wear anything which is dangerous to another player. Undershirts, if worn, must match the sleeve color of the uniform. Under shorts, if worn, must match the shorts color of the uniform.
6. Shin-guards, which must be covered entirely by the stockings, shall be made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, polyurethane or similar substance) and shall afford a reasonable degree of protection.
7. The goalkeeper shall wear colors which distinguish him from the other players and from the referee. The goalkeeper jersey does not have to have a number associated to the jersey.
8. Only soccer shoes or tennis shoes are allowed for competition. (For reference, a soccer shoe does not have a toe cleat and has a more limited number of cleats on the bottom.) Baseball or football shoes/cleats are not allowed and a player will not be allowed to participate with these shoes. The toe cleat **cannot** be cut off the baseball or football shoe to conform. The types of cleats, size and number prohibit the use of baseball or football cleats.

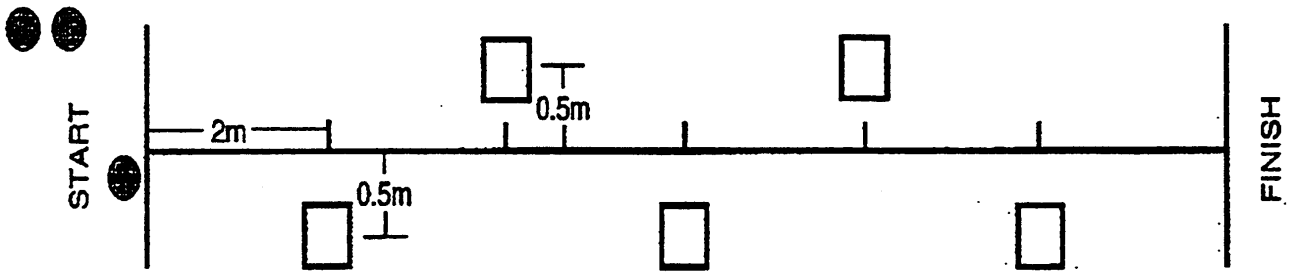
PUNISHMENT – Equipment Infractions

For any infringement of this law, the player at fault will not be allowed on the field or shall be sent off the field to adjust his equipment and he shall not return without first reporting to the referee, who shall satisfy himself that the player's equipment is in order. The player shall only re-enter the game at a moment when the ball has ceased to be in play.

FOOTBALL (SOCCER) TEAM SKILLS ASSESSMENT TEST (FSAT)

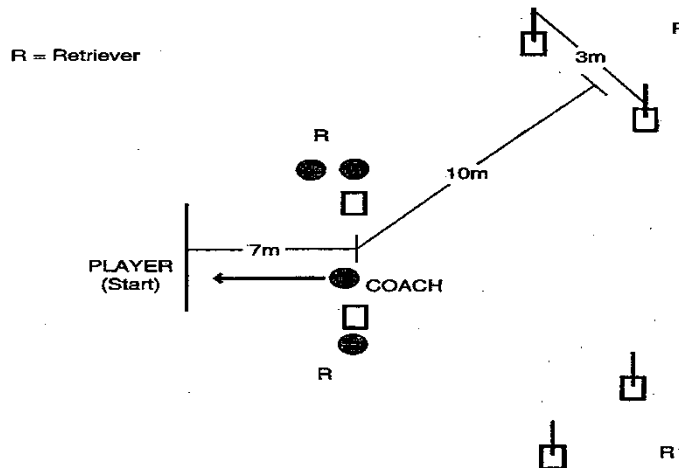
These skills are designed to help determine a preliminary idea as to the ability level of the athletes. They should be used as a teaching method for basic skills used during a game setting.

a. Football (Soccer) Team Skills Assessment Test – Dribbling



- 1) Set-up: 12m dribbling slalom: five cones (minimum 18" high), 2m apart, staggered 0.5m from central line, and three to five balls at the start line.
- 2) Test: (Time: one minute) Player dribbles through slalom as quickly as possible, rounding all cones. Player leaves ball over the finish line (ball must be stopped) and sprints back to the start. If there is time remaining, player starts with second ball and repeats. Player continues to repeat until one minute has elapsed to signify the end of the test. A whistle will be blown when one minute has elapsed to signify the end of the test.
- 3) Scoring: Player scores five points for each cone passed (to the outside) (i.e. 25 points per successful run). Cones that are knocked down do not count.

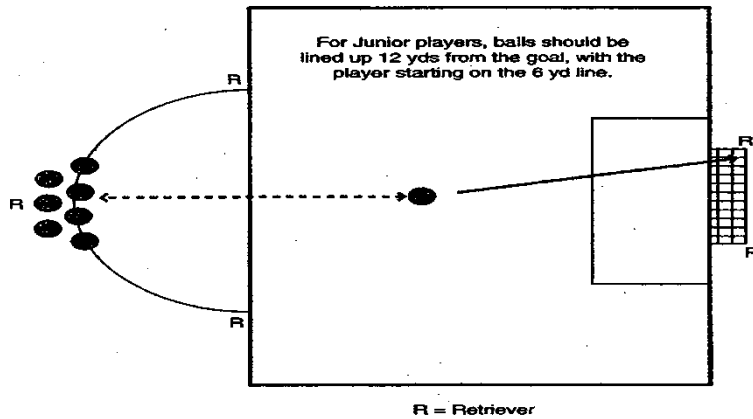
b. Football (Soccer) Team Skills Assessment Test – Control and Pass



- 1) Set Up: Two cones to form a "passing gate" 5m wide, 7m from the starting line, two passing "target gates" (cones and 1m flags if possible) as shown, and four to eight soccer balls. (If balls are in short supply, use four balls but have an efficient retrieval system for returning the balls to the coach.)
- 2) Test: (Time: one minute) Coach rolls the ball at a moderate pace to the waiting player. The player may wait on the line or move towards the ball once it has been rolled. Player controls the ball and dribbles through the passing gate. Coach alternately calls and physically indicates "left" or "right" to designate target. Ball 1: Right / Ball 2: Left / Ball 3: Right, etc. Players can dribble as close as they like before passing the ball through the target. The coach will roll the next ball as soon as the player returns to the starting line. At one minute, a whistle will be blown to signify the end of the test.

- 3) Scoring: Player scores 10 points for each successful pass through a target gate. A ball that hits the cone and goes through will count.

c. Football (Soccer) Team Skills Assessment Test – Shooting



- 1) Set Up: Penalty area and full-size goal, with nets, on a regulation field and four to eight balls at the top of the penalty arc. (If balls are in short supply, the test can be run with four to five balls with a good retrieval and return system.)
- 2) Test: Player starts at the penalty spot, runs to the first ball, dribbles into the penalty area and shoots, attempting to shoot the ball in the air into the goal. Players can shoot from whatever distance they choose once they are inside the penalty area. As soon as the player has shot, he/she returns and repeats with another ball. A whistle will be blown after one minute to signify the end of the test.
- 3) Scoring: Player scores 10 points for each shot traveling from foot to goal in the air and five points for each shot that touches the ground before entering the goal.

FINAL FSAT SCORING: Total the final score for each of the three FSAT skill tests for each player. This score should then be entered on the roster entry form for State competition.