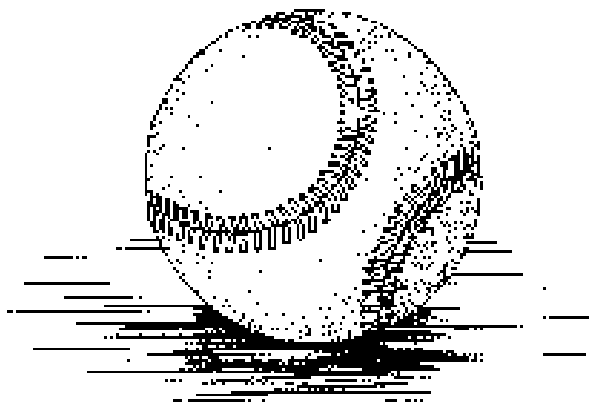


# **Special Olympics**

## **Northern California and Nevada**

### **Softball**



### **2006**

## **Guidelines**

### **and**

## **Rules**



May 2006

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS MISSION**

## **SONC / SONV PLAYS BY THE RULES**

## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA ATHLETES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **DIVISIONING CRITERIA**

## **SONC / SONV SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Section A - General Rules

Section B - Official Events

Section C - Divisioning

Section D - Uniforms

Section E - Equipment

Section F - Officials and Their Duties

Section G - Coaches and Their Responsibilities

1. Protests

Section H - Rules of Competition

1. General Rules and Modifications
2. Unified Sports® Competition
3. Tee Ball competition

Section I - Individual Skills

1. Scoresheet

Section J - Team Skills

1. Scoresheet

**ADDENDUM:** Changes to Section H, d, 6

## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS MISSION STATEMENT**

**The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with mental retardation, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics Athletes and the community.**

# **Training for Life**

## **SONC / SONV PLAYS BY THE RULES.....**

**All Special Olympics competitions will be conducted in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules and the National Governing Body of rules for each sport offered in our program. These rules are designed to protect the Athletes, provide equitable conditions of competition and promote uniformity so that no competitor shall obtain an unfair advantage over another.**

**The International Olympics Committee (IOC) has granted its official recognition to Special Olympics International, Inc., and its accredited programs.**

# Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada

## COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada (SONC/SONV) volunteer coaches are models whose behavior should serve as a positive example for their athletes. Their behavior should reflect a concern that the fairest and most positive competitive experience is equally available to every Special Olympics athlete in each training or competition. The coach has the unique opportunity to influence the development and personal growth of many individuals. For this reason, it is important that the coach adhere to the standards of ethical decision making and teaching.

In addition, it is the position of SONC/SONV that each volunteer coach shall agree to:

### HAVE RESPECT FOR OTHERS

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONC/SONV staff members, and friends and spectators in Special Olympics.
- I will treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- I will be a positive role model for the athletes I coach.

### ENSURE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

- I will ensure that for each athlete I coach, the time spent with Special Olympics is a positive experience.
- I will respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each athlete.
- I will ensure each athlete competes in events that challenge that athlete's potential and are appropriate to that athlete's ability.
- I will be fair, considerate and honest with athletes and communicate with athletes using simple, clear language.
- I will ensure that accurate scores are provided for entry of an athlete into any event.
- I will instruct each athlete to perform to the best of the athlete's ability at all preliminaries/heats and finals in accordance with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

### ACT PROFESSIONALLY AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS/HER ACTIONS

- My language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation will demonstrate high standards.
- I will display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in Special Olympics, including to the athletes, other coaches and volunteers, opponents, officials, administrators, SONC/SONV staff members, parents, spectators and the media.
- I will encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I will not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs while representing Special Olympics at training sessions or during competitions.
- I will not engage in any form of personal abuse towards athletes, other coaches and volunteers, SONC/SONV staff members, or friends and spectators in Special Olympics, including verbal, physical or emotional abuse.
- I will be alert to any form of abuse from other sources directed toward athletes or others in my care.

### PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE TO THE ATHLETES

- I will seek continued improvement through performance evaluation and ongoing coach education.
- I will be knowledgeable about the Sports Rules and skills of the sport(s) I coach.
- I will provide a planned training program.
- I will keep copies of the registration, training, and competition records for each athlete I coach.

- I will follow the Special Olympics and National Governing Body rules for my sport(s) coached, as well as all SONC/SONV policies and procedures as amended.

**ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE ATHLETES**

- I will ensure that the equipment and facilities for my sport(s) coached are safe to use.
- I will ensure that the equipment, rules, training and the environment are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
- I will review each athlete's registration form and be aware of any limitations on that athlete's participation noted on that form.
- I will encourage athletes to seek medical advice when needed.
- I will maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes.
- I will allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.

Should the behaviors and/or abilities of any volunteer coach or other faction of a school/organization violate either the principles stated above (including the SONC/SONV policies and procedures as amended) or the philosophy of the Special Olympics movement, then any of the following actions may be taken by SONC/SONV in its sole discretion:

1. The coach may be notified by official warning of the undesirable behavior and be requested to remedy the situation immediately in order to continue his or her participation in Special Olympics;
2. The coach may be requested to withdraw personally or with his/her team from the remainder of any Special Olympics event or tournament;
3. The coach or sponsoring school/organization may be suspended from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events for a specified period of time; and/or
4. The coach or sponsoring school/organization may be permanently prohibited from participating in any or all Special Olympics activities or events.

I have read and understand the foregoing SONC/SONV Coaches' Code of Conduct, and agree to abide by its terms.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Volunteer Coach)

Print Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada

## ATHLETE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada (SONC / SONV) is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All SONC / SONV Athletes and Unified Partners agree to the following code:

### SPORTSMANSHIP

- I will practice good sportsmanship.
- I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team, and Special Olympics.
- I will not use bad language.
- I will not swear or insult other persons.
- I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers, or staff.

### TRAINING AND COMPETITION

- I will train regularly.
- I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.
- I will listen to my coaches and the official and ask questions when I do not understand
- I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.
- I will not "hold back" in preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals competition division.

### RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

- I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.
- I will not smoke in non-smoking areas.
- I will not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics venues
- I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.
- I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules, the International Federation and the National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport(s).

I agree to obey this code and I understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences by SONC / SONV program up to and including not being allowed to participate.

# **DIVISIONING CRITERIA**

## **(DEVELOPED BY SONC / SONV SOFTBALL SMT)**

**Teams will be placed in competitive divisions based on the following criteria:**

### **Level 1**

Competitive at ASA C or D level—all players could participate on this level

### **Level 2**

- High ability athletes
  - Good reaction time/quick reflexes
  - All able to hit balls into outfield in the air
- High understanding of rules and game play
- Can play by ASA rules

### **Level 3**

- Basic understanding of rules
- Ability to field grounders and catch fly balls; majority able to hit ball into the outfield in the air
- Good understanding of balls and strikes
- Understanding of game rules and offensive/defensive situations (i.e. force plays, coverage schemes, etc) is as follows:
  - *High 3*- Good (5-8 players)
  - *Mid 3*- Average (3-5 players)
  - *Low 3*- Limited (1-3 players)

### **Level 4 (Coach Pitch)**

- Utilizes coach as pitcher
- Limited concept of game rules
- Inconsistent at hitting pitched balls
- 1-2 athletes able to hit the ball into the outfield in the air
- Limited team concept
  - Poor understanding of situations, base coverage schemes and force plays.
  - High coach instruction mandatory

### **Level 5 (Tee Ball division)**

- Inability to hit pitched balls
- Difficulty fielding ground balls
- Very low mobility/reaction time
- All players--limited ability
- Extremely low understanding of rules or game play
- No team concept
- If only one real good player dominates the game, you could still possibly be a Level 5 team.

**IN ORDER TO PROPERLY LEVEL YOUR TEAM, USE THE ABOVE CRITERIA KEEPING YOUR EIGHT 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 Softball is a team sport and teams will be divisioned based on total team composition.**

# SONC / SONV SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Official Special Olympics Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Softball competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules for Softball. ASA rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall apply.

## SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

1. EACH SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE IS REQUIRED TO HAVE AN APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION AND A RELEASE FORM FILLED OUT AND SIGNED BY A CERTIFIED PHYSICIAN IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE. ALSO, EACH UNIFIED PARTNER MUST FILL OUT A UNIFIED® PARTNER RELEASE FORM IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SPECIAL OLYMPICS GENERAL RULES.
2. ***EACH TEAM IS REQUIRED TO PLAY ALL TEAM MEMBERS IN EVERY GAME PLAYED. PLAYERS MUST PLAY: AT LEAST ONE DEFENSIVE INNING IN THE FIELD OR ONE AT BAT.***
3. ***EACH TEAM IS REQUIRED TO PLAY AT A REGIONAL QUALIFYING SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM CHAMPIONSHIP.***

## SECTION B - OFFICIAL EVENTS

1. Traditional
2. Unified Sports® - No less than 5 Special Olympics Athletes and 5 Special Partners (6 and 6 if Extra Hitter Used). Each event will offer all 5 levels.

The following event provides meaningful competition for athletes with lower ability levels:

1. Individual Skills Competition (ISC)

## SECTION C - DIVISIONS

1. ***Competitors in Softball will compete in Open Age Group:***
  - a) ***Open Age Group: Combination of other age groups. This group will be used if there are not enough teams within a specific age group to make a competitive division.***
2. All Co-ed teams will compete in the male divisions according to age.
3. Teams will be divisioned according to:
  - a) Regional Events
  - b) Previous year's results
  - c) Other teams' Evaluations
  - d) Skills assessment test scores (new teams only).

**The softball management team will determine the final divisions for the program championship. There will be no qualifying games at the program championship.**

## SECTION D - UNIFORMS

1. All players must wear matching uniforms (same color, trim and style). The jersey must have at least a 6" number on the back and be contrasting to the shirt color. Shirts and/or pants must also be matching. No 2 players may wear the same number. If caps are to be worn they must all be matching.
2. **NO JEANS.**
3. Softball shoes are recommended (rubber sole cleats). **No metal cleats or running sneakers.**

## SECTION E – EQUIPMENT

1. Only bats marked by the manufacturer as “Official Softball” may be used. No double wall or titanium bats may be used.
2. The first basemen and/or catcher may wear a first baseman’s trapping style mitt. No other player!
3. The catcher must wear a facemask, skullcap and throat-guard. Chest protector and shin guards are recommended, but not required.
4. All batters and base runners must wear an approved batter’s helmet.
5. All jewelry, rings, and watches must be removed prior to entering the field. Failure to do so will end in disqualification for the player.
6. **Levels (1, 2, 3 & 4) will use the Worth RIF #10 Ball, optic yellow with red stitches.**
7. **Level 5 will use the Easton Softball Soft Touch.**

## SECTION F - OFFICIALS AND THEIR DUTIES

1. There will be at least one Umpire for all games during competition.
2. Officials shall have the power to make all decisions on any point not specifically covered in the rules.
3. An appeal play is defined as a play in which an umpire is unable to make a decision unless he/she is requested to do so by a coach or player. The appeal can be made if a coach or player asks the umpire to make a ruling.
4. The umpires are empowered to make all decisions on the playing field. If a protest is made, it shall be brought to the Softball Rules Committee who will then make a final decision. A protest may only be made if it questions the applicability of the rules. No protest will be considered which pertains to any judgment call made by an umpire.
5. If a coach touches a runner while the ball is still in play, that runner will be declared out. Coaches are required to stay within the boundaries of the coaches’ boxes.

**Players and/or coaches may be dismissed due to poor sportsmanship, excessive foul language or inappropriate behavior. This interpretation may be determined by either the umpire or Tournament Committee.**

## SECTION G - COACHES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Coaches shall remain within the designated “coaches’ areas” or in the dugout while the game is in progress. Coaches are not allowed on the field during the game.
2. In level 4 &5, coaches are allowed to assist players to their positions prior to the start of the inning.
3. Coaches are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules of the game, not only the modified rules in this manual, but also the International Rules of the game. The National Governing Body of rules for Special Olympics Softball is Federation International Softball and the Amateur Softball Association (ASA). To acquire your own ASA Rules Book, write to:

### **Amateur Softball Association**

2801 N.E.50th Street  
Oklahoma, OK 73111  
(405) 424-5266

### **Protests**

1. Protests can only be made by the Head Coach and must be made immediately following an incident. The protest must be given to the Umpire and scorekeeper.
2. Protests are only allowed for rules interpretations and implementation issues. Protests are not allowed on judgment calls. The Softball Rules Committee will decide on all protests within 30 minutes of the completed game.
3. Protest forms will be available at event registration.

## SECTION H - RULES OF COMPETITION

### General Rules and Modifications

#### 1. The field shall conform to FIS and ASA standards with the following exceptions:

Field Specifications

**Level 1, 2 and 3 – minimum 200' fence**

**Level 4 and 5 – 200' fence (If no fence, then a line and /or cones will be used to determine the 200 ft perimeter).**

2. A regulation game shall consist of seven innings. The game will be considered complete if after five (5) full innings of play one team leads the other by ten runs or more. The game shall last no longer than 1 hour and fifteen (15) minutes. An inning will not begin after the time limit is reached. If the home team is winning, the game is over after the visiting team has batted.
3. Games are considered complete after 3 full innings of play.
4. **In level 4 and 5, an inning will consist of three outs or 10 runs, whichever occurs first.**
5. The distance from home plate to the pitcher's rubber may be modified from the actual distance of 50 feet to the following distances:

**Level 2 - 46 feet**

**Level 3 and 4 - 40 feet**

**Note: Once the distance is determined, the pitcher must pitch from this spot the remainder of the game.**

6. Teams must **begin** a game with at least 9 players. Unified Teams may start with 9, but must have 5 athletes and 4 partners. *All Teams must have a roster of at least 10 players. Teams may end the game with 8 players if the player(s) are injured during the game.*
7. In level 4 and 5, coaches are allowed to assist players to their positions prior to the start of the inning.
8. **In levels 4 and 5, an 8 ft circle will be placed around the pitchers mound and the defensive pitcher must be in that 8 ft circle while the ball is dead.**
9. *Forfeit time- 5 minutes past game time!*
10. No bunting at any level. This is a judgment call by the Umpire.
11. *If the batter has two strikes and fouls off the third attempt, he or she shall be declared out.*
12. **A team roster will consist of a minimum of 10 players and maximum of 15 players.**
13. **Teams may play any of their roster players in the field and make changes throughout the game. However, batting line-up changes must occur according to ASA rules.**
14. **Batter substitution and re-entry rule:**  
*Batting line-up only. Any of the starting players may leave and re-enter the game. This may be done by each starting player only once, with the provision that the players occupy the same position in the batting order as the one they occupied when they leave the game. A starting player may only re-enter the game for the person who substituted for him/her. Substitutes may re-enter the game in the same manner.*
15. An extra player, referred to as a "EP," is optional, but if one is used, it must be made known prior to the start of the game and be listed on the scoring sheet in the regular batting order. If the EP is used, he must be used the entire game. Failure to complete the game with the EP results in the forfeiture of the game.
16. The EP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the game.
17. If an EP is used, all 11 must bat and any 10 may play defense. Defensive positions may be changed, but the batting order must remain the same.
18. The EP may be substituted for at any time. The substitute must be a player who has not yet been in the game. The starting EP may re-enter.
19. When batting, players will take their stance within the lines of the batter's box.
20. The ball must be pitched in an underhand motion, and should travel in an arc that is no less than 1.83m (6') and no greater than 3.66m (12').
21. Four balls constitute a walk and three strikes constitute an out. If the batter has two strikes and fouls off the third pitch, he/she shall be declared out
22. Courtesy runners may be requested during the review of the ground rules with the umpires before the game begins. The player that made the last out will be the courtesy runner.
23. **Umpires determine when the ball is dead. Teams need to get the ball to the infield and control the ball for the Umpires to determine the play to be dead.**

24. In case of a tie for awarding purpose, divisioning games, or seeding for medal play, the following procedures will take place:
  - A. **Head to head competition results (with (2) teams only)**
  - B. **Lowest total defensive points allowed in all games played that counted towards the standings. (no divisioning or play in games)**
  - C. **Games Rules Committee will make final decision on outcome of the tie.**

## Unified Sports® Team Competition

1. The roster shall contain a proportionate number of Athletes and Partners.
2. During competition, the line-up shall never be less than five Athletes and five Partners (six Athletes & six Partners if the EP II is used) at any time. Failure to adhere to the required ratio results in a forfeit.
3. Each team shall have an adult non-playing coach responsible for the line-up and conduct of the team during competition.
4. The batting order shall be an alternation of Athletes and Partners.
5. **There are no position requirements. Athletes and or Partners may play any position in the field.**
6. If a Partner is intentionally walked, then the next batter (an Athlete) will have the option of being awarded first base.
7. In Unified Sports® competition, umpires are to warn teams whose Special Partners dominate and/or encroach play of Special Olympics Athletes.

## Coach Pitch

1. Each Teams' coach will pitch to their own Team. The pitcher will be designated at the beginning of the game.
2. ASA arc rule will not be enforced (min 6ft arc to max 12ft).
3. **Batters will get a maximum of 7 pitches.** Umpires will call strikes and a player can strike out. ASA rules will prevail (three strikes and the foul ball rule). If after the seventh pitch, the athlete has failed to reach base safely or even fails to swing at the pitch, he/she will be called out.
4. **Batters can not be walked.**
5. The coach must make every effort to move out of the way of the defensive players attempting to field the ball or make a play. If the coach interferes with the defender making the play or touches the ball, the ball will become dead and the batter will be called out.
6. Coach pitching distance must adhere to the SONC Level Rules and modifications (adjust to a minimum of 40 ft and a max of 50ft). As per SONC rules, once a spot are established, the pitcher (coach) must pitch all athletes from that position.
7. **An 8-ft circle will be placed around the pitchers mound and the defensive pitcher must be in that 8-ft circle while the ball is dead.**
8. **The defensive pitcher must remain in the 8-ft circle around the pitcher's mound until the ball becomes live.**

## Tee Ball Competition

- a. Playing Area
  - 1) The playing area shall conform to FIS standards, with the following modifications:
    - a) The distance from home plate to the pitcher's rubber may be modified to a minimum distance of 46'.
    - b) A "neutral zone" will be marked in arc of 46' from home plate. Any batted ball that does not cross this line and is not touched by a defensive player will be designated a foul ball.
    - c) A coaches' circle will be located 10' beyond second base and made with a 6' diameter. One coach from the defensive team may be allowed to stand in this circle while his team is on the field.

b. Equipment

- 1) Same as Slow Pitch Team Competition.
- 2) **Exception: Ball will be an Easton Soft Touch Softball.**

c. Team and Players

- 1) *Each team must have 9 players in the following positions to start a game.*

Normal Positions:

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| a) Pitcher          | Defensive position is on the rubber                    |
| b) Catcher          | Defensive position is behind the plate                 |
| c) First Baseman    | Normal defensive position                              |
| d) Second Baseman   | Normal defensive position                              |
| e) Third Baseman    | Normal defensive position                              |
| f) Shortstop        | Normal defensive position                              |
| g) Four Outfielders | Must play a minimum of 3m (9' 10 ¼") behind infielders |

d. General Rules and Modifications

- 1) A batting tee will be placed directly on home plate.
- 2) A coach from the batting team will adjust the tee to fit the batter.
- 3) To start play, the catcher will place the ball on the tee and the umpire will say "play ball".
- 4) The batter will step in the batter's box and hit the ball.
- 5) If the batter completely misses the ball and the tee, the attempt shall be ruled a strike.
- 6) **All defensive players must stand behind the neutral zone before the ball is hit. They may come into the neutral zone after the ball is hit to field it. If they touch a ball within the neutral zone, the ball becomes live. If the ball stops in the neutral zone, untouched by a defensive player, the ball will be called a foul ball.**
- 7) If the batter has two strikes and fouls off the third attempt, he or she shall be declared out.
- 8) *If the batter has two strikes and swings and misses, he or she shall be declared out.*
- 9) **An 8-ft circle will be placed around the pitchers mound and the defensive pitcher must be in that 8-ft circle while the ball is dead.**
- 10) The batter must hit the ball within the foul lines and beyond the 46 ft neutral zone to be ruled a fair ball. If a batted ball does not leave the neutral zone, and the defensive player does not touch it, the ball will be called a foul ball. *If a defensive player touches the ball before the 46ft. neutral line, then the ball is deemed in play.*
- 11) The umpires are empowered to make all decisions on the playing field. If a protest is made, it shall be brought before the Softball Rules Committee who will then make a final decision. A protest will not be considered which pertains to any judgment call made by an umpire.
- 12) After a ball is hit into fair territory and the batter has left the batter's box, the umpire shall remove the tee from home plate and set it in foul territory.

e. Coaches Privileges

- 1) Two base coaches are allowed for the offensive team, one in the first base coaches' box and one in the third base coaches' box. The coaches must remain in those boxes while their team is at bat.
- 2) One of the two base coaches must adjust the tee to the proper height for each batter and return to the coaches' box.
- 3) One coach from the defensive team may be allowed on the field, and he must remain in the coaches' circle behind second base. Also, he must make a reasonable attempt to avoid any ball that is thrown in his/her direction.

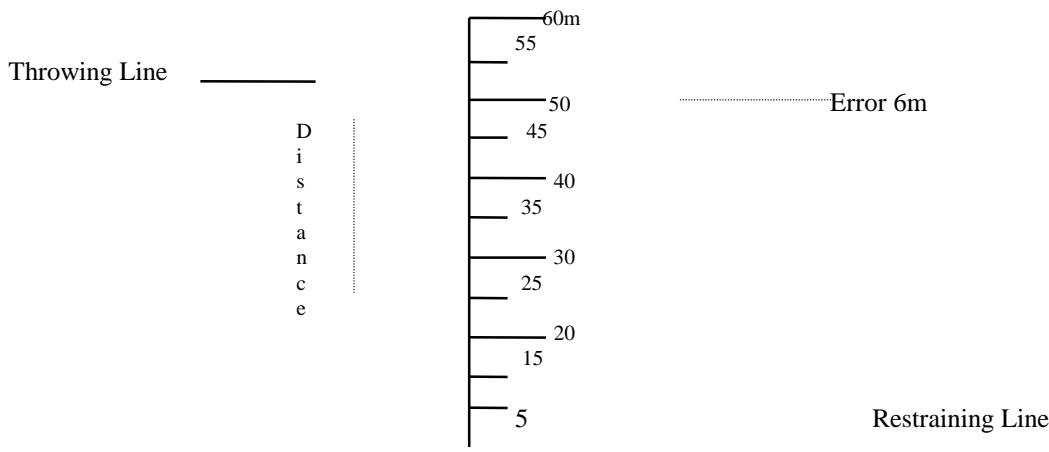
## SECTION I - INDIVIDUAL SKILLS CONTEST

1. The ISC is designed specifically for lower ability athletes who have not yet developed the skills necessary to participate meaningfully in team Softball, and for players who cannot participate in team Softball because of their need to use a walking device.
2. Four events comprise the Individual Skills Contest: Base Running, Throwing, Fielding and Hitting. The athlete's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of these four events. Athletes will be pre-divisioned according to their total scores from these four events. Each event is diagrammed with the suggested number and placement of volunteers who will administer them. It is also suggested that the same volunteers remain at an event throughout the competition so that consistency is provided.

a. **Base-Running**

- 1) Equipment - Three bases, home plate, stopwatch.
- 2) Purpose - To measure the athlete's base running ability.
- 3) Description - Bases are set up like a baseball diamond and positioned 19.81m (65') apart. The athlete is instructed to start on home plate, and run around the bases as fast as possible, touching each base en route.
- 4) Scoring - The time starts when the athlete leaves home plate and stops when the athlete touches home plate after circling the bases. The time elapsed in seconds is subtracted from 60 to determine the point score. A penalty of five seconds for each base missed or touched in an improper order shall be assessed. The best score of two trials is recorded.

b. **Throwing**



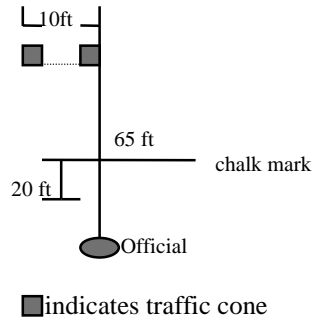
- 1) Equipment - Regulation field, two measuring tapes, softballs, two small cones or marking stakes.
- 2) Purpose - To measure the athlete's ability in throwing for distance and accuracy.
- 3) Description - The player being tested stands behind the restraining line, back far enough to take one or more steps in preparation for throwing. The player has two trials to throw the softball as far and as straight as possible down the throwing line, without stepping over the restraining line. Coaches, assistants or other waiting players should be positioned in the field to indicate, using a cone or marking stake, the spot where each ball first touches the ground. The better of the two throws is measured and recorded as the player's score. If a player steps on or over the line before releasing the ball, the trial must be repeated. There will be a maximum of two repeats.
- 4) Scoring - The new throwing score equals the throwing distance, measured at a point on the throwing line straight across from (perpendicular to) the spot where the ball landed, minus the error distance - the number of meters the ball landed off target - away from the throwing line. The player's score is the better of the two throws. Both error scores and distance are measured to the nearest meter; i.e., if a ball lands even with

(perpendicular to) the 50m point on the measuring tape, but is 6m off to one side, the player's score is 44 points. (Distance thrown (50) minus number of meters off target (6) results in a new score of 44m) Athletes score one point per meter; i.e., 44m = 44 points. If score falls between meters, score should be rounded down; i.e., 44.73 = 44 points.

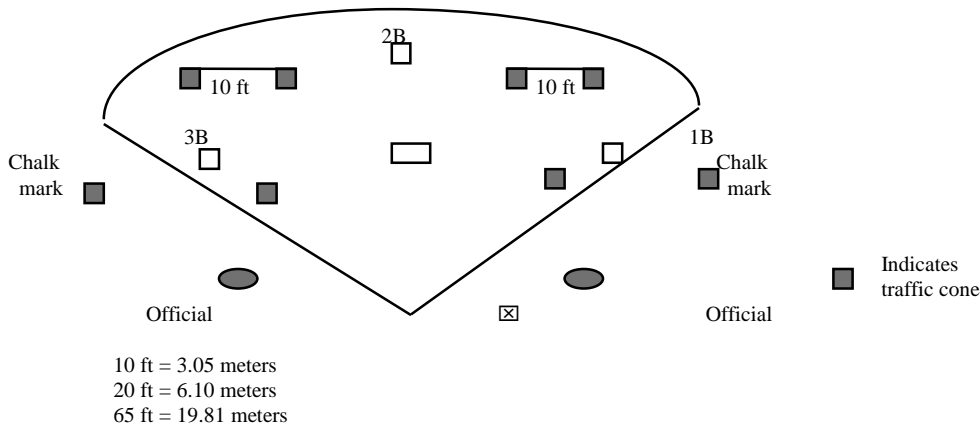
c. **Fielding**

- 1) Equipment - 30cm (12") softballs, measuring tape, chalk/line, cones.
- 2) Purpose - To measure athlete's fielding ability.
- 3) Description - The athlete will stand between, and behind, the two cones. The official must throw the ball on the ground to the athlete, between the cones. The throw to the athlete must hit the ground before the 6.10m (20') chalk mark. The athlete may move aggressively toward the ball. If the thrown ball is outside of the cones, the throw must be repeated. Each athlete gets five fielding attempts per trial. Each athlete receives two trials.
- 4) Scoring - The athlete receives five points for a clearly fielded ball (either caught in glove or trapped against the body, but off the ground); two points for a ball that is blocked; zero points for a missed attempt; for a maximum score of 50.

FIELDING DIAGRAM 1



FIELDING DIAGRAM 2



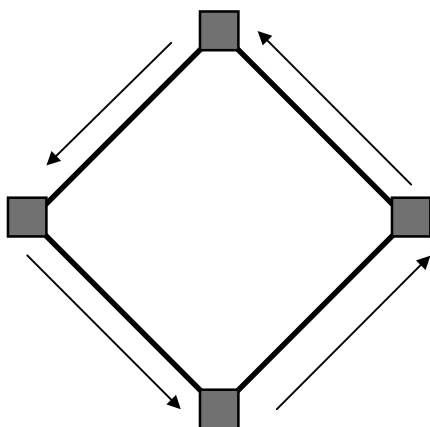
d. **Hitting**

- 1) Equipment - Batting tee, 30cm (11 3/4") red stitch restricted-flight softballs, bat, measuring tape, and chalk.
- 2) Purpose - To measure the athlete's ability to hit for distance when hitting off a batting tee.
- 3) Description - Standing in a regulation-size batter's box (i.e., 2.31m (7'7") by 99cm (3'3")), the athlete is instructed to hit the ball off the tee. The athlete receives three

- attempts.
- 4) Score - The distance of the longest hit shall determine the athlete's final score. The distance of a hit is measured from the batting tee to the point where the ball touches the ground. The distance is measured to the nearest meter; i.e., 1m = 1 point, 46m = 46 points. If the score falls between meters, scores should be rounded down; i.e., 46.73 = 46 points.
- e. **Final Tally:**  
A player's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of the four events which comprise the Individual Skills Contest.

## SECTION J - SOFTBALL TEAM SKILLS ASSESSMENT TEST

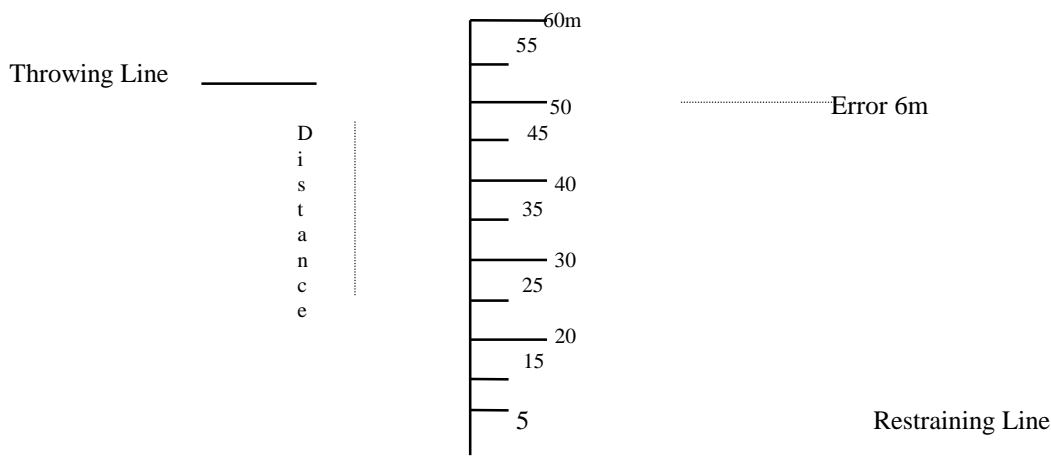
1. Individual player scores from each of the following skills assessment tests must be submitted to the Competition Organizing Committee by all teams entering Special Olympics Softball competition.
2. These tests are designed to help the Competition Committee gain a preliminary idea as to the ability level of the teams entered in the tournament. This allows the Committee to place teams in preliminary divisions for on-site evaluation. These tests can be critical to the success of the tournament.
3. These tests are to be used as an enhancement to, not a replacement for, on-site observation and evaluation.
4. Softball Team Skills Assessment Test (SAT)
  - a. Test Number One - Base Running



- 1) Set-up:
  - a) Standard softball field.
  - b) Three bases, home plate, stopwatch
- 2) Test:
  - a) Bases are set up like a baseball diamond and positioned 19.81m (65') apart.
  - b) The athlete is instructed to start at home plate and run around the bases as fast as possible, touching each base en route.
- 3) Scoring:
  - a) The time starts when the athlete leaves home plate.
  - b) The time stops when the athlete touches home plate after circling the bases.
  - c) The time elapsed in seconds is subtracted from 50 to determine the point score.
  - d) A penalty of five seconds for each base missed or touched in an improper order shall be assessed.

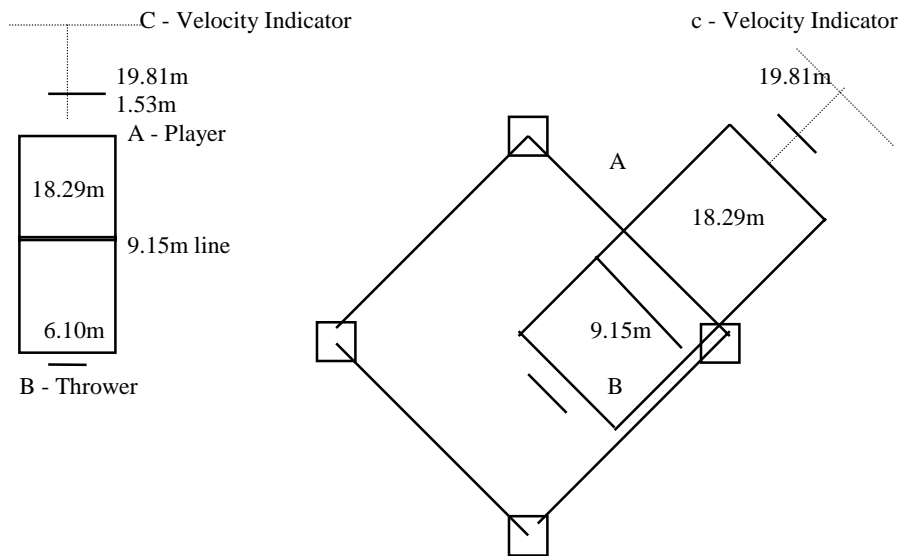
- e) The base score of two trials is recorded.
- f) Athletes should not be asked to take the two trials consecutively.

b. Test Number Two - Throwing



- 1) Set-up:
  - a) An outfield or a smooth grass field that can be marked off in feet.
  - b) Two measuring tapes, softballs, two small cones or marking stakes.
- 2) Test:
  - a) The player being tested stands behind the restraining line, back far enough to take one or more steps in preparation for throwing.
  - b) The player has two trials to throw the softball as far and as straight as possible down the throwing line, without stepping over the restraining line.
  - c) Coaches, assistants, or other waiting players should be positioned in the field to indicate, using a cone or marking stake, the spot where each ball first touches the ground.
  - d) The better of the two throws is measured and recorded as the player's score.
  - e) If a player steps on or over the restraining line before releasing the ball, the trial must be repeated.
  - f) There will be a maximum of two repeats.
- 3) Scoring:
  - a) The net throwing score equals the throwing distance, measured at a point on the throwing line straight across from (perpendicular to) the spot where the ball landed, minus the error distance - the number of meters the ball landed off target away from the throwing line.
  - b) The player's score is the better of the two throws.
  - c) Both error scores and distance scores are measured to the nearest meter.
  - d) Scoring Example:
    - 1) If a ball lands even with (perpendicular to) the 50m point on the measuring tape, but is 6m off to one side, the player's score is 44 points. [Distance thrown (50m) minus the number of meters off target (6m) results in a net score of 44m.]
    - 2) Athletes score one point per meter; i.e., 44m = 44 points. If the score falls between meters, the score should be rounded down; i.e., 44.73 = 44 points.

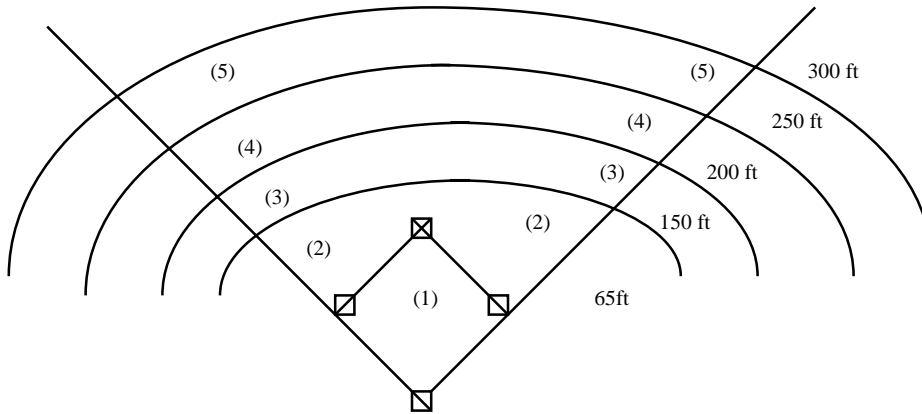
c. Test Number Three - Fielding



- 1) Set-up:
  - a) Standard infield or a smooth field with short grass on which chalk markings or cones can be placed.
  - b) Softballs, fielding gloves, measuring tape.
  
- 2) Test:
  - a) The player being tested stands in a ready position (A) behind a 1.53m (5') restraining line.
  - b) A thrower stands behind the throwing line and throws two practice and six test balls to each player.
  - c) Each throw must strike the ground before the 9.15m (30') line and must stay within the sideline boundaries of the marked area.
  - d) The throw should be made sidearm, with sufficient velocity to carry an untouched ball to line C - the velocity indicator distance beyond the end line.
  - e) The prescribed distance beyond the end line is marked by a cone or similar object.
  - f) Of the six trials, two balls should be thrown directly to the player, two to the right, and two to the left side of the player.
  - g) The player attempts to field each ball cleanly; i.e., with no noticeable bobbling or temporary loss of control, and tosses it back to the thrower.
  - h) On each trial the player starts behind the 1.53m (5') restraining line, but must move forward of the 18.29m (60') line toward the approaching ground ball in order to obtain maximum points.
  - i) Any throw not made as specified should be repeated. (**Note:** It is important to periodically check the velocity of the throw by occasionally instructing the player to let a ball go by untouched. Throws should reach the velocity marker.)
  
- 3) Scoring:
  - a) Each ball cleanly fielded in front of the 18.29m (60') end line counts five points.
  - b) A ball which is bobbled, but stopped from going past the player counts four points.
  - c) Balls fielded behind the 18.29m (60') line receive three points for cleanly fielded balls, and two points for bobbled balls.
  - d) Balls are considered to have been fielded in front of the 60' end line when at least the player's glove and ball are clearly in front of the line.
  - e) Any ball which is missed entirely, or touched but gets past the player, scores no points.
  - f) The score is the sum of all six trials.
  - g) It is recommended that the scorer stand just outside the marked area, even with the

- 18.29m (60') end line.  
h) Maximum score is 30 points.

d. Test Number Four - Batting



- 1) Set-up:
  - a) Standard softball field, 12 marking cones, softballs, bats, measuring tape.
- 2) Test:
  - a) The batter assumes a normal batting stance at the plate.
  - b) From the pitcher's mound, a coach will throw five hittable pitches that the batter attempts to hit as hard and as far as possible.
  - c) These pitches should be within a regulation arc (6'-12').
  - d) Only five swings are allowed to each batter.
- 3) Scoring:
  - a) The distance of the longest hit shall determine the athlete's final score. The distance of a hit is measured from the batting tee to the point where the ball first touches the ground. The distance is measured to the nearest meter; i.e., 1m = 1 point, 46m = 46 points. If the score falls between meters, the score should be rounded down; i.e., 46.73 = 46 points.