



# **UNIFIED TRACK & FIELD PLAYBOOK**

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO  
KNOW ABOUT:**

- **EVENTS**
- **EQUIPMENT**
- **RULES**
- **SCORING**
- **AWARDS**



**Special  
Olympics**  
Virginia

# OVERVIEW

- Unified track and field teams consist of approximately equal numbers of athletes with intellectual disabilities and partners without intellectual disabilities.
- All athletes and partners compete independently as equal members of the team and perform to their highest ability levels.
- Heats based on ability are formed to give all competitors a fair chance of winning.
- Varsity track and field athletes may help lead practices and train with the Unified track and field team. Varsity athletes, however, should not be Unified partners since they are already members of their varsity track team.

# ORGANIZING YOUR TEAM

- Work with your school's varsity track coach to determine when the Unified track & field team can practice. Options include:
  - Practice before the varsity team practice starts
  - Share the track facility with the varsity team.
  - Practice with the varsity track team.
- The partners are full participants on the team. They can also serve in leadership roles with athletes to lead warm-ups and teach running and field event skills.
- Work with the other Unified track & field coaches at nearby schools to determine your competition schedule. Options include:
  - Add Unified track & field events to varsity competitions. The Unified track & field team may travel with the varsity team.
  - Hold separate Unified track & field meets during school, after school or on weekends.
  - Host a championship Unified track & field meet at the end of the season.
- Times and distances should be recorded at all meets. Team scores may not be calculated at all meets.

# EVENTS

A variety of events are available to accommodate students of varying ability levels and physical abilities. Schools decide which events to offer.

100 Meter Walk

100 Meter Assisted Walk

100 Meter Non-Motorized Wheelchair Race

100 Meter Motorized Wheelchair Race

100 Meter Run

200 Meter Run

400 Meter Run

4 x 100 Meter Unified Relay

Standing Long Jump

Running Long Jump

Softball Throw

Shot Put

Turbojav

# **WALKING RACES**

Participants who use devices to walk should compete against each other. An empty lane should separate competitors in order to allow more space for participants.

# **WHEELCHAIR RACES**

- Participants who use non-motorized wheelchairs should compete against each other.
- Participants who use motorized wheelchairs should compete against each other.
- Participants who are pushed, pulled or otherwise assisted should compete separately from participants who independently move their wheelchairs.
- Competitors start with all wheels behind the start line.
- Competitors are timed until all front wheels cross the front edge of the finish line.
- Lanes for wheelchair events are two track-lanes wide.

# **100 METER RACE**

- Competitors may run outside of their assigned lane as long as they do not interfere with another runner.
- Competitors who interfere with other runners are disqualified.

# **200M & 400M RACES**

- A staggered start is used and competitors must stay in their lanes.
- Competitors who run outside of their lanes are disqualified.

# **4 X 100M RELAY RACE**

- Each team consists of two athletes and two partners.
- Athletes and partners may run in any order.
- A staggered start is used and runners must stay in their lanes.
- Runners who run outside of their lanes are disqualified.
- Runners must pass the baton within their lane's marked zones or the team is disqualified.

# **FIELD EVENTS**

- Each competitor is allowed three non-consecutive attempts. All attempts are measured.
- The furthest distance of the three attempts is counted as the competitor's final score.

## **SOFTBALL THROW**

- A standard 12" softball is used.
- Competitors may use any type of throw.
- Throws are measured from where the ball lands, not from where it rolls to a stop.
- A throw is not measured if the competitor steps on or over the throwing line.

## **SHOT PUT**

- Men's shot put for high school students is 4 kg or 8.8 pounds.
- Women's shot put and middle school students shot put is 3 kg or 6.6 pounds
- Competitors may not "throw" the shot. The shot may not drop below or behind the shoulder and the throwing elbow must be kept up.
- Competitors may not touch the top of the ring. They may touch the inside of the ring or toe board.

# **TURBOJAV**

- Females and males age 8 - 15 use a 300g turbojav.
- Males age 16+ use a 400g turbojav.
- The turbojav must be thrown overhand above the shoulder.
- Measurements are taken from where the tip of the turbojav first strikes the ground.
- A throw is not measured if a competitor steps over the throwing line or if the turbojav tip does not land first.

# **STANDING LONG JUMP**

- Competitors start with both feet on the ground behind a marked take-off line.
- Competitors must jump with both feet.
- The distance measured is from the heel of the closest foot to the take-off line.

# **RUNNING LONG JUMP**

- Competitors must jump off one foot behind the edge of the take-off line closest to the sand pit.
- The take-off line is one meter from the edge of the sand pit. Use several pieces of white athletic tape to make a take-off line.
- The distance measured is from the closest impression in the sand made by any part of the body to the take-off line.



# **DIVISIONING**

- Students are allowed to enter two events and one relay.
- Relay teams may be limited to 1 or 2 per school, with one team comprised of students who run faster than the other team.
- Heats are comprised of 3 - 8 students based on ability.
- Entry scores are used to group students by ability.
- No consideration is given to whether a competitor is an athlete or a partner. All students are grouped based on ability, meaning athletes and partners may be in the same heat.
- If there is a sufficient number of competitors, heats may be formed based on ability and gender.

# SCORING

- All competitors in each event earn points for their school as follows:
  - 1st place = 10 points
  - 2nd place = 8 points
  - 3rd place = 6 points
  - 4th place = 5 points
  - 5th place = 4 points
  - 6th place = 3 points
  - 7th place = 2 points
  - 8th place = 1 points
- Unified relay teams may or may not count towards team points. It is sometimes easier to offer Unified relay races for fun if the runners are likely to change the day of the event.
- Teams may vary in size. To account for differences in team size, divide the total number of team points by the number of competitors on the team to determine the team's final placement.

# AWARDS

- Team awards are presented rather than recognizing individual event winners.
- Special Olympics Virginia can supply 1st - 8th place Unified Sports ribbons for team awards.
- Schools may order gold, silver and bronze Unified Sports medals and participation Unified Sports medals if they wish.
- Schools may also choose to present team trophies for championship competitions.