Unified Team Track & Field
Official Sports &Competition Rules

REGISTRATION TERMINOLOGY

A. Participants with intellectual disabilities will be registered as "Unified Athletes."

B. Participants without intellectual disabilities will be registered as "Unified Partners."

ELIGIBILITY / CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

A. Students who meet all AIA eligibility requirements will qualify as a Unified Athlete or a Unified Partner.

B. All Unified Athletes and Unified Partners shall complete all clearance requirements put forth by the AIA and SOAZ for participation in Unified Sports as outlined in the AIA Bylaws and school's athletic clearance packet, including, but not limited to, registration/consent forms, sports physicals, concussion training, and student eligibility forms.

C. All Unified Sports coaches shall complete all certification requirements put forth by the AIA, Special Olympics Arizona, and his/her school district before the beginning of the sports season.

D. Any student who also competes on the school's traditional Track & Field team ***IS*** eligible to participate as a Unified Partner in Unified Team Track and Field, ***EXCEPT*** during the following circumstances –

- Any competition at which the student attempts to qualify for advancement to a state-level competition in any non-Unified event.
- Any state-level competition at which the student competes in non-Unified events.

E. High school athletes in other spring sports may participate in Unified Team Track and Field if the school and coaches allow it.

REGULAR/POST-SEASON GUIDELINES

A. Regular Season

i. The AIA Standardized Calendar shall be used to identify the allowable starting week for practice and regular-season competition and the conclusion of regular and post-season competition.

ii. Special Olympics Arizona's "8-practice" rule is effective for participation in High School Unified Sports. Practices are to be a minimum duration of the time of the class to qualify as a sanctioned practice.

B. Qualifications Standards – State Championship

i. To qualify for AIA Track and Field State Championship advancement, teams must compete at a qualifying Unified Track and Field Sectionals meet. The current season's fact sheet lists a list of qualifying Unified Sectionals meets.

ii. The **top 8 pairs in each event statewide will qualify for the AIA State Championship**. Teams who place first at a qualifying Unified Sectionals meet are guaranteed advancement to the state championship. The remaining spots will be based on final team scores from the Unified Sectionals meets.

C. AIA Track and Field State Championship

i. The Unified Track and Field State Championship will be held during the first week of May in conjunction with the AIA State Track and Field Championship.

ii. Seeding for all Unified Team Track and Field events will be determined by qualification scores (times/distances) based on the results of the Unified Sectionals meets.

iii. Team registration will follow the same process established by the AIA for the State Track and Field Championship. The timeline of deadlines can be found on the current season's fact sheet.

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OFFICIAL RULES

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The rules shall be those of the current National Federation Track and Field Rule Book, with exceptions noted in the AIA Constitution and Bylaws and modifications outlined in these Unified Track and Field Sports and Competition Rules.

I. Team Composition

A. Each team shall have an adult non-playing coach responsible for the lineup and conduct of the team.
B. A team roster shall consist of at least 6 participants and no more than 24 participants.
C. The roster must always have an approximately equal number of Unified Athletes and Unified Partners.
D. Teams will be coded with no limitation on the number of boys or girls in an event or on a team.
E. An equal number of Unified Athletes and Unified Partners must be entered in each event.
F. To emphasize the values of inclusion and teamwork, awards will be for team accomplishments only.

II. Events and Entry Requirements

A. The following events are currently offered for Unified Team Track and Field:

- 2x100 Meters
- 2x200 Meters
- 2x400 Meters
- 4X100 Meters
- Shot Put
- Turbo Javelin
- Long-Jump

B. An individual may NOT be entered (as a participant AND/OR as an alternate) in more than three (3) events, relays inclusive, and shall not compete in more than three (3) events.

C. Each school may enter the maximum number of participants in the events below. Still, there must be an equal number of Unified Athletes and Unified Partners entered in each event:

i. 2x100 Meters – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
ii. 2x200 Meters - 4 participants (2 Unified Partners/ 2 Unified Partners)
iii. 2x400 Meters – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
iv. 4X100 Meter Relay – 1 relay team of 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
v. Shot Put – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
vi. Turbo Javelin – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
vii. Long-Jump – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)

D. Wheelchair Participants

i. Participants using manual wheelchairs or power wheelchairs are eligible to participate as follows:
   a. Track Events
      - MANUAL WHEELCHAIRS: compete against participants with and without disabilities.
      - POWER WHEELCHAIRS: compete in a division that is only composed of power wheelchair competitors. Because the engine and not a person propels the chair, the type of competition is different. If there is only one competitor in a division, they try to exceed their personal best for the season. If successful, they receive the point total for 1st place. If not, they receive the point total for 2nd place.
      - LANE ASSIGNMENTS: Two lanes will be assigned for wheelchair competitors during a race
      - RELAYS: Only participants using a manual wheelchair can be selected as members

of the 4 x 100 or 4 x 400-meter relays.

b. Field Events
- All wheelchair participants compete against participants with and without disabilities.

E. Participants with Visual Impairments
   i. Participants with visual impairments (defined as blind or severely restricted vision) may use a guide runner to assist them. The guide runner is given one adjoining lane.
   ii. Another acceptable option is for the participant to use a guide rope held by volunteers with a relay baton attached. The runner grabs the baton and slides it along the rope while running or walking during the race.

F. Participants with Hearing Impairments
   i. The competitor should be placed in the lane closest to the positioning of the official starter.
   ii. An assistant standing next to the starter will drop a brightly colored (red) cloth when the gun sounds.
   iii. Another allowable option is to have the assistant stand behind the competitor with the hearing impairment and tap them on the shoulder when the gun sounds.

III. **Seeding and Team Scoring**

A. Participants with and without disabilities compete against each other in co-ed competition divisions within each event. These divisions are determined by the entrants having similar qualifying times or distances.

B. Qualifying times and distances for each competitor must be submitted at least 10 days before a competition for the events in which they will be entered. For example, if a participant will be entered in the 2x400 meters and the running long jump, qualifying marks must be submitted for each event.

C. Ideally, the variance between the highest and lowest scores in a competition division should be no more than 15%. However, this variance can be expanded to include more divisions of three or more competitors.

D. The minimum number of competitors in a heat/flight is three, and the maximum is eight.

E. Every event competition division result in the same allocation of points awarded to the teams. For example, if there are seven divisions of the 2x100 meters, competitors in each division will score points for their teams based on their place of finish.

F. Team scoring is based upon the format delineated in the NFHS Track and Field Rules Book for dual meets. All competition divisions in Unified Team Track and Field will score points as follows:

   i. The following scoring will be used for all types of Unified Track and Field meets (dual, tri, invitational) :

   a. 1st place = 10 points
   b. 2nd place = 8 points
   c. 3rd place = 6 points
   d. 4th place = 5 points
   e. 5th place = 4 points
   f. 6th place = 3 points
   g. 7th place = 2 points
   h. 8th place = 1 point

   ii. Adding together the total amount of points earned by the participants on each Unified Track and Field team determines the final team's place of finish for the competition.

   iii. To emphasize the values of inclusion and teamwork, **awards will be for team accomplishments only**.

IV. **Event Rules**

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A. All track and field events will follow the National Federation of State High School Associations rules, except for modifications set forth in the official Special Olympics rules for athletics (Track & Field).

B. Highlighted **track event** rules modifications appearing in the Special Olympics rules include the following:
   i. In races up to and including the 400 meters, runners have the option of using or not using starting blocks.
   ii. A runner charged with two false starts in the same race will be disqualified.
   iii. All runners should run within their lanes. However, if a runner runs outside their lane in the straight or outside the outer lane on the bend, with no material advantage being gained, and if no other runner is obstructed, the competitor should not be disqualified.
   iv. <u>Wheelchair Racers:</u>
      a. A wheelchair competitor finishes their race when all front wheels (one or two) of the wheelchair reach the finish line.
      b. The lanes wheelchair competitors use should be made two-track lanes wide. c.

C. Highlighted **field event** rules modifications appearing in the Special Olympics rules include the following:
   i. <u>Field Event Scoring</u>
      a. Participants shall be allowed to perform two non-consecutive attempts during the competition.
      b. All attempts shall be measured and recorded.
      c. The longest measurement of each competitor's two attempts shall be used for scoring the final place of finish.
      d. In the event of a tie, the competitors' second measurement shall determine the final place of finish.
   ii. <u>Shot Put</u>: All competitors will use an 8 lb. shot.
   iii. <u>Turbo Javelin</u>
      a. All competitors will throw a turbo javelin weighing 400 grams.
      b. The turbo javelin must be held by the grip by one hand only.
      c. The turbo javelin must be thrown over the shoulder or upper part of the throwing arm and may not be slung or hurled.
      d. It is counted as a foul if a competitor: (a) does not use the proper throwing technique; (b) does not throw the turbo javelin so the point (tip) lands before any other part of the implement; (c) does not throw the turbo javelin so the point (tip) falls entirely within the inner edges of the sector lines.
      e. The runway consists of parallel lines that are separated by 4 meters. A foul line marks the end of the runway. To simplify the IAAF rules, the landing sector lines are defined by this procedure: Find the center of the foul line (2 meters) and pull a measuring tape 8 meters to the back of the javelin runway. Mark the center spot at this point. Hold the end of the measuring tape at this center point and pull the tape through the point where the foul line and runway parallel line connects on one side. Mark this line out 40 meters from the center point at the back of the runway and repeat the procedure for the other side.
   iv. <u>Long Jump</u>
      a. The following two approaches are allowed when performing the Long Jump. During

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In competition, ***participants are required to use the same approach for both attempts*** and must notify the field judge of their approach ***before*** their first attempt –

1. Standing Approach
    - The takeoff board for the Standing Long Jump shall be marked one inch from the edge of the sandpit.
2. Running Approach
    - The takeoff board for the Running Long Jump shall be placed one meter from the edge of the sandpit.
    - To safely clear the space between the takeoff board and the sandpit, competitors must be able to jump a **minimum of one meter** to use the **running approach** during competition.
        - *NOTE—Participants who CANNOT jump at least one meter will be required to use the standing approach during the competition.*