2020 BOCCE SEASON OVERVIEW

Bocce Season Calendar

• Registration Deadlines
  - Qualifying Tournaments – July 8, 2020
  - Season Ending Tournament, Tournament of Champions – July 29, 2020

• Qualifying Tournaments
  - The Roots, Westfield July 18, 2020
  - Teamworks, Canton, July 25, 2020

• Season Ending State Tournaments
  - Tournament of Champions August 22 & 23, 2020

Registration

• Programs must abide by registration deadlines. Programs that do not meet registration deadlines will not be eligible to compete
• In order to attend any event or practice all participants must have up to date forms and/or certifications on file with Special Olympics Massachusetts by published deadline

Waivers

• In order to advance to a State level season ending tournament (tournament of champions) all participants must compete at and qualify through a regional qualifier.
  - An athlete who is sick or injured may be granted a waiver if Special Olympics MA is notified in advance or immediately after tournament and there is still space available at Tournament of Champions
• Waivers will not be giving out for behavioral issues or athlete doesn't feel like attending that day

Sport Resources

A variety of coaching resources are available for download at the Special Olympics sport resource page (https://resources.specialolympics.org/sports-essentials). These include

• Sport Essentials
  - Article One / Coaching S.O. Athlete / Sport Rules / Coaching Guides / Athlete & Coach Development Models

• Unified Sports
  - Online Certification Course / Unified Sport Models / Team Assessment Tools / Principles of Meaningful Involvement / Tutorial Videos / Unified Guidelines
Age Guidelines
- 8-15
- 16-21
- 22+
- These are guidelines athletes maybe bumped up in age group to make competitive divisions. But will not be bumped up an age group that spans two age groups. Divisioning comes down to ability being the determining factor.
- Athletes age is determined by age of athlete at State Games
- Age group is determined by oldest member of the team

Uniform Guidelines for Bocce (Participants & Coaches)
- Closed toe shoes
- Polo shirt or T-shirt with proper Logo
- Matching shorts or pants
  - Khaki pants or shorts, cargo shorts, black gym shorts,
  - No jeans ripped jeans or shorts

Website / Event Info
- All Events are posted to the calendar page Special Olympics MA website.
- Event pages will include:
  - Programs assigned to event
  - Event timelines
  - Event contact Information and On site leaders
  - Event Schedule with participation #’s by event
  - Weather policy
- Spring Season Resource Page
  - Links to events
  - Sport rules
  - Registration form

Levels of Competition
- Qualifying Tournament
  - In order to advance on to Tournament of Champions athletes must participate in a qualifying tournament
  - Ribbons will be awarded based on placement with in their division

- Season Ending State Tournaments
  - Tournament of Champions
    - Criteria to attend: must have competed at a qualifying tournament and received a pre-determined award. No waivers will be granted
    - Have attended all assigned competition events
    - Medals and Ribbons will be awarded based on teams or individual's placement.
SOMA Bocce Rules

- Athletes should be at (or near) their assigned court 10 minutes prior to their start time.
- Officials will hold the game for **5 minutes** for late athletes. If athletes are not on their court after 5 minutes of the scheduled start time, they will forfeit that game.
- Scratches and Substitutions
  - Prior to games beginning, please notify the venue director and/or GMT of any scratches.
  - Only one substitute may be allowed per team per game. Once a player has registered to substitute for one team during the tournament, he or she may not substitute for any other team during that tournament. Officials must be notified of the substitution.
- A player can grip the ball from the bottom or top, but it must be delivered underhand style, which is defined as releasing the ball below the waist
  - The ball may be rolled, tossed, bounced, banked, etc. as long as it does not go out of bounds or the player does not violate the foul markers
- **A player** may request a mechanical measurement (with graduated ruler or tape measure).
- At the end of each game, a player from each team must sign the scoresheet to verify the score.
- No coaching from the sidelines by either coaches or spectators
  - Coaching is referred to as any discussion with the player during the course of the game relating to strategy or technique, or any other communication the official deems as coaching.
  - In doubles play, discussion with any athlete is prohibited once the athlete steps onto the court
    - Discussion is defined as direct interaction and communication with the athlete while they are playing.
Best Practices of a Safe Coach

The following bullets are simple best practices of a safe coach and reminders for all Special Olympic Massachusetts coach

- Limit 1 to 1 interaction with athletes
  - always be within the sight line or ear shot of others
- Always submit an incident report after an injury
- Follow injury and concussion return to play policy
- Never distribute any medication that is not in its original container
- Mandated reporter
  - SOMA coaches are not mandated reporters,
  - you know your athletes and if you suspect that they are subject to any abuse or in immediate danger do not hesitate to notify the police and Special Olympics staff
- Before any trip, event or overnight
  - review code of conduct
  - clearly explain rules and behavior expectations for all (athletes, chaperones, partners)
- Create a session long training plan that sets goals that focus on athlete development and skill improvement

Smoking, Drinking, Illegal Substances

- Special Olympics Massachusetts has established that all competition venues, housing facilities, ceremonies venues, and Olympic Towns will be alcohol, tobacco, cannabis (of any form), non-control substances & vaping free. Any coach, chaperone, volunteer, family member or athlete in violation of the Policy will face disciplinary action from SOMA, which could result in the violating individual(s) being sent home and suspended from future participation. SOMA Coaches, Chaperones, Volunteers, Family Members or Athletes must agree to abstain from the consumption of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, cannabis, and vaping during the entire course of all Special Olympics Massachusetts competition events.

- No concealed weapons, firearms are allowed at any Special Olympics Massachusetts event!
Coaching Criteria

Below is the most current version of the United States Coaches Education system that is required of all Special Olympics coaches as outlined by Special Olympics North America. This progression chart was approved by the Special Olympics United States Leadership Committee in Fall of 2018.

Sport Assistant Coach
- Valid Class A Form
- Special Olympics MA General Orientation
- Concussion Certification
- Protective Behaviors

Level 1 - Certified Coach \textit{(core coach knowledge)}

Traditional Special Olympics Coach
- All Sport Assistant Coach Requirements
- Coaching Special Olympics Athlete
  - Online course via Human Kinetics Coach Education
  - Or in person training conducted by a Chapter approved trainer

Unified Sports
- All Sport Assistant Coach Requirements
- Coaching Unified Sports
  - online Unified Sports course via NFHS
  - Or in person training conducted by a Chapter approved trainer

Level 2 - Certified Coach \textit{(Sports Specific Knowledge)}

Traditional Special Olympics and Unified Sports
- All Level 1 requirements
- Sports Specific Course
  - Online for those sports where online courses have been developed
  - Or in person sport specific training

** NOTE- Level required of Head Coaches attending a USA Games in specific sport being coached

Level 3 - Certified Coach \textit{(Advanced Coaching Knowledge)}
- All Level 2 requirements
- Principles of Coaching
  - or in person training conducted by a Chapter approved trainer

** NOTE- Level required of Head Coaches attending a World Games in specific sport being coached

If you have any questions about your certification status or certification status of the coaches in your program please contact your Business Operations contact