



High Performance Coaching Guide

March 2014



Special Olympics
Ontario



Table of Contents

Congratulations!.....	2
Coach Profile.....	3
Goal Setting.....	4
Coaches Guide to Mental Training.....	6
Team Building	8
Coaches Preparing to Compete Guide.....	9
Coaches Guide to Travel Preparation	10
Coaches Guide to Sport Nutrition	11
Early Morning Events.....	11
Early Afternoon Events.....	11
Evening Events.....	12
All Day Events.....	12
Coaches Guide to Strength Training & Conditioning	15
FITTE Principle.....	16

Congratulations!

Congratulations on being selected as a coach! It will be an extreme privilege to help represent your athletes at the upcoming Games. You deserve to enjoy every minute of the coaching experience at, and in preparation for, the big event.

This is YOUR High Performance Athlete Coaching Guide to help you monitor the training and health of your athletes leading up to the Games. Over the next 20 weeks, you, as a coach, will work very hard by pushing your athletes and challenging them to prepare to compete. That said, it is crucial to keep in mind that the maintenance of your own health is also very important to effective coaching. Make sure to lead by example by eating right, exercising and getting enough sleep. All your hard work over the next couple of months will pay off when you arrive prepared and ready to compete!

The coaching guide will include physical, mental, and nutritional components. By working through the guide provided, tracking your athlete's progress, and setting weekly goals, you are helping your athletes set themselves up to reach their personal best as an athlete and also maximize your own personal and professional coaching performance.

We use images throughout the guide to highlight tips, questions and worksheets for the different components of coaching. If you have any questions as you work your way through your coaching guide, please don't hesitate to contact us:

Special Olympics Ontario

Telephone: 1.888.333.5515

Website: www.specialolympicsontario.com

Have FUN and ENJOY the Training Process!

Special Thank You To:

Michelle Commandant for developing the exercise list and the periodization model for the Athlete Training Guide.

Special Olympics Manitoba and **Special Olympics Canada** for providing Special Olympics Ontario with the base resources for the development of this Guide.

Coach Profile

Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

Favourite Special Olympics Moment: _____

Before reading through your Coaching Guide, think about your favourite coaching experience; in competition or practice. In the box below, describe everything about that experience. Include things like: what you did to prepare yourself, what you did to prepare your athletes, what strategies you used to motivate your athletes, what strategies you used to prepare for your opponents, what you were thinking throughout the competition, how you adjusted to controversy (i.e., judging, refereeing, weather conditions, etc.), what you said to keep your athletes focused on competing to the best of their abilities, and ANYTHING else that you can remember about your best performance!

Favourite Coaching Experience:

Goal Setting

A. Athlete Goal Setting

Goal setting is a very important part of your athletes training! Goals give your athletes a clear idea of what they want to achieve and how hard they have to work to achieve their goals. Goal setting is a great way to help keep your athletes motivated, help them stay focused, and help them stay committed to training.

In the Athlete Training Guide, you will find that there is a section for the athletes to write their Dream goals, and short term goals (both are important to have). Dream-goals are set for the future – in this case, we want the athletes to consider their performance goals at the upcoming Games. Short-term goals are set weekly or at the beginning of each practice. The short-term goals will help the athlete reach their dream-goals by focusing on specific areas of training or competition that they would like to improve.

As a coach, it will be important to assist your athletes when it comes to setting their Short-Term goals and Dream goals. Things to consider when helping athletes set their goals – ask them the following questions:

- What is your goal for the upcoming Games?
 - How will you achieve your goal?
 - When do you want to work on accomplishing your goals?
 - Who can help you work towards your goals?
- * Be very **specific** when writing goals – this will help your athlete(s) develop a picture in their mind of successfully completing each goal
- * Set **realistic** goals – goals that are difficult enough to push them, yet something they will be able to accomplish with hard work
- * Focus on setting goals that are within their control...how they want to perform and what they want to do

B. Coach Goal Setting:

Goal setting is not only important for your athletes, but it is also very important for you – the coach – to set goals for yourself, your team, and your individual athletes. Goal setting will give you a clear idea of what you want to achieve and how hard you have to work to achieve your coaching goals. Goal setting is a great way to help keep your athletes motivated, help them stay focused, and help them stay committed to training.

Coaching Goals for Games

The first step in goal setting is to set your long-term goals for the Games.

<p>At the Games, my coaching goals are:</p> <p>Individual:</p> <p>Team:</p> <p>Athletes:</p>

The Second step in goal setting is to set short-term goals leading up to the Games.

<p>Leading up to the Games, my coaching goals are:</p> <p>Individual:</p> <p>Team:</p> <p>Athletes:</p>
--

Coaches Guide to Mental Training

Working with your athletes to develop mental training plans will compliment all the technical and tactical preparation you are doing with your athletes. Below are a few key ideas of how you can incorporate mental training into your daily practice plan...ultimately, ask lots of questions and prompt your athletes to think about WHY they performed a certain way and not another way!!??

1. Competition Routines & Plans

- Plan, plan, plan - plan routines and work at sticking to them in all training and competitive opportunities...AND, have a plan for when our plan isn't working out.
 - Being prepared means having a plan to ensure consistent focus and optimal performance – Look at the practice & competition schedule to see what kind of plans your team/athletes will need.
 - Outline key components for each plan.....they will be different for each part of the competition and for each athlete.....consistently rehearse and use the plan.
 - Goals...Focus...Feelings...Imagery...Thinking...Hydration...Food...when to focus...when to relax...etc.
 - Write down the plans and specifically when they will be done
 - Pre-competition plan
 - During competition plan
 - Re-focusing plan
 - Post-competition debrief plan

2. Nervous energy that is getting out of control

- Breathe!
- Take 5 slow deep breaths “in through your nose, down to your stomach and out through your mouth”
- Take 5 more slow deep breaths – with each breath your body & mind feel more relaxed – the tension leaves your neck, your shoulders, your fingers, your legs, and out your toes.....Breathe
- Take 5 more slow deep breaths – each time you breathe out repeat “Relax” or “I can do it” or “I’m ready for this” or “Here we go”.....“Relax”
- Now that you are relaxed, let’s go over what we are here for and what you want to focus on. Focus on skills & the process (e.g., personal best).
- Deep breathing is also very useful to help nervous athletes and coaches sleep before competition – being RESTED is key to performance!

3. Confidence (or lack thereof)

- Confidence = Preparation
- Talk about all the things that you have done to get here...things you have done well...previous experiences...what you have learned...previous successes...what

did those feel like...close your eyes and imagine that time...breathe...lets great relaxed and ready to enjoy the performance!

- Re-visit the competition routine...what you want to focus on to perform well.

4. Managing emotions

- Discuss & prepare emotionally for feelings that may be experienced at the Games (positive & negative feelings).
- How will they feel? Will they impact performance?
- Develop and REHEARSE appropriate responses to those feelings and other challenging situations.....emotional control!
- It is very important to acknowledge & process emotions before they become a distraction.
 - It's okay to be afraid.....to be nervous.....to be excited.....frustrated...etc.
 - Those feelings are normal how can we "change emotional channels" to a more positive feeling to help us get prepared?

5. Possible distractions

- Brainstorm and discuss as many potential distractions & challenges that may be experienced at the competition.
- Come up with a PLAN to prepare, deal and manage the distractions...and practice and rehearse these situations and how to appropriately respond.
- Breathe.....re-focus.....breathe.....let the distractions go out your big toe.....breathe.....re-focus on what you want to do!
- "Cookie Jar" example – have everyone write down or draw out things that distract them, challenges, nerves, homesickness, crowds, etc. and then put all the papers together inside the "cookie jar" – a safe place to keep them where they won't get in the way of performance and success!

6. It's all about team

- Come up with a team cheer, a team vision, a team motto
- What does our team believe in? What do we stand for?
- Belief.....Support.....Communication (verbal & non-verbal)....
.....Respect.....Encouragement.....Patience.....and Commitment!

Team Building

Here are a few fun team building activities:

1) Human Knot

Objective: - Communication, cooperation, perseverance

Process: - Split team into manageable groups (all of them or 8-10 per group). Have the group stand in a circle with everyone facing in shoulder to shoulder. Have every member grasp hands with someone on the other side of the circle, different hands grasp with different members across the circle. (makes a mesh of hands in the middle).

Group has to become untangled without any hands letting go! (Climbing & flexibility might be required!)

2) Team Bubble

Objective: - To allow the team to create their own expectations for appropriate behaviour during practices and games. Commitment, Energy, Unity, excellence, tradition

Process: - Have team members contribute ideas for what is expected at games/practices (in the bubble) and what should be left outside of the bubble. Determine when the bubble starts. You can copy it for everyone to see. What does the 'performance bubble' represent and what belongs in the bubble?

3) Spider Web

Objective: - Team unity, responsibility, cohesion,

Process: - The group forms a circle. One person has a ball of yarn. They tell why they enjoy the group & what they bring to the team & then toss the ball to another person. This continues until everyone in the group has caught the ball. The web formed between all of the members illustrates the individuality of the group & the ties that bind them into a group.

4) Fear in a Hat

Objective: - Vulnerability, problem solving, distraction control, team awareness, unity

Process: - Have each person write down a fear of theirs onto a piece of paper (have it anonymous). Place each piece of paper into a hat. Then sit the team in a circle and start with one person pulling out a fear. They have to then describe why that is a fear for someone and then offer some suggestions about how they can deal with it and how they team can assist that player with it. Do not disclose names, this is to be anonymous. Then continue around circle until each fear is spoken. Respect and control is a must here. Players are being made vulnerable control over the environment is a must.

Coaches Preparing to Compete Guide

Preparing to Compete - Coach Information

An important step in preparing for the Games is to gather as much information on the competition venues and to have a plan to deal with things you (and your athletes) can control and what you can't. It's important to start weeks/months ahead of time, talking with your athletes about competition and practicing as similarly to competition as possible (e.g., timing, warm-ups, distractions, winning/losing, nutrition, pressure, etc.). The more opportunities to rehearse, the more prepared you and your athletes will be when it comes to competition. The ultimate goal is to eliminate as many unknowns as possible, so there will be fewer surprises when you are at the Games – knowing routines and responses ahead of time will 'FREE' you and your athletes to enjoy the experience and perform optimally!

A great way is to use the games website to gather as much information & images as possible:

- Sporting venue (surface, temperature, washroom facilities, etc...)
- Sleeping accommodations
- Menu options
- Weather
- Information on the history of the games
- Information on Kingston, Ontario
- What other things will help you and your athletes be prepared for the Games?

Brainstorm possible scenarios – things you can control, and those you cannot. As a team you can come up with a list of possible scenarios and then discuss and rehearse how you are going to deal with these things (appropriate responses).

For example:

- Big win / big loss
- Lost equipment
- Crowds
- Media
- Problems with divisioning/seeding
- Bad food
- Cold/Hot weather alerts (too extreme to compete)
- Injury
- What are other possible scenarios that could come up at the Games?

Learning from others – Ask other athletes or coaches that have been to previous Games to share their experiences. This is a great learning experience and a fun way to motivate both athletes and coaches!

The key leading up to the Games is for you and your athletes to ask lots of questions, share lots of information, and prepare, prepare, prepare...and then enjoy!

Coaches Guide to Travel Preparation

Travel, just like training & competition requires preparation and rehearsal. Take time with your athlete the weeks before to come up with a “Packing List” of what they will need to bring with them to the Games, what gets packed in the checked luggage and what is kept as a carry-on. It’s important to discuss, plan and rehearse traveling.

Discuss travel plans, scheduling, waiting, security checks, what to bring on the plane, what not to bring on the plane....everything involved in traveling.

Find pictures and YouTube videos to show the experience more realistically – giving a clear and positive picture on traveling.

Discuss possible scenarios that could come up when traveling....what is our plan if...

Packing list for travel:

- Team travel uniform
- Identification
- Healthy snack
- Music
- Book / magazine
- Other: _____

Coaches Guide to Sport Nutrition

Three very important questions to ask yourself:

1. *What will your athlete eat?*
 2. *When will your athlete eat?*
 3. *Where will your athlete get the food?*
- Training or practice is the time to test different foods and the timing of meals and snacks. Your athlete should NEVER, EVER try any new foods or beverages the day of competition. Training or practice is the time to test fuel options for tolerance.
 - Once you and your athlete have figured out the right combination, it should be incorporated into your athlete's overall competition schedule.
 - Your athlete should not train/compete on an empty stomach. He should plan to eat a snack 1-2 hours prior.
 - Your athlete should choose carb-rich foods that are well tolerated.
 - With your athlete, develop a pre-event meal plan that he can use; experiment during training.
 - Your athlete should avoid eating high fat foods and excess protein prior to exercise.

Early Morning Events

The Night Before:

Your athlete should eat a high-carb meal; pasta, grains, breads, veggies, milk, along with some lean protein – 3 oz chicken or fish. They should drink 2 glasses of water before and after the meal, and walk/stretch before bed.

The Morning of:

Your athlete should eat a light breakfast – fruit yogurt smoothie, low fibre cereal & milk, meal replacement drink (Ensure/Boost). They should drink 2 glasses of water 2 hours before the event. Allow for 2 hours to digest solid foods.

Early Afternoon Events

The Night Before:

Your athlete should eat a high-carb snack before bedtime, such as toast & jam and 1% chocolate milk.

The Morning of:

Your athlete should eat a substantial mid-morning meal of breads, cereals, fruit, yogurt and juice.

Or, they should have a big breakfast and a light lunch. They should drink fluids throughout the morning and stop 2 hours prior to the event. They should drink fluids every 20 minutes throughout the competition day.

Evening Events

The Night Before:

Your athlete should eat a high-carb meal, and GET A GOOD NIGHT SLEEP.

The Day Of:

Both breakfast and lunch will be completely digested by evening. A carb-rich meal – soup, sandwich and juice should be eaten 3 hours before the event. Your athlete should drink fluids (water) all day up to 2 hours before the event.

They should drink fluids every 20 minutes throughout the competition day.

After the Event:

Your athlete should eat high-carb foods, and drink plenty of fluids.

All Day Events

The Day Before:

Your athlete should eat carb-rich meals and snacks every 2-3 hours. They should drink sports drinks (make your own), juice and low fat milk.

The Day Of:

Your athlete should eat the largest high-carb breakfast he can tolerate– toast, pancakes or hot cereal. They should eat a low-fat lunch and snack on high-carb foods – sports bars, juice, bagels and bananas. They should drink water first and sports drinks (if tolerated/needed) throughout the day. They should drink fluids every 20 minutes throughout of the competition day.

Being Prepared:

Conduct research before you travel. Find out what you have available to you in relation to where you are staying. Are you staying at a hotel? If so, do the rooms have refrigerators, microwaves, coffee makers? Find out where the nearest grocery store is, and plan a trip to the store to pick up some essentials, preferably the day you arrive or the day after. Find out some of your athletes' healthy food preferences, and stock up on those foods as breakfast foods, lunch foods and snacks, keeping in mind what you have available to you. If there is no refrigeration available, perhaps you need to bring along some coolers and ice packs.

When grocery shopping for (or with) your athletes, look for grains that are 100% whole wheat, milk and yogurt that are 0-1% milk fat (M.F.), and choose a variety of colours of fruits and vegetables, especially orange and dark green. Find some sources of protein that can be easily packed for the competition site, such as natural peanut butter, canned fish, or protein bars. Remember to bring along utensils, can openers, hand sanitizer, etc.

Keep in mind that the food available at the competition site will likely be different from what the athletes need to fuel their bodies for competition. Make sure to bring along the foods that

best fuel their bodies for competition so that they don't have to resort to the convenience foods normally found at competition sites, such as burgers, hotdogs, fries, chips, and soft drinks.

Visit www.coach.ca and look at the Sport Nutrition Advisory Council (SNAC) nutrition and travel resources.

Things to Bring from Home:

- Hand sanitizer
- Cooler, ice packs
- Lunch bags/storage containers
- Granola bars and meal replacements
- Reusable water bottle

Things to Pack from the Dining Hall or Grocery Store:

- Fruit
- Bagels & cereal bars
- Juice

Stay hydrated:

- Carry a water bottle or sports drink
- Drink fluids throughout the day
- Limit caffeine



Pack quick healthy snacks:



Granola bar



Fruit



Canned fish



Natural peanut butter



Broccoli

Sports Drinks vs. Energy Drinks

There is a big difference between sports drinks and energy drinks. Sports drinks are a source of hydration, carbohydrates and electrolytes for athletes. However, it should be noted that sports drinks are only necessary for athletic activities that are of a high intensity and lasting longer than a period of one hour. For activities lasting less than one hour, or for lower intensity activities lasting longer than one hour, water is a sufficient drink for adequate hydration. For athletes participating in higher intensity activities for greater than one hour, a diluted sports beverage (half sport beverage, half water), or other source of carbohydrates and fluids (such as diluted fruit juice) is recommended.

Energy drinks, on the other hand, have no place in sports. Energy drinks can cause feelings of anxiety or nervousness, which can decrease athletic performance. They are full of sugar and caffeine, which can result in intense levels of energy, followed by a severe decrease in energy levels, also known as a 'crash.' Energy drinks also contain herbal substances, which may be harmful to our health. Therefore, energy drinks should not be consumed by athletes at any time around training or competition.

The difference between your athlete and his competition is who is putting sport nutrition into practice!

Coaches Guide to Strength Training & Conditioning

Why is Strength and Conditioning Important for your athletes?

- Decreases risk of injury, builds strong and fit bodies, increases range of motion and strength, increases performance, decreases recovery time

Overtraining: is an “excessive frequency, volume or intensity, of training that results in extreme fatigue, illness, or injury (which is often due to a lack of sufficient rest, recovery, and perhaps nutrient intake). On a short term basis this is called ‘overreaching’, and recover will only take a few days... Overtraining syndrome can last up to six months, and recovery may be delayed” (Baechle, T.R., & Earle, R.W., 2008).

Overtraining/overreaching can occur if there is a rapid pace of progression during resistance training that your body is not used to.

Be sure to stay hydrated during your workouts, and work at your own pace. If your body feels fatigued, maybe you could take the day off and rest. Listen to your body, it will tell you when something is up.

- What to look for in your athletes:
 - Decrease in concentration, increase in fatigue, increase in soreness, unexplained soreness, increase illness or missed practices/training session.
- How to overcome and prevent overtraining:
 - Performance planning: is making a training schedule for the entire year. Such as, at the beginning of training you should have more training and conditioning practices, closer to the competition this should change to tapering down to more intense less duration and less frequent practices for increased recovery time and increased time for mental preparation and so the bodies are in good form for performance.
 - proper nutrition, proper hydration, proper rest and recovery time listening to your athletes and their bodies
 - be aware of other activities they participate in

FITTE Principle

Frequency, intensity, type, time, enjoyment

F – FREQUENCY:

- How often will you be training or performing
- Example: Three days a week
- Performance Planning: at the beginning of your training schedule, the frequency should be higher than the frequency used closer to competition

I – INTENSITY:

- How hard you are going to be working
- Example: Two practices of high intensity, full strength and one practice low intensity, more endurance
- Performance Planning: should have high intensity and low intensity and medium intensity practices, closer to performance should be less training but all higher intensity.

T-TYPE:

- Kind of exercise you are performing
- Example: Bowling at the lanes
- Performance Planning: incorporate other types of activities at the beginning to increase other energy systems to build stronger athletes and then stick to their sport closer to competition and stick to training for sport no new conditioning then!

T-TIME:

- Amount of time that you are training or performing the activity
- Example: 2 hours at the lanes
- Performance Planning: much like frequency, this should be higher at the beginning of your training cycle and taper down closer to competition

E- ENJOYMENT

- Did you have fun?
- Did you feel good?
- Did you accomplish a goal?
- Example: Laughed and had fun with your teammates, accomplished your goal of stretching before and after practice. Performance Planning: try to maintain enjoyment as a key goal throughout

Step Into Action, Cross-Training and Online Fitness and Health Tracking

Step Into Action is an interactive program designed to improve the fitness, health and well-being of each participant. The tracking feature of the website enables participants to visually measure their physical activity and nutrition in a fun and novel way, helping change their perceptions and behaviour towards living an active healthy lifestyle.

The 'Step' component of the program includes any type of activity that can be measured by a pedometer or a time measurement, such as: walking, jogging, running, participating in sports, or even dancing.

On the website step.specialolympicsontario.com:

- *Athletes* can track their steps and nutrition while visually seeing their progress over time;
- *Coaches* can download nutrition and physical activity resources, and also, track the progress of all participating athletes.

The **Step Into Action** program supplies **pedometers** and **resources** (free of charge) for all registered participants.

These resources are designed to educate the athletes about goal setting, nutrition and physical fitness; with the ultimate goal of helping them along the path of incorporating an active and healthy lifestyle into their daily lives.

Finally, **Step Into Action** also aims to develop the participants skills in the following areas of: *goal setting, goal achievement, responsibility, accountability, and computer literacy.*

In case of injury or sore muscles – The PIER principle



Pressure: apply pressure to your injury to keep it protected and decrease swelling



Ice: apply ice every hour for 10 minutes after hurting yourself for the first few days



Elevation: to decrease the swelling to your injured area elevate your injured area



Rest – (active) recovery: make sure to take rest when injured, just remember this doesn't mean sit on the couch! Keep moving to keep the injury from stiffening up

What signs and symptoms to look for

- Sprain: injury to ligaments
- Strain: injury to muscle
- Tear: complete loss of integrity of the tissue (muscle and ligament and tendons)
- Muscle tightness/spasm: aggravation of the nerve controlling the muscle causing them to tighten around the nerve

Degrees of Injuries

- 1st degree: mild symptoms such as pain and inflammation, slightly restricted range of motion
- 2nd degree: moderate symptoms, moderately restricted range of motion, more serious loss of function
- 3rd degree: severe symptoms, fully restricted range of motion, full loss of function

When to use Ice vs. Heat?

- **Heat (10 – 20 minutes)**
 - for chronic or sub-acute injuries (One week post trauma and on)
 - no active swelling
 - pain control
 - muscle spasm
 - before activity as warm up
- **Ice (10 – 20 minutes)**
 - for acute injuries (24 to 48 hours post trauma)
 - active swelling
 - pain control
 - muscle spasm
 - after activity to control symptoms

When to consult help from medical field/ambulance

- Is the problem any of the following?
 - Severe
 - Unusual
 - Persistent
 - Recurrent
 - If you answer yes to any of these, it is time to consult further care

Injury Treatment tips

1. Muscle cramps: slowly stretch area, apply ice for prolonged cramping, hydration and nutrition!
2. Use PIER principle in case of sprains and strains
3. Cuts/abrasions: expose area, clean with water, apply gauze and or Band-Aids