



## Special Olympics Ohio

### Snowshoeing Rules Manual (rev. 10/2024)

The Official Special Olympics Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Snowshoeing competitions. Special Olympics, Inc. is the International Governing Body for Snowshoeing.

#### OFFICIAL EVENTS

The SOOH Snowshoeing season runs October through February. The State Tournament is held during the first quarter of each year. Prior to attending the State Snowshoeing Competition, it is suggested that athletes be in a training program for at least 8 weeks. However, due to weather constraints this may not always be possible.

Special Olympics Ohio provides a range of events to offer athletes of varying abilities the opportunity to compete. The following is a list of official events available in Special Olympics Ohio.

- 50 Meter Race
- 100 Meter Race
- 200 Meter Race

#### COURSES

##### *Track Course*

- The track course is a 400-meter continuous loop with a course width of at least one meter for each competitor in a race.
- The 400-meter track loop should be relatively flat.
- The course should be prepared so that conditions are similar for all parts of the track.
- The direction of competing shall be left-hand inside.

##### *Event Specific Layouts should include the following:*

- 50- and 100-Meter Races
  - Run on a straight area of the course or on a separate course to allow for events to run concurrently.
  - Lanes should be marked and delineated on the track for the 50- and 100-meter events.
  - These lanes should be at least one-meter wide each with wider lanes up to 1.7 meters wide being preferable.

#### Special Olympics Ohio

921 Eastwind Drive, Suite 120, Westerville, OH 43081 Tel 614.239.7050

[www.soooh.org](http://www.soooh.org) [Twitter soohio](https://twitter.com/soohio)

*Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities*



- 200-Meter Race
  - Run over a portion of the 400-meter course.

## **EQUIPMENT**

### ***Snowshoes***

- The snowshoe frame itself shall not be smaller than 17.78 cm x 50.8 cm (7 inches x 20 inches). This measurement shall be taken at the longest point of the snowshoe and at the widest point of the snowshoe. The frame measurement will not be taken along a curved line. This means that snowshoes shall have frames with at least two points that are a minimum of 17.78 cm apart (width) and at least two points that are a minimum of 50.8 cm apart (length).
- Factory installed toe and heel traction claws are acceptable. The attachment of any additional "spikes" is not permitted.
- The snowshoe shall consist of a frame and webbing or solid decking material.
- The foot must be secured through a direct mount binding system to the snowshoe.
- Competitors should wear the same style, brand, type, size (or pair) of snowshoes and type of clothing for divisioning and finals competition of a particular event.

### ***Footwear***

- Competition footwear may include, but is not limited to running shoes, hiking boots or snow boots. All competitors are required to wear footwear.

### ***Poles***

- The use of poles is optional.

### ***Bib Numbers***

- Bib numbers must be visible in the front torso during competition.

## **RULES OF COMPETITION**

### ***Equipment Check***

- All snowshoes will be measured and checked by an official prior to each competition.
- Competitors must always wear their assigned number in a position visible to the officials.



## ***The Start***

- At the start of the race, competitors must have both tips of his/her snowshoes behind the starting line, which is identified, in the snow with either color or some form of marking. No part of the competitor's body or clothing can in contact with the starting line or the snow ahead before the start.
- All supports, such as blocks or holes, which give a competitor an advantage at the start, are prohibited.
- All competitors in each division shall start on the starting line side by side at the same time. There will be no timed interval starts.
- Competitors may begin the race/leave the start area after the start signal.
- Starting command will be as follows:
  - Verbal command shall be "Racers Ready" (competitor is expected to hold position).
  - The start signal shall be a verbal "Go" or firing of a starting pistol.
  - An additional visual start indicator (flag) may be used to assist competitors with a hearing impairment. A tap touch start may be used for an athlete who is visually impaired.
- False Starts
  - Any competitor starting before the start signal is given will be charged with a false start.
  - A false start occurs when a competitor significantly moves any body part before the start signal after coming to a still set position after the "Racers ready" command and before the starting signal.
  - An official should identify and notify the competitor that is charged with a false start.
  - Any competitor making two false starts in the same race will be disqualified from that race.

## ***The Race***

- Only the officials and competitors competing in the race are allowed on the course.
- When using a curved course, the Chief of Course must ensure that all competitors must have an opportunity to cover the same distance, either by a waterfall start or other means dictated by the shape of the course. See Appendix A for a waterfall start diagram.
- A competitor may not progress forward more than three meters unless they have both snowshoes attached to their feet.
- Pacing of competitors is not allowed. Pacing is defined as moving along with, ahead of, just behind or next to a competitor for more than 3 meters by persons not participating in the same race or use of any kind of timing device used to advise the competitor of their race time.



- In the 50 Meter and 100 Meter races, each competitor should keep in the allotted lane from start to finish. Unless a material advantage has been gained, or impedance or interference with another competitor occurs, a competitor shall not be disqualified if he or she leaves the lane.
- Two-Minute Rule
  - If during a race a competitor falls, has difficulty with a snowshoe or binding, or leaves the track, he/she has two minutes to correct the problem. In any race 100 meters or longer a competitor must progress at least 20 meters toward the finish line every two minutes.
  - A competitor who fails to adhere to the two-minute limit or receive assistance of any kind shall be disqualified.
  - The closest referee will be responsible for providing a one-minute warning and timing of the violation.
  - Officials should allow the competitor 2 minutes to return to the course before intervening unless the situation poses a safety concern for the competitor or other competitors on the course.

### ***Disqualifications***

- Officials shall have the authority to order the race to be re-held excluding any disqualified competitor.
- A competitor or relay team will be disqualified for the following.
  - Improperly overtaking or impeding another competitor, or in any other way intentionally interfering with another competitor.
  - Preventing another competitor from passing.
  - Jostling or obstructing another competitor, to impede his or her progress. The action must be judged to be beyond incidental to result in disqualification.
  - Leaving the designated the course.
  - Making two false starts.
  - Making an improper exchange on the relay exchange zone.
  - Failing to adhere to progress within the two-minute time limit.
  - Progressing more than three meters without both snowshoes attached to his / her feet.
  - Crossing the finish line without both snowshoes on his / her feet.
  - Receiving physical assistance at any time after he/she crosses the start line to begin the race or before he/she crosses the finish line.
  - Using improper (not approved) snowshoes.
- Regardless of whether there has been a disqualification, Officials, in exceptional circumstances, shall also have the authority to order the race to be re-held if he considers it just and reasonable to do so.



### ***The Finish***

- A competitor has finished the race when his/her torso reaches the vertical plane of the finish line. The torso is distinguished from the head, neck, arms, legs, hands, and feet.
- A competitor must have both snowshoes on his/her feet when crossing the finish line.

## **APPENDIX A**

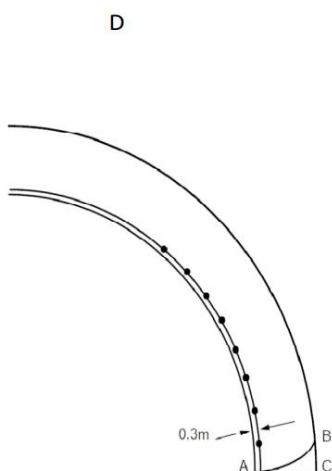
### **WATERFALL START LINES**

#### ***Guidelines***

- Waterfall (curved) starting lines are used for all races in Special Olympics Snowshoeing not run entirely on a straightaway (200 meters). The waterfall starting line will ensure that each competitor runs the same equal distance going into the curve, from any starting position along this waterfall start line (i.e., snowshoer starting along the outer edge of the track covers the same distance as snowshoer starting along the inside edge of the track).
- In the diagram below the curved line A to B is the waterfall starting line. An athlete starting at point B would cover the same distance on the track as a person starting at point A, when measured to the upper pin location, point D, ~25 meters into the curve.
- The curved waterfall starting line may be established by driving a row of pins 3.05 meters (10 ft) apart, 0.3 meters (12 in) from the curb—the first pin to be 0.3 meters (12 in) from the curb at the start. For a 9.75-meter (32 ft) track, 10 pins are sufficient.
- Using a steel tape or rope 30.48 meters (100 ft) or longer, and with the pin furthest from the start as center, scribe an arc (the waterfall start line) from pole to outer curb of track.
- The distance for spacing of the pins—3.05 meters—is an arbitrary and sufficiently accurate interval.



- This will not be an arc of a circle as the radius will change as the tape loses contact with each successive pin.



### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event that the weather during an outdoor competition does not cooperate, we may need to delay the continuation of events until the weather improves. We will follow the guidelines set forth by the Ohio High School Athletic Association for outdoor sports. Thunder or lightning will result in a 30-minute delay, which will reset from the latest occurrence. When available and confirmed, we will continue to monitor the activity utilizing an advanced weather tracking system. The games management committee will make any call to delay, should this occur, and notify Venue Managers and/or officials, who will in turn notify those present.