



Special Olympics

Wyoming

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Special Olympics Mission Statement:

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics Athletes and the community.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS WYOMING

SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

These Official Special Olympics Wyoming Softball Rules shall govern Special Olympics Wyoming Softball competition. These rules based on Special Olympics, Inc. and Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules for Softball. ASA rules shall be employed except when there is a conflict, in such cases, these Official Special Olympics Wyoming Softball Rules shall apply.

SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

1. Each Special Olympics Athlete is required to have a valid Medical form (Application for Participation) filled out by a certified physician, and a signed Release form in order to participate. Each Unified Sports partner must fill out a Unified Sports® partner release form and a Volunteer Information form, and meet Class “A” Volunteer criteria in order to participate. Athletes or Partners without the appropriate forms are ineligible to participate. These forms must be on file.
2. All Coaches and Assistant Coaches must have a Volunteer Information Form on file and meet Class “A” Volunteer criteria in order to participate.
3. Athletes and Unified Sports partners must participate in a training program.
4. Programs with multiple teams should identify these teams with different team names, not numbers or letters.
5. Each team is required to play all eligible team members in every game played (at least 1 at bat or 1 inning in the field). Injured players are not required to play.

SECTION B - OFFICIAL EVENTS

1. Unified Sports® Softball
2. Traditional Team Softball
3. Individual Skills Competition

SECTION C - DIVISIONS

At this time all divisions will be created solely on the basis of the ability levels of the teams entered in the tournament.

1. Teams will be divisioned according to:
 - a. Scores compiled from each athlete’s score on the four Softball Skills Assessment Tests (SAT’s) of (Base running, Throwing, Fielding and Batting). These tests are for player/team assessment only and are not competition events for medals and ribbons. (Information regarding these Softball Skill Assessment Tests follows in Section J).
2. Coaches must submit a Softball Skills Assessment Test Score for each player on their roster prior to competition.
3. The “team score” shall be determined by adding the top ten players’ scores and then dividing that total by ten.

SECTION D - UNIFORMS

1. All players should wear matching uniforms (same color, trim and style). **Jerseys must be the same color.** The jersey must have at least a 6" number on the back and be contrasting to the shirt color. No player may wear the same number.
2. Players should wear softball pants (preferred), shorts or sweats. Players may not wear jeans or cutoffs. Pants of the same color are preferred.
3. Softball shoes are recommended (rubber sole cleats). No metal cleats.

SECTION E - EQUIPMENT

1. Equipment as specified by ASA rules shall be used.
2. Only Official Softball bats bearing the ASA certification mark may be used. **No titanium bats** may be used.
3. A first baseman's trapping-type mitt may be worn by any player.
4. The catcher must wear a facemask and batter's helmet. Chest protector, throat guard and shin guards are recommended, but not required.
5. Any defensive or offensive player can wear an approved plastic face mask/guard.
6. All batters and base runners must wear an approved batter's helmet. When purchasing new helmets teams should buy helmets with face guards, especially for youth players.
7. The Ball
 - a. A 12" softball will be used.
8. All jewelry rings, and watches must be removed prior to entering the field. If a piece of jewelry cannot be removed it must be covered with tape.

SECTION F - OFFICIALS AND THEIR DUTIES

1. There will be at least one Umpire for all games during competition.
2. Umpires shall have the power to make all decisions on any point not specifically covered in the rules.
3. An appeal play is defined as a play in which an umpire is unable to make a decision unless he/she is requested to do so by a coach or player. The appeal can be made if a coach or player asks the umpire to make a ruling.
4. The umpires are empowered to make all decisions on the playing field.
5. In case of injury to any player or participant the umpire will stop play.
6. Players and/or coaches may be ejected due to poor sportsmanship, excessive foul language or inappropriate behavior. This can be determined by either the umpire or Tournament Committee.

SECTION G - COACHES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Coaches shall remain within the designated "coaches' areas" or in the dugout while the game is in progress.
2. If a coach touches a runner while the ball is still in play, that runner will be declared out. Coaches are required to stay within the boundaries of the coaches' boxes.
3. Coaches are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules of the game.

Protests

1. Protests can only be made by the Head Coach and must be made immediately following an incident. The protest must be given in writing to the Umpire and/or scorekeeper.
2. Protests are only allowed for rules interpretations and implementation issues. Protests are not allowed on judgment calls. The Softball Rules Committee will decide on all protests within 30 minutes of the completed game.
3. Protest forms will be available at event registration.

SECTION H – GENERAL RULES OF COMPETITION and MODIFICATIONS (For all divisions)

I. The Game and the Lineup

1. In cases not specifically covered by these rules, Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules shall govern.
2. Forfeit time is 10 minutes after the scheduled game time, not 10-minutes after the previous game has completed. All teams should be ready to play (batting order filled out, etc) by this time.
3. Unless otherwise determined, a coin toss prior to the start of the game will determine the choice of home team. The team winning the toss may elect to bat first.
4. The length of the games will be seven innings or 1 hour and 15 minutes.
5. In case of inclement weather games will be considered complete after 3 full innings of play.
6. A game tied at the end of regulation play shall be continued by playing additional innings until one team has the lead at the completion of an inning.
7. Teams must begin and complete a game with at least 8 players. If at any time the team cannot field 8 players the game will be declared a forfeit.
8. Teams playing with 8 or 9 players will receive an automatic out at the end of the lineup (a “short-handed” lineup) when the 9th or 10th player would have batted.
9. If a player arrives late for a “short-handed” team they shall be inserted into the lineup at the end of the batting order.

II. The Batter

1. When batting, players will take their stance within the lines of the batter’s box.
2. Four balls constitute a walk and three strikes constitute an out. If the batter has two strikes and fouls off the third pitch, he/she shall be declared out.
3. Throwing the bat: The first time a batter throws the bat (based on the umpire’s discretion) both teams will be warned. After the warning whenever any player throws the bat the batter will be called out. Players will be ejected from the game for a second offense.

III. Substitutions

1. Substitutions may be made anytime that time is called. Substitutes must take the same place in the batting order for the person they are replacing. **The scorekeeper must be notified of all substitutions.**
2. Any of the starting players may leave and re-enter the game. This may be done by each starting player only once, with the provision that the players occupy the same position in the batting order as the one they occupied when they leave the game. A starting player may only re-enter the game for the person who substituted for him/her. Substitutes may re-enter the game in the same manner.

IV. Base running

1. Stealing of bases is not allowed.
2. A base runner must maintain contact with the base they are on until a legally pitched ball has reached home plate.

V. ADA and Courtesy Runner Rules

1. Within the ASA Official Rules for Softball there is a rule entitled the American Disability Act Rule. (Found in RULE 4 – Players, Coaches, Substitutes – Section 2.) This rule allows players to play defense or offense only, if that player has a physical disability, which prohibits them from playing either offense or defense. Another athlete must play the offensive or defensive position in place of the athlete who is unable.
2. A courtesy runner will be allowed at one place in the line-up for an athlete with a physical disability or injury only. The courtesy runner cannot leave their starting position, even at home plate, until signaled by the Umpire. The courtesy runner will be the player who made the last out. Serving as a courtesy runner does not count as participating in the game. The courtesy runner may enter after the batter has reached base.

VI. Sportsmanship

1. If in the opinion of the umpire(s) or the tournament committee a player, coach, or fan is acting in an unsportsmanlike manner, the offending team will be given one warning. A penalty will be assessed to the team or team member for repeated unsportsmanlike behavior. Penalties may include assessing an automatic out in the lineup, ejection from the game, team forfeiture of the game, etc. depending on the nature of the unsportsmanlike conduct.
2. Special Olympics Wyoming will consider comments such as “Swing, Batter” made by fielders or the players/coaches in the opposing dugout and directed to the batter to be unsportsmanlike. These types of comments are especially inappropriate when made by partners and directed to athletes of the opposing team. They are outside of the spirit of Special Olympics competition.

SECTION I – UNIFIED SPORTS® SOFTBALL

I. Playing Area and Ball

1. The field shall conform to ASA standards. Bases will be 65' feet apart. The pitching distance is between 45' to 50'.
2. A 12" (30 cm) softball will be used for Unified Sports® Team competition

II. Team, Coach, Players, and Lineup

1. Each team shall have an adult non-playing coach responsible for the line-up and conduct of the team during competition. A program must submit a written petition to Special Olympics Wyoming if they are not in a position to have a non-playing coach
2. The coach and team must know the general principles of the Unified Sports® program.
3. Unified Sports® Teams should be made up of Athletes and Partners who are of similar ages and ability levels. Every attempt should be made to keep all teammates as closely matched as possible. This will decrease the risk of injury and provide a more meaningful sports experience.
4. The roster shall contain a proportionate number of athletes and partners. During competition, the playing line-up should be five athletes and five partners at any time. A minimum of 4 Athletes and 4 Partners must be playing or a forfeit will be declared. 5 athletes and 4 partners may be played, but not vice-versa. (See next rule for exception.)

5. If a team has exactly 5 athletes (no substitutes) and an athlete gets injured during the game, and cannot continue playing, the team will be allowed to complete the game with 4 athletes and 5 partners. However, if the athlete cannot play in the next game the team would only be able to play 4 athletes and 4 partners.
6. The catcher must be able to safely play that position, and understand its positioning. The catcher must also be able to routinely field pitches and return them to the pitcher. If the umpire or competition committee feels that the catcher cannot safely play that position they may ask the coach to replace the catcher.
7. In Unified Sports® competition, umpires are to warn a team who's partners dominate and/or encroach on the play of Special Olympics athletes. Umpires have the right to reverse a call based on partner domination or encroachment. This includes moving a pitcher to home plate to take a throw from another fielder. The catcher should make the play if in position.

III. The Game

1. The length of games may vary depending on the tournament format. Generally, games have a time limit of 1 hour and 15 minutes. No inning will start after the time limit. Half-innings must be completed. Full Innings must be completed after the time limit if the home team is trailing or the game is tied.
2. A regulation game shall consist of seven innings or until the time limit is reached, whichever comes first. The game will be considered complete if after five (5) full innings of play one team leads the other by ten runs or more. A game will be considered complete once the time limit has been reached and the final inning is over; regardless of how many innings have been played.

IV. Pitching and Batting

1. Four balls constitute a walk and three strikes constitute an out. If the batter has two strikes and fouls off the third pitch, he/she shall be declared out.
2. The batting order must alternate athletes and partners.
3. The ball must be pitched in an underhand motion, and must travel in an arc that is no less than 6 feet and no greater than 12 feet.
4. Per ASA Class C Rules, a limit of 2 over the fence home runs per game (per team) will be in effect. For any in excess, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and runners may not advance.

V. Base running

1. Sliding is not allowed.
2. Players can only overrun first base without being in danger of being tagged out.
3. The Infield Fly Rule will be in effect when there are less than two outs and:
 - a. There are runners on first and second or the bases are loaded.
 - b. The umpire will announce, "Infield Fly" when one of the above conditions exists and a batter hits a pop-fly in the infield. Please note that an infield fly is a judgment call by the umpire and NOT subject for controversy. When the Infield Fly Rule is declared, the batter is automatically OUT. The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught. The runner may also tag-up and advance after a defensive player has touched the ball.

VI. Defensive Positions

1. The battery (pitcher and catcher) must be one athlete and one partner. Two athletes and two partners will make up the infield and two athletes and two partners will make up the outfield.
2. The outfielders must play a minimum of 10 feet behind infielders. Four outfielders must start play, on each pitch, in the outfield.

SECTION J –SOFTBALL INDIVIDUAL SKILLS CONTEST (ISC)

1. The Softball ISC is designed specifically for lower ability athletes who have not yet developed the skills necessary to participate meaningfully in team Softball.
2. Four events comprise the Individual Skills Contest: Base Running, Throwing, Fielding and Hitting.
3. The athlete's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of these four events. Athletes will be pre-divisoned according to their total scores from these four events.

The same volunteers should remain at an event throughout the competition so that consistency is provided.

A. Base Running

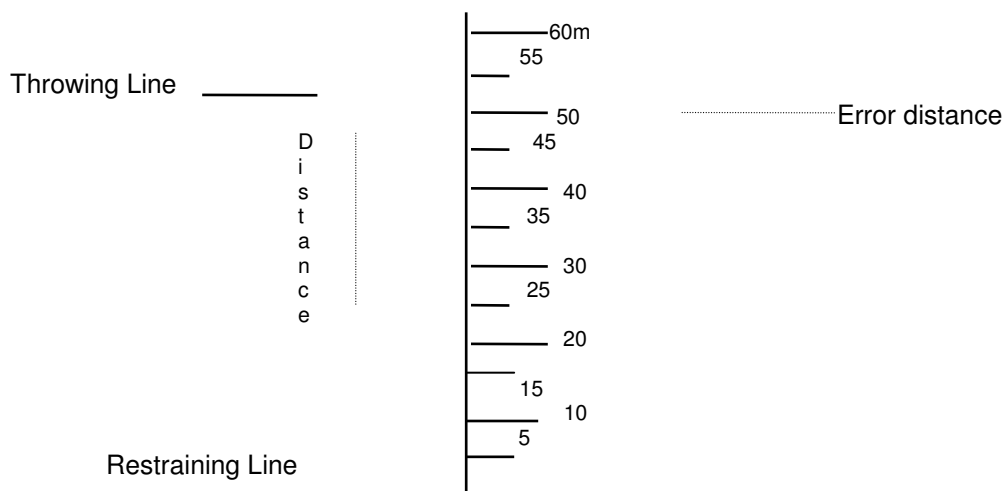
- 1) Equipment - Three bases, home plate, stopwatch.
- 2) Purpose - To measure the athlete's base running ability. 3)

Description - Bases are set up like a baseball diamond and positioned 65 feet apart.

The athlete is instructed to start on home plate, and run around the bases as fast as possible, touching each base en route.

- 4) Scoring - The time stops when the athlete touches home plate after circling the bases. The time elapsed in seconds is subtracted from 60 to determine the point score. A penalty of five seconds for each base missed or touched in an improper order shall be assessed. The best score of two trials is recorded.

B. Throwing



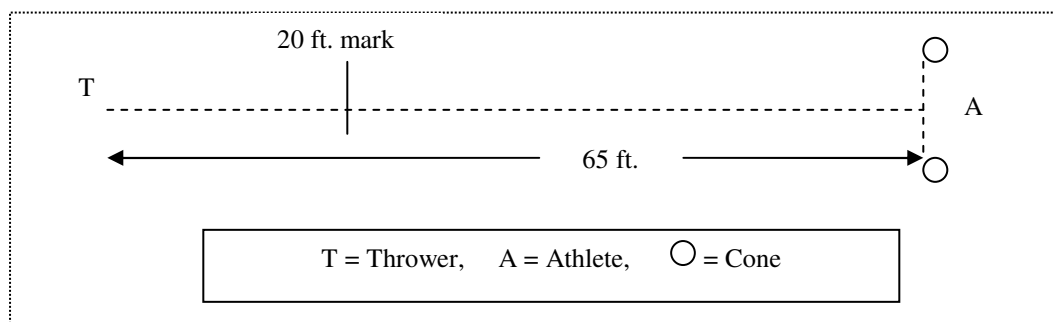
- 1) Equipment - Regulation field, two measuring tapes (with meters and feet), 9" or 12" softballs, two small cones or marking stakes.
- 2) Purpose - To measure the athlete's ability in throwing for distance and accuracy.
- 3) Description - The player being tested stands behind the restraining line, back far enough to take one or more steps in preparation for throwing. The player has two trials to throw the softball as far and as straight as possible down the throwing line, without stepping over the restraining line. Volunteers should be positioned in the field to indicate, using a cone or marking stake, the spot where each ball first touches the ground. The better of the two throws is measured and recorded as the player's score. If a player steps on or over the line before releasing the ball, the trial must be repeated. There will be a maximum of two repeats.

- 4) Scoring - The throwing score equals the throwing distance, measured at a point on the throwing line straight across from (perpendicular to) the spot where the ball landed, minus the error distance - the number of meters the ball landed off target - away from the throwing line. The player's score is the better of the two throws. Both error scores and distance are measured to the nearest meter; i.e., if a ball lands even with (perpendicular to) the 50m point on the measuring tape, but is 6m off to one side, the player's score is 44 points. (Distance thrown (50) minus number of meters off target (6) results in a new score of 44M.) Athletes score one point per meter; i.e., 44m = 44 points. If score falls between meters, score should be rounded down; i.e., 44.73 = 44 points.

C. Fielding

- 1) Equipment – 12-inch (30 cm) softballs, measuring tape (with meters and feet), chalk/line, cones.
- 2) Purpose - To measure athlete's fielding ability.
- 3) Description - The athlete will stand between and behind the two cones. The official must throw the ball on the ground to the athlete, between the cones. The throw to the athlete must hit the ground before the 20 foot chalk mark. The athlete may move through the cones toward the ball. If the thrown ball is outside of the cones, the throw must be repeated. Each athlete gets five fielding attempts per trial. Each athlete receives two trials.
- 4) Scoring - The athlete receives five points for a clearly fielded ball (either caught in glove or trapped against the body, but off the ground); two points for a ball that is blocked; zero points for a missed attempt; for a maximum score of 50.

FIELDING DIAGRAM



D. Hitting

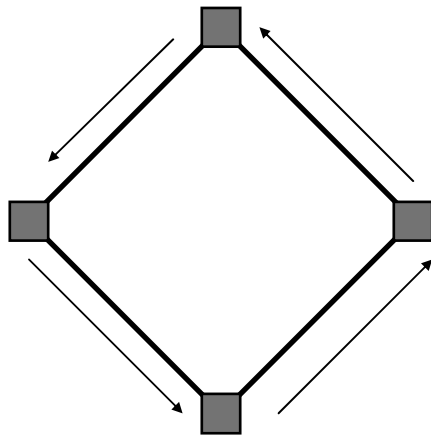
- 1) Equipment - Batting tee, 12" (30 cm) softballs, bat, metric measuring tape and chalk.
- 2) Purpose - To measure the athlete's ability to hit for distance when hitting off a batting tee.
- 3) Description - Standing in a regulation-size batter's box (i.e., 7'7" (2.31 m) by 3'3" (.99 m)), the athlete is instructed to hit the ball off the tee. The athlete receives three attempts.
- 4) Score - The distance of the longest hit shall determine the athlete's final score. The distance of a hit is measured from the batting tee to the point where the ball first touches the ground. The distance is measured to the nearest meter; i.e., 1m = 1 point, 46m = 46 points. If the score falls between meters, scores should be rounded down; i.e., 46.73 = 46 points.

E. Final Score - A player's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of the four events which comprise the Individual Skills Contest.

SECTION K - SOFTBALL TEAM SKILLS ASSESSMENT TEST (Used for all Unified Sports and traditional Teams)

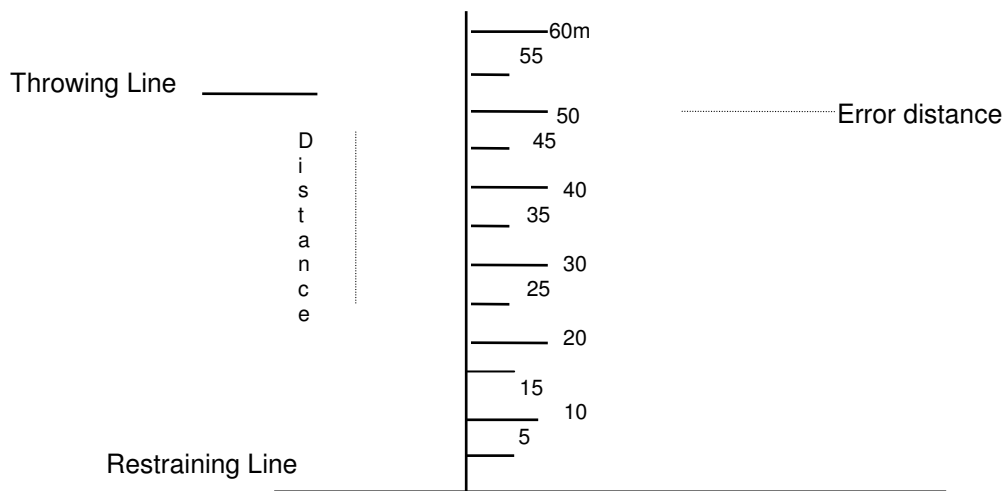
1. Individual player scores from each of the following skills assessment tests must be submitted to the Competition Organizing Committee by all teams entering Special Olympics Softball competition.
2. These tests are designed to help the Competition Committee gain a preliminary idea as to the ability level of the teams entered in the tournament. This allows the Committee to place teams in preliminary divisions for on-site evaluation. These tests can be critical to the success of the tournament.

a. Test Number One - Base Running



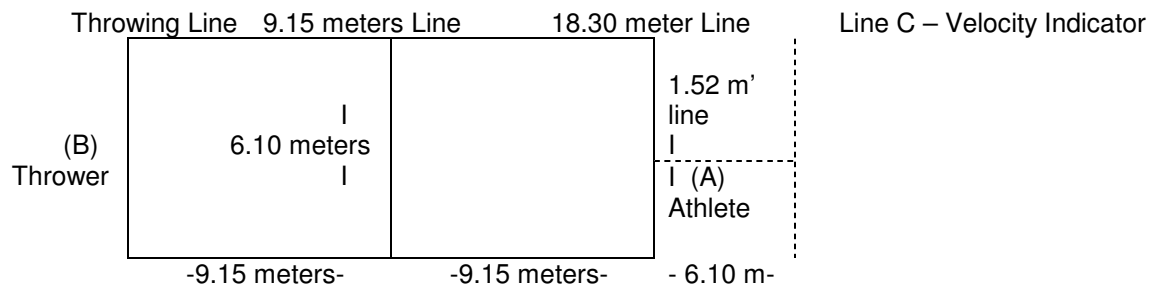
- 1) Set-up:
 - a) Standard softball field.
 - b) Three bases, home plate, stopwatch.
- 2) Test:
 - a) Bases are set up like a baseball diamond and positioned 65 feet apart.
 - b) The athlete is instructed to start at home plate and run around the bases as fast as possible, touching each base en route.
- 3) Scoring:
 - a) The time starts when the athlete leaves home plate.
 - b) The time stops when the athlete touches home plate after circling the bases.
 - c) The time elapsed in seconds is subtracted from 50 to determine the point score.
 - d) A penalty of five seconds for each based missed or touched in an improper order shall be assessed.
 - e) The base score of two trials is recorded.
 - f) Athletes should not be asked to take the two trials consecutively.

b. Test Number Two - Throwing



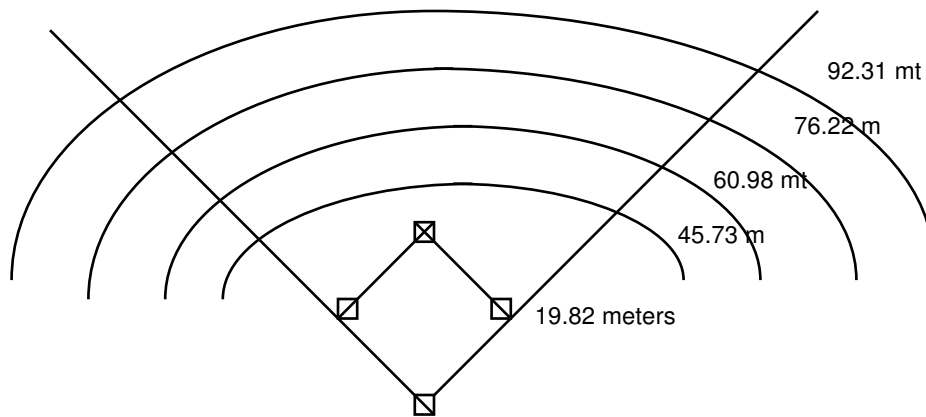
- 1) Set-up:
 - a) An outfield or a smooth grass field that can be marked off in feet.
 - b) Two metric measuring tapes, softballs, two small cones or marking stakes.
- 2) Test:
 - a) The player being tested stands behind the restraining line, back far enough to take one or more steps in preparation for throwing.
 - b) The player has two trials to throw the softball as far and as straight as possible down the throwing line, without stepping over the restraining line.
 - c) Volunteers should be positioned in the field to indicate, using a cone or marking stake, the spot where each ball first touches the ground.
 - d) The better of the two throws is measured and recorded as the player's score.
 - e) If a player steps on or over the restraining line before releasing the ball, the trial must be repeated.
 - f) There will be a maximum of two repeats.
- 3) Scoring:
 - a) The net throwing score equals the throwing distance, measured at a point on the throwing line straight across from (perpendicular to) the spot where the ball landed, minus the error distance - the number of meters the ball landed off target away from the throwing line.
 - b) The player's score is the better of the two throws.
 - c) Both error scores and distance scores are measured to the nearest meter.
 - d) Scoring Example:
 - 1) If a ball lands even with (perpendicular to) the 50m point on the measuring tape, but is 6m off to one side, the player's score is 44 points. [Distance thrown (50m) minus the number of meters off target (6m) results in a net score of 44m.]
 - 2) Athletes score one point per meter; i.e., 44m = 44 points. If the score falls between meters, the score should be rounded down; i.e., 44.73 = 44 points.

c. Test Number Three - Fielding



- 1) Set-up:
 - a) Standard infield or a smooth field with short grass on which chalk markings or cones can be placed.
 - b) Softballs, fielding gloves, measuring tape.
- 2) Test:
 - a) The player being tested stands in a ready position (A) behind a 1.52 meter restraining line.
 - b) A thrower stands behind the throwing line and throws two practice and six test balls to each player.
 - c) Each throw must strike the ground before the 9.15 meter line and must stay within the sideline boundaries of the marked area.
 - d) The throw should be made sidearm, with sufficient velocity to carry an untouched ball to line C - the velocity indicator distance beyond the end line.
 - e) The prescribed distance beyond the end line is marked by a cone or similar object.
 - f) Of the six trials, two balls should be thrown directly to the player, two to the right, and two to the left side of the player.
 - g) The player attempts to field each ball cleanly; i.e., with no noticeable bobbling or temporary loss of control, and tosses it back to the thrower.
 - h) On each trial the player starts behind the 5' restraining line, but must move forward of the 18.30 meter line toward the approaching ground ball in order to obtain maximum points.
 - i) Any throw not made as specified should be repeated. (**Note:** It is important to periodically check the velocity of the throw by occasionally instructing the player to let a ball go by untouched. Throws should reach the velocity marker.)
- 3) Scoring:
 - a) Each ball cleanly fielded in front of the 18.30 meter end line counts five points.
 - b) A ball that is bobbled, but stopped from going past the player counts four points.
 - c) Balls fielded behind the 18.30 meter line receive three points for cleanly fielded balls, and two points for bobbled balls.
 - d) Balls are considered to have been fielded in front of the 18.30 meter end line when at least the player's glove and ball are clearly in front of the line.
 - e) Any ball that is missed entirely, or touched but gets past the player, scores no points
 - f) The score is the sum of all six trials.
 - g) It is recommended that the scorer stand just outside the marked area, even with the 18.30 meter end line.
 - h) Maximum score is 30 points.

d. Test Number Four - Batting



- 1) Set-up:
 - a) Standard softball field, 12 marking cones, softballs, bats, measuring tape (with meters and feet).
- 2) Test:
 - a) The batter assumes a normal batting stance at the plate.
 - b) From the pitcher's mound, a coach will throw five hittable pitches that the batter attempts to hit as hard and as far as possible.
 - c) These pitches should be within a regulation arc (1.8-3.6 meters).
 - d) Only five swings are allowed to each batter.
- 3) Scoring:
 - a) The distance of the longest hit shall determine the athlete's final score. The distance of a hit is measured from the batting tee to the point where the ball first touches the ground. The distance is measured to the nearest meter; i.e., 1m = 1 point, 46m = 46 points. If the score falls between meters, the score should be rounded down; i.e., 46.73 = 46 points.