

UNIFIED SPORTS – FOOTBALL



FOOTBALL 5 or 7-A-SIDE

Spirit of the Games: Excellence through competition — how does Unified Football exemplify these values?



Football is the nation's favourite sport, currently played by a diverse range of people across the country. Having pride in playing football for your school is something that every young person should have the opportunity to experience.



Enjoyment should be at the heart of the game for everyone involved. Therefore respecting our opponents, teammates and officials is paramount.



Whether you win, lose or draw, do it with integrity.



Have the courage to be creative and try new things whilst focusing on your team objective.



Football is a game that relies on the combined effort of the whole team. Success will be determined by how well individuals come together and strive towards a common goal.



At some point, you will meet challenges. To be successful on the football pitch you will need to be determined and resilient – both essential life skills.

What are the benefits of playing Unified Football?

Special Olympics Unified Sports is an inclusive sports programme that combines an approximately equal number of Special Olympics athletes (individuals with intellectual disabilities) and partners (Individuals without intellectual disabilities) on teams for training and competition. Unified Football is a particularly appropriate sport for individuals with intellectual disabilities as it:

- Involves all participants constantly.
- Is easy to teach and immediately rewarding to play.
- Allows rapid initial improvement in skills and basic game understanding.

Above all, football is a fun, exciting and engaging team sport.

Differences of Unified Football

Unified Football has players with and without intellectual disabilities playing together on the same team at the same time, against other teams with the same make up. Unified Sports break down barriers, enabling young people to play side by side in inclusive competition, building positive experiences and confidence.

Priority competitions:

Name of the competition:

Unified Football 5-a-side & 7-a-side team competition

Age group:

Key Stage 3 Years 7,8 & 9 (U12-14) Note that players should be grouped across two year age groups only.

What level/location:

Cluster/Partnership/Local Authority/County

Who can run it?

Level 1: Schools

How to enter it:

Local entry through Inclusion school or SGO

When does it take place?

Competition runs April–June

Next steps after this competition:

The competition may be played across other schools. All players are encouraged to continue playing in school and their local communities. Development will see teams eligible to progress to international pathways led by Special Olympics Great Britain (SOGB).

Young Leader/Officials courses/qualifications available:

The Football Association (FA) offer two Football Leadership Courses for young people (aged 12+)

- **Junior Football Leaders – an introduction into football leadership. Approximately six guided learning hours.**
- **Leadership through Football – a Level 2 course, which requires a minimum of 62 guided learning hours.**

Delivery of the qualification will be led by individual(s) holding Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and are practising Physical Education specialists who have undergone an appropriate (FA-led) induction into the delivery of the qualification or by licensed FA Tutors who have undergone specialist inductions specific to this qualification.

If you are interested in training as a tutor of either of these courses, please contact: Development@SchoolsFA.com

Relevant web links:

www.specialolympics.org/football.aspx

www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk

FOOTBALL

Competition Card

Name of competition:

Unified Football 5 or 7-a-side team competition

Age group:

Key Stage 3 (U12, U13, U14) but Unified Football can be played at any age group in mixed teams

How to enter:

Both competitions can be played within school (Level 1) or with other schools (Level 2) via the SGO or Lead Inclusion School.

Tournament format:

5 or 7-a side competition begins within school or local events or leagues which could take place within one school, or playing against other schools. Unified Football is a mechanism to get more young people involved in football and to breakdown some of the barriers to participation for players with an intellectual disability. Special Olympics clubs across the country provide pathways for sustained participation beyond the School Games.

Simple rules:

- Recommended playing surface is a third generation artificial turf pitch. Where third generation artificial turf pitch is not used a sand-filled artificial turf pitch is acceptable.
- The Ball: Size 4 ball.
- For goalpost dimensions please refer to pitch diagrams for 7-a-side, mini soccer goals are also permitted.
- For 7-a-side teams of 7 (recommended is a squad of 12) during play, a team may not exceed: four athletes and three Unified Partners.
- Substitutions are unlimited in number (players may return on the field after being substituted).
- Substitutions can be made at any time the ball is out of bounds, between halves, after a goal is scored or during an injury timeout.
- Shin pads are required by all players.
- It is recommended that the duration of the game for 5-a-side is two equal 15 minute halves (for 7-a side 20 minutes) with a half time interval of five minutes.
- If the score is level at full time, two five minute overtime periods are used. If the game is still tied, penalty kicks will be used to decide the winner.
- For the start of play the ball must be kicked forward from the centre spot before being touched by another player. A goal can be scored directly from a kick off.
- Ball in and out of play: ball over the touchline results in a kick in. Ball over the end line results in a goal kick or corner kick. The ball must be completely over the goal line to be considered out of play.
- There is no offside.
- All freekicks are direct.
- A penalty kick is taken from the penalty mark.
- Free kick: opposing players must be at least five metres from the ball.
- A corner kick is awarded to the attacking team when a player from the defending team kicks the ball over their own goal line.
- Players with physical disabilities can participate as Unified Partners.

Roles for young people:

- Assistant Coach/Team Manager – delivering warm-up activities and games.
- Allow young referees the chance to officiate in these games, with support from a more experienced adult.
- Give young people the responsibility of organising and delivering the competition and fixture programme.
- Writing match reports to feature on the school website.
- Respect Ambassador – briefing teams and referees on the Respect Programme and monitoring the behaviour of teams.

How can regularity be achieved?

Regular playing opportunities can be created by running a regular 'central venue competition', rather than a 'one off' event. Schools can take it in turns to host, or a regular venue can be booked. Also refer to the FA pan disability offer for additional competition formats.

How can depth in competition through extra teams be achieved?

Schools should be encouraged to enter more than one team into competitions to give as many players as possible the opportunity to take part. Regular Intra-School football (Level 1) and regular after-school clubs can grow the base of players to allow schools to enter teams into Level 2 competitions.

Think Inclusively!

- Modify pitch sizes within the minimum and maximum size guides.
- Use rolling substitutions to ensure equal playing time amongst the team.
- Allow 'roll-ins' rather than 'throw-ins' to make controlling the ball easier for players with limited movement.
- Use a different coloured football for the engagement of visually impaired players.
- Ensure pitches are clearly marked and try to avoid using facilities with lots of different line markings and poor lighting where possible.
- Ensure referees support the inclusion of deaf players by using flags to signal decisions made.
- Ensure deaf players are permitted to wear hearing aids (if they choose to) during game play.

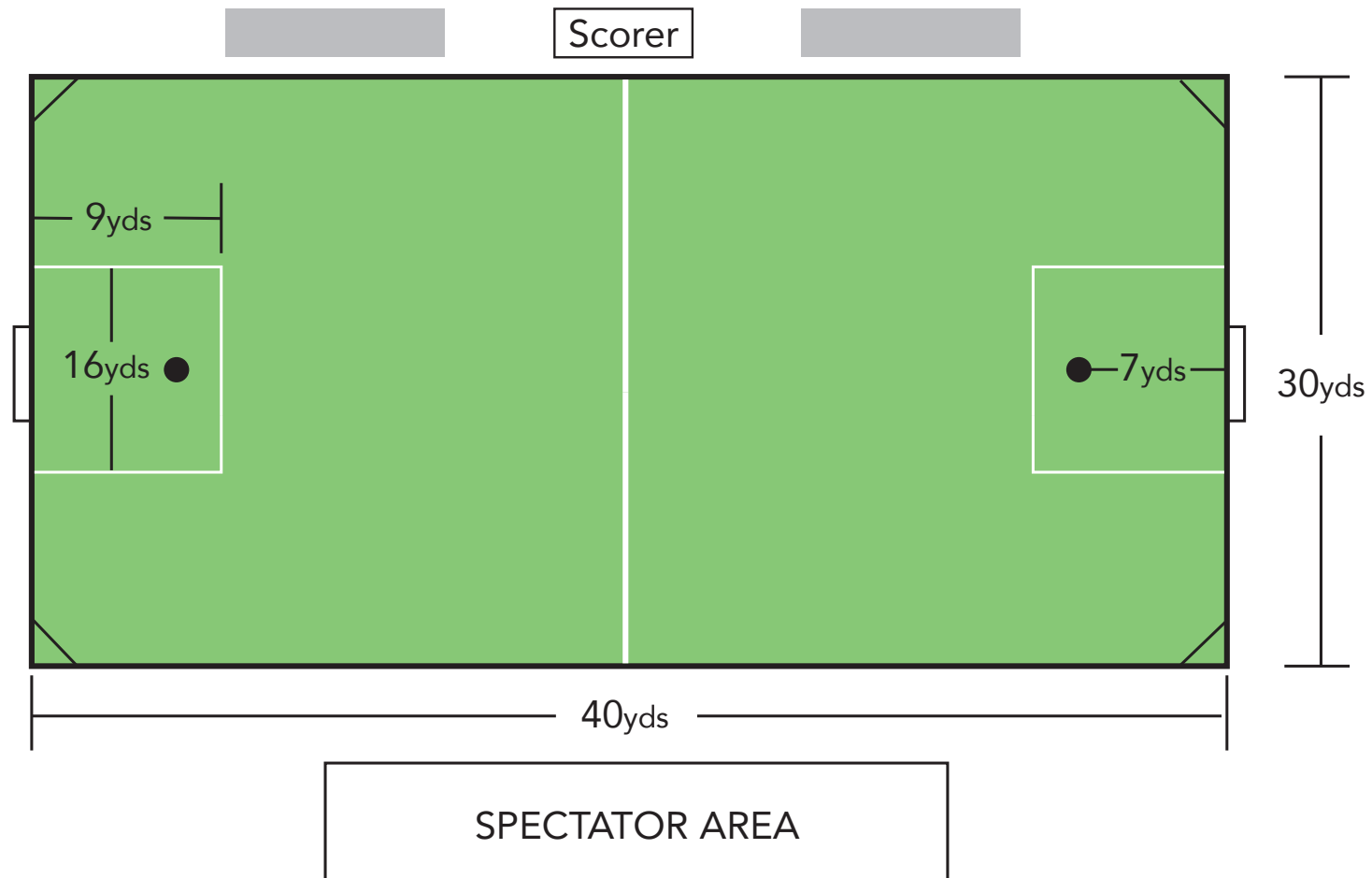
Relevant web links:

- For a full handbook and examples of training/coaching drills - please visit www.specialolympics.org/football.aspx
- County Schools Associations Contacts: www.esfa.co.uk/associations



FOOTBALL PITCH DIAGRAM

7-A-SIDE



For 5-a-side competitions, you may wish to reduce the playing area.

Football Team Divisioning Form

This form is an optional resource that can be used to ensure meaningful involvement for all players and teams when competing against others.

School Details			
School Name:			
Date of Assessment:	/ /	Type of surface the assessment took place on:	
Team Name: (include names of multiple teams if from same school)			
Notes: (Although each team should be made up of similar ability players, please note any exceptions here).			

Shirt Number:	Full Name:	Gender:	Year Group:	Member of a Special Olympics Club?	Athlete or Unified Partner?
		Male/Female		Yes/No	Athlete/Unified Partner
		Male/Female		Yes/No	Athlete/Unified Partner
		Male/Female		Yes/No	Athlete/Unified Partner
		Male/Female		Yes/No	Athlete/Unified Partner
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		Male/Female		Yes/No	Athlete/Unified Partner
		Male/Female		Yes/No	Athlete/Unified Partner
		Male/Female		Yes/No	Athlete/Unified Partner

Average ability level of the Football team: (Please rate each technique below in the end box out of 4) 4= Low, 3= Medium, 2= High, 1= Advanced			
1) Personal physical fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> endurance/condition average body size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> average body age 	1 2 3 4
2) Individual ball skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dribbling control and passing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shooting – heading attacking/defending 	1 2 3 4
3) Goalkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> anticipation & awareness positioning stopping & blocking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> catching distribution 	1 2 3 4
4) Team performance			
Level 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a very low level of spatial awareness plays with little team work or integration between the players finds it difficult to use game tactics at set pieces or in the run of play. 		1 2 3 4
Level 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has better spatial awareness with higher level of integration between players struggles to work as a team in defence situations uses basic tactics at set plays. 		
Level 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has good spatial awareness and high level of integration between players works as a team in defence and can better anticipate their opponent's moves uses the game tactics both at set pieces in the run of play. 		
Level 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has very good spatial awareness and utilises the whole playing area performs good team work in attack and defence, even under strong pressure from opponents can adapt set pieces and game tactics to what the situation requires. 		

