



HORSESHOES

TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Traditional Singles (10',20',30',40')
Traditional Doubles (10',20',30',40')

UNIFIED EVENTS

Unified Doubles (10,20,30',40')

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Horseshoes shall govern all Special Olympics competitions. Special Olympics has created these rules based National Horseshoe Pitchers Association (NHPA) rules, which shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Horseshoes.

RULES OF COMPETITION

UNIFORM SPECIFICATIONS

1. Players will dress in a manner which will bring credit to them and the sport of Horseshoes.
2. Players must wear closed-toed shoes that will not damage or disrupt the court surface.
3. Shirts that identify the Special Olympics program are preferred.
4. Prohibited apparel
 - a. Cutoffs, tank tops, sleeveless t-shirts or anything with advertisements or inappropriate subject matter.
5. The Horseshoes Sport Management Team or sport official shall have the authority to bar offenders from competition until they comply with the rule.

GENERAL RULES

1. Team Competition
 - a. Traditional doubles shall consist of two (2) athletes per team.
 - b. Unified doubles shall consist of one (1) athlete and one (1) Unified partner.
2. Qualification Score
 - a. A qualification score is required for each competitor entered in individual or doubles competition.
 - b. The qualification score shall be the basis for division placement in Summer Games.
3. Pitching Distance
 - a. The Horseshoes Sport Management Team will place athletes in the appropriate divisions based on qualification scores.
 - b. Individuals may be placed in divisions for 10-foot, 20-foot, 30-foot or 40-foot pitching distances.
 - c. Doubles teams will compete in 10-foot, 20-foot, 30-foot or 40-foot distances with both teammates pitching from the same distance.
 - d. Unified doubles teams will compete in either 20-foot, 30-foot or 40-foot distances with both teammates pitching from the same distance.
 - e. Pitching stakes for contestants will be 40 feet. Foul lines for those who pitch shall be in categories
 - i. 40-foot pitchers will stand next to the stake and pitch.
 - ii. 30-foot pitchers will stand 10 feet in front of the stake.
 - iii. 20-foot pitchers will stand 20 feet in front of the stake.
 - iv. 10-foot pitchers will stand 30 feet in front of the stake.
 - f. Pitching is to be done on the platforms on the side of the pit area or directly in front of them if pitching is done from a shorter distance.
 - g. In situations where the pitcher is standing at floor level pitching onto a raised pitching area, the tournament officials shall calculate the increased pitching distance created by raised stake areas and adjust the foul line.
4. Choice of Pitch
 - a. Choice of pitch or follow shall be determined by the toss of a coin or a flipped-up shoe.
 - i. In successive games between the same players, the loser shall have a choice.
 - b. Duration of pitches (two shoes) is to be 30 seconds.
 - i. If a player stops and steps back for no other reason than to disturb his opponent, then the referee shall give a warning to that pitcher.
 - ii. A second warning by the referee is a foul shoe, and shoe will be removed from the court.
 - c. A contestant must pitch his/her second shoe from the same side of the approach as his/her first shoe.
 - i. A contestant may pitch his/her shoe from the approach side of his/her choice during any inning of the game as long as they are both pitched from the same side.
 - ii. Penalty
 - 1) The second shoe shall be removed from the court.
 - d. A contestant may use no more than two (2) horseshoes during a contest.
 - i. Spare shoes are to be kept in a horseshoe box or somewhere off the court.
 - e. A contestant-pitched horseshoe which strikes an object such as a bird, dog, cat, a rolling shoe from another court, a fellow contestant, etc. before landing shall be pitched over.
 - i. A pitched horseshoe striking a tree limb, an electrical wire, or the ceiling of an indoor facility, etc. shall not be pitched over.
 - ii. Items that cannot be avoided call for a re-pitch; those items that can be avoided do not qualify for a re-pitch.
 - f. Any released horseshoe that has crossed the foul line shall be ruled a pitched shoe and cannot be re-pitched

unless covered by Rule 5-e.

- g. If it is discovered during an inning that a contestant has pitched his/her opponent's horseshoes, that entire inning shall be replayed using the proper horseshoes.
5. Foul Shoes
 - a. Any shoe pitched by a contestant which lands outside the fair area of the opposite pitching box is a foul shoe.
 - b. Any shoe that lands in fair territory but hits the backstop or other objects and comes back into the pitching area shall be called a foul shoe.
 - c. Foul shoes shall be removed from the opposite pitcher's box.
 - d. A foul shoe shall not be scored or re-edited except in the score sheet column headed "shoes pitched."
 - e. When a foul shoe disrupts the position of a shoe in a fair territory, the foul shoe is to be removed from the pitching area and all other shoes area to remain as they are.
 6. Practice Shoes
 - a. Between games, pitchers shall be limited to four (4) practice shoes once the scorekeeper and both pitchers are on the court ready to proceed with the next game.
 7. Broken Shoes
 - a. When a shoe lands in fair territory and breaks into separate parts, it shall be removed and the contestant is allowed to pitch another shoe in its stead.
 8. Measurements
 - a. Measurements to determine points shall be made with tape measure and/or a straight edge.
 - b. A ringer is declared when a shoe encircles the stake far enough to allow the touching of both heel caulks simultaneously with a straight edge.
 9. Scoring Rules
 - a. A game is divided into innings. Each inning is the pitching of two (2) shoes by each contestant.
 - b. The points shall be scored according to the position of the shoes at the end of the inning, that is, after the contestants have each thrown two (2) shoes.
 - c. The player having the first pitch in a designated inning shall pitch two (2) shoes in succession before the other player pitches two (2) shoes.
 - d. Players shall alternate first pitch, one (1) player having the first pitch in even number innings and the other player in the odd number innings.
 - e. The winner of a game shall be the first person or team to score 15 points.
 - f. Scoring will be as follows
 - i. One (1) shoe that lands within 6 inches of the stake = one (1) point.
 - ii. One (1) shoe that touches any part of shoe to the stake is a leaner = two (2) points
 - iii. One (1) ringer (shoe that encircles stake) = three (3) points.
 10. The Breakers
 - a. If tied, extra inning is played.
 - b. If still tied, each athlete will pitch two (2) shoes; closest to the stake wins.
 - c. If each competitor throws a ringer based on bullet (b) above, the next closest shoe wins.



HORSESHOES

COURT AND EQUIPMENT

1. A court will occupy a level area of at least 50 feet (in a north-south direction if possible) by at least 10 feet, and consist of two (2) pitcher's boxes, each six (6) feet square with a stake in its exact center.
 - a. The pitcher's boxes shall be located in such a manner that their front edges are parallel and the stakes are 40 feet apart in the middle of the total area.
2. When a number of courts are constructed adjacent to each other as required for tournament play, the stakes of one (1) court shall be at least 10 feet (12 feet preferable) from the stakes of the adjacent courts.
 - a. Foul lines in front of the pitcher's boxes shall be in a straight line across the entire layout.
3. A shoe shall not exceed 7-1/4 inches in width, 7-5/8 inches in length, and shall not weigh more than 2lbs, 10 ounces.
 - a. On a parallel line 3/4 of an inch from the straight edge touching the points of the open end of the shoe, the opening shall not exceed 3-1/2 inches.
4. Each pitcher's box shall be six (6) feet square with the stake in the exact center and shall consist of an area of clay, synthetic substance, dirt or sand into which the players throw their shoes.
5. The material around the stake may not be shoveled during a contest unless approved by a judge.
 - a. Contestants cannot mash or move material around the stake during a contest except to repair damage done by picking up a buried shoe or damage done by the measuring of a shoe.
 - b. Contestants are responsible for leveling and watering the court scheduled for their next game. Contestants may have someone do this job for them.
6. Every effort must be made to keep the substance around the stakes moist and in good shape to avoid bouncing ringers and sliding ringers.
7. Stakes shall be one (1) inch in diameter - no longer.
 - a. They may be of cold-rolled steel, mild iron, soft metal, or synthetic material.
 - b. The top of each stake shall extend not less than 14 inches nor more than 15 inches above the level of the pitcher's platform on each side of the stake with a three (3) inch incline toward each other.
8. When a stake breaks during an inning, the game shall be discontinued at the end of the previous inning, and the stake shall be repaired.
 - a. The contestants shall be allowed four (4) shoes to warm up and the game shall continue.
 - b. Tournament officials may opt to hold the completion of that game until another time if scheduling dictates.
 - c. Tournament officials may opt to move that game to another court while the repairs are being made.
 - d. A broken stake is defined as any stake not standing in the same position as when the inning started due to whatever damage.

GENERAL RULES FOR DETERMINING QUALIFICATION SCORE

1. Purpose
 - a. To measure the participant's ability for placement in an appropriate division for competition.
2. Equipment
 - a. A regulation court marked with lines between pits at 10-feet, 20-feet, and 30-feet.
3. Description
 - a. Each competitor tosses two (2) trials (10 horseshoes per trial) from their assigned (entered) distance (10-foot, 20-foot, 30-foot or 40-foot).
 - b. Each horseshoe should be removed from the pit before the next horseshoe is pitched.
4. Scoring
 - a. One (1) point is scored for each horseshoe that lands and stays in the pit.
 - b. Three (3) points are scored for each shoe that is around the stake.
 - c. Zero (0) points are scored for a shoe that does not stay in the pit.

