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# 2025 SOPA Softball Season

June - August

# Agenda

- Overview – Summer Season
- Softball Sport Management Team
- Softball Coach Survey
- Softball Season
  - Location Map
  - Seasonal Competition
    - How to host/what is expected of a coach
- Coach Clinic – May 17th at In the Net
- SOPA Softball Championship
- SONA Softball Championship
- Site Registration/Sign-ups
- Pre-season webinar – May 1, 7pm







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# Softball – Summer Season

- Year-round training and competition
- More competition opportunities due to longer length for the season
- Opportunity to increase participation by providing softball to additional athletes (spring sport athletes)

**SEASONS AT A GLANCE**

	 FALL	 WINTER	 SPRING	 SUMMER
<b>Training Site Registration</b> (see link below)	April 1 - May 1	Sept. 1 - Oct. 1	Nov. 1 - Dec. 1	March 1 - April 1
<b>Athlete, Unified Partner, Volunteer Signup</b>	May 15 - July 15	Oct. 15 - Nov. 15	Dec. 15 - March 1	April 15 - May 15
<b>Season Length</b>	August 9 - Nov. 3	Dec. 1 - March 2	March 14 - June 7	June 1 - Sept. 15
<b>Eligibility Deadline</b>	August 23	December 13	March 28	June 20
<b>Sports Offered</b>	Bocce, Bowling, Flag Football, Long Distance Running/Walking, Powerlifting, Soccer, Volleyball	Alpine Skiing, Bowling, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Snowboard, Snowshoe, Speed Skating	Athletics (Track & Field), Basketball, Equestrian, Gymnastics, Swimming, Tennis	Golf Softball

# Softball Sport Management Team

- Special Olympics Pennsylvania Sport Management Teams are comprised of key regional leadership volunteers who represent each of SOPA's sponsored sports. These individuals represent a variety of levels within their respective sports, both inside and outside of Special Olympic Goals
  - Goals
    - Promote the sport within the Special Olympics community
    - Increase awareness of and athlete participation in the sport
    - Work to improve the quality of coach/athlete training and competition opportunities for the sport they represent



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# Sport Management Team

Name	Region
Jason Merola	Great Lehigh Valley & Pocono
Jen Rice	The Wilds
Chris Branda	Susquehanna
Gary Adams	Greater Lehigh Valley & Pocono
Nelson Trout	Capitol Area
Linds Pacovsky	Ridger & Valley
Lis Fee	Three Rivers
David Kolojejchchick	USA Softball
Mary Lou Shaff	The Wilds
Ann Midegel	The Wilds



# Softball Sport Management Team

## Goals for 2025

- Assist in the planning of the Softball Championship.
- Plan season to include events/tournaments throughout the season.
- Revise coaches' education materials and build out facilitator guide.
- Host in-person advanced coaches' clinic.



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# Softball Coach Survey

- Link if you have not completed: [Softball Coaches Survey](#)
- Goal was to collect coach's feedback to help us develop a competitive softball season from June – August
- Minimum # of games played to qualify for SOPA Championship
  - Defining expectations to be a competitive team
- Need coaches to be willing to host doubleheaders/tournaments
  - Results from survey showed your willingness to do this!!!



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# Softball Seasonal Competition

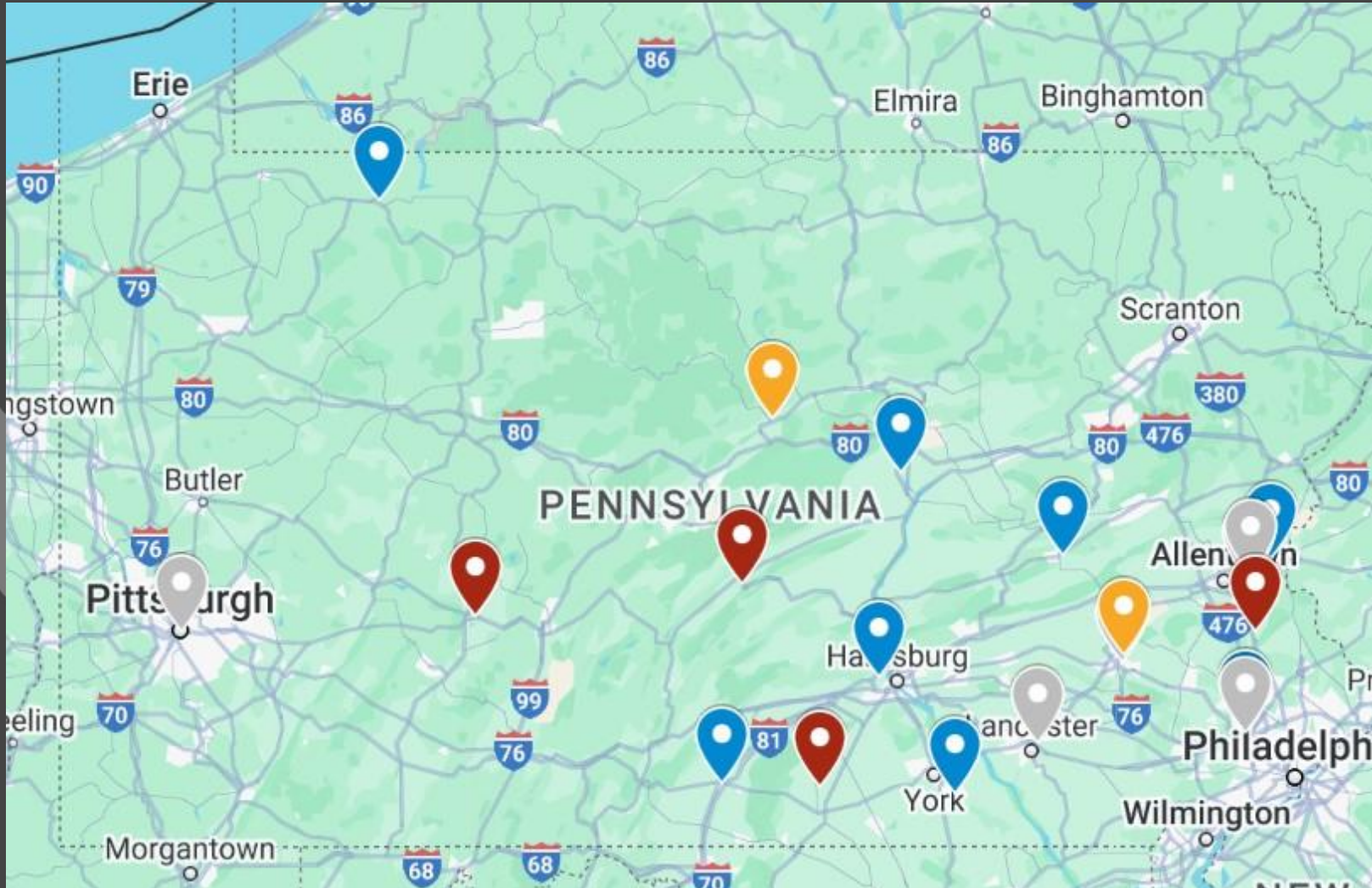
- Offering
  - Individual Skills
  - Traditional Team
  - Unified Team
- Play minimum number of games
- Play against other local teams



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# Location Map



- [SB map](#)
- [Softball Contact List](#)
- **Yellow = Advanced**
- Gray = Intermediate
- **Red = Novice**
- **Blue = Unknown**



# Hosting Competitions

- Expectation of coach
  - Work with Regional Sport Director on planning
  - Secure facility/day-of set-up
  - Solicit teams – doubleheader 1 other team, tournament a few teams depending on what facility can accommodate
  - Communicate with teams attending
  - Work with facility/RSD to secure volunteers
  - Assist with securing umpires (via facility or your personal connections)
- Expectation of Regional Team
  - Secure umpires via SMT/HQ staff
  - Supply equipment (if necessary)
  - Set up GMS if needed
  - Ensure all athletes participating meet eligibility criteria
- Awards are NOT necessary



# Expectation for all Competitions

- Must have umpires
- Must follow SOI Softball Sport Rules
  - Must play complete games (i.e. 7 innings)
  - Field must meet dimensions in Sport Rules and include 3 bases, home plate with base runner home plate and pitching rubber
  - Field must lined with foul lines, base runner home plate, batter's box
- Each team must have 1 certified coach
- Teams must be in matching uniforms



# Softball Coaches Clinic

- May 17, 2025
- In the Net
  - Premier Sports Complex in Central PA
  - 998 Airport Road, Palmyra, PA 17078
- Timeline
  - Registration – 8:30 AM – 8:45 AM
  - Morning Session – 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM
  - Lunch – 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM
  - Afternoon Session – 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- [Coaches Clinic Interest Form](#)



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# SOPA Softball Championship

- August 22, 23, 24
- In the Net
  - Premier Sports Complex in Central PA
  - 998 Airport Road, Palmyra, PA 17078



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# Facilities

- 6 fields
  - 5 Artificial Turf Infields
- Outdoor Multipurpose Field
- Main Dome



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# Potential Schedule

- Friday, August 22nd
  - Arrival 11:00PM
  - Prelims 12:00PM
  - Opening Ceremonies
- Saturday, August 23rd
  - Pool Play and Medal Rounds
  - Olympic Town
  - Healthy Athletes
  - Night Activity
- Sunday, August 24th
  - Medal Rounds
  - Awards



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# SONA National Championship

- September 18-21
- Oklahoma City and Midwest City, OK
- Teams interested in attending must let Regional staff know ASAP
- SOPA will submit quota based on interest
- Teams will be expected to raise all funds for attendance at the event (registration fee, travel, housing, meals). These are not budgeted expenses.



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# Site Registration / Signups

- [Training Site Registration Form](#)
  - Head coach/training site coordinator complete by April 1
- Athlete & Volunteer Sign-ups
  - April 15 – May 15, be sure ALL interested individuals are in by May 15
- You may start practices earlier, but it is extremely important that you are working with your RSD to ensure everyone at practice is eligible



# Your Questions

- 8-week requirement
  - Athletes must be attending a minimum 8-weeks of softball /games to be eligible for Championship event
  - There are 11 weeks between summer games and Championship event, but you can start training prior to June
  - Softball should take priority over fall sports until the end of season
- Weather
  - Just like every season weather should be monitored for safe practice/competitions
  - [Heat Risk](#) is a site we recommend you follow, and RSD will communicate with coaching if temperatures are too high for practices/competitions
  - Practice can be moved indoors, if possible, in these situations



# SAVE THE DATE: May 1, 7:00 PM

- Pre-season Softball Coach webinar
- [REGISTER HERE](#)
- To cover:
  - Softball Rules
  - Seasonal Schedule
  - Hosting doubleheader/Tournament
  - How to use your Tracker
    - Eligibility
    - Championship LOI/Registration
  - SOPA Softball Championship



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