

# 2018-2019 Program Updates

## Maximum Effort Rule

Beginning in the Fall of 2017, SONJ began a two-year process to gradually phase in the Maximum Effort Rule as per Section 11 of the Special Olympics Sports Rules. The first sport that utilized this rule was **cycling beginning Fall of 2017**.

For further information, please see pages 16-17 of [Article 1: Sports Rules document](#).

## Swimming

Based on the recommendations of the Swimming focus group, which included state committee members, athletes and parents, the Swim Advancement from Sectionals to Summer Games will remain as stated in 2018, which is the following:

### Individual:

- Individual athletes will advance from the Sectional competitions to the State competition by placing first or second in their respective divisions in any 1 of their events at the Sectional meet. If an individual swims 4 events at Sectionals, they only need to receive Gold or Silver in 1 of those events to advance and compete in ALL of their events at Summer Games.

### Relay:

- If a relay team wins Gold or Silver at Sectionals, all 4 athletes move on to Summer Games, to do their individual and relay events.
- If a(n) athlete(s) wins an individual event Gold or Silver but does not come in first or second with a relay, the relay team does not advance as a group.
- If a relay team does not receive a Gold or Silver as a team, the relay team does not advance, unless each individual achieves a Gold or Silver in individual events – securing advancement of each of the team members to Summer Games.
- For Relays- The substitution and incomplete relay language will be closely modeled after the established language in 2018.

**In addition, SONJ will adopt the following recommendation from the Swimming focus group to extend the Summer Games schedule to include Friday:**

- Friday events will be added to the schedule to alleviate some of the safety and capacity issues over the Saturday and Sunday competition days. The Friday events will be made up of distance events and the schedule will be similar to version C which would involve approximately 70-75 unique athletes. The estimated time of competition would be 1:30-4pm on Friday. Awards for Friday's competition would be done Saturday morning. As we get to the spring, and registrations come in, the Friday schedule will be defined.

## Bowling

*The 2019 process for re-rating bowling averages that exceed the 30% Maximum Effort Rule (Section 11 of the Special Olympics Sports Rules) in Sectional competition is as follows:*

- For those athletes exceeding a 30% improvement from their divisioning score (minimum 15-game legal submitted average) to their final 3 game average at a Sectional level competition, we will re-calculate a "current average" for divisioning purposes at the State Games level IF there is an appeal made by the Head Coach or LTP Coordinator. The "current average" would consist of an athlete's scores from the Sectional meet (3 games), Area meet (3 games) and the minimum 15-game average submitted for the area meet registration, as well as any games bowled after the area meet registration submission.

***\*\* It is impressed upon all coaches to keep records of ALL games' scores of their athletes for this documentation. \*\****

- If an athlete exceeds the 30% improvement from their divisioning score (minimum 15-game legal submitted average) to their final 3 game average at a sectional level competition, and the Head Coach or LTP Coordinator cannot provide documentation through the appeal process, a rerated average of the average of the 3 games bowled at the Sectional level competition will be used for divisioning purposes at the State Games level.
- The established re-rating procedure will not affect assisted or unassisted ramp bowlers. Ramp bowlers will be divisioned using the minimum 15-game average submitted for the area meet registration at Spring Games, if the athlete advances.

## Athlete Congress Recommendation

The Athlete Congress will be voting to make a recommendation to implement a one sport per season policy for all seasons. The details will be made available later in 2018.

## Establishment of Transgender Policy

The establishment of a Transgender Policy is a directive from SOI and will be made available to the Special Olympics community when it is approved by the SONJ Board of Trustees. When complete, the Transgender Policy will be available on the SONJ website ([sonj.org](http://sonj.org)) on the Resource page on the LTP Section of the site.