



Monthly Coaches Newsletter – April 2018

Sports Highlight: 2018 SOOH State Basketball Tournament took place at five gyms in the Tuscarawas Valley, March 23-24th.

The road to Tuscarawas County began in late February on courts across the Buckeye state when the original field of 155 teams began their playoff games. During the state tournament, 28 teams competed in semifinal and final games in 9 divisions. You can find the results of those games through the link below:

<http://www.soo.org/pageDownload.php?docID=8272>

Congratulations to all Special Olympics Ohio State Basketball Champions!

- *Men's Open Div. I: CCBDD Rockets
- *Men's Div. II: [Fayette County Special Olympics Ohio](#) Dragons I
- *Men's Div. III: [Special Olympics Hamilton County](#) Hoopsters
- *Men's Div. IV: Tuscarawas County- Maroon
- *Men's Div. V: Hamilton County Snap
- *Women's Div.: [Special Olympics Delaware County, OH](#) Lady Racers
- *School Age Div. I: Franklin Columbus Comets- Green
- *School Age Div. II: Coshocton Hopewell- Red

Additionally, more than 200 athletes competed in the Basketball Individual Skills contest!

2018 National Unified Bowling Tournament – Syracuse, NY

Special Olympics Ohio hosted the 28th annual National Unified Bowling Tournament in Syracuse New York the week of March 13-15. Not only did a lot of bowling pins fall that week we were all given the joy of seeing the snow capital of the world deliver with 18 inches of snow. Special Olympics North America asks Ohio to conduct The National Unified Bowling Tournament each year in with conjunction to the United States Bowling Congress.

Ohio had the following programs participate in the event; Hamilton County, Medina DD, Cuyahoga Cleveland Municipal Schools. The Ohio teams competed with 350 athletes from all over the country in both Unified Doubles and Unified Team Bowling.



(Above) the ON Center Syracuse, NY –Photo Credit: SOOH – Josh Messersmith



(Above) WBCA All Americans Basketball Clinic with SOOH Athletes – Photo Credit: SOOH – Kate Burdett

Coming Soon: Spring Games, state-wide!! These games served to qualify nearly 3,000 athletes for the State Summer Games!

Coach of the Month: Head Coach John Shaffer, Lucas County Toledo Public Schools – The T Rockets!! I have watched this coach in action this season and this nomination from Sue Hess, Local Coordinator- Lucas County Toledo Public Schools comes as no surprise:

I would like to nominate John Shaffer as Special Olympics Coach of the Month. John and his partners, Marcia Quinn and Zack Shaw, have coached our basketball team for 8 years. John started as head coach when his two sons joined our team. One of his son's plays on his High School team, the other son plays for us, (when he isn't wearing a cast). John has always handled every level of skill; he believes practicing as a group together in 'squads' helps our younger less skilled athletes become better basketball players. He is excellent at handling aggressive behaviors if an athlete exhibits during practice or game. He really tries to keep them from escalating but if they do, is able to calm down each episode. John expects his athletes to exhibit the sportsmanship of Special Olympics. He never runs up scores in fact, even in tournament play, John makes sure each athlete has as close to equal time on the floor as they can tolerate. He makes sure his 'lead' players understand everyone gets the ball and will pull any athlete who is not showing good sportsmanship. He always gives athletes a second chance.

This year we had 36 athletes show up to play basketball. Rather than split practices, John believed both teams would gain by practicing together. We had some siblings who were willing to commit so our new team became our FIRSY Unified Basketball team. John has coached both teams and given every child opportunity to 'shine'. He goes out of his way to give the athletes he is training opportunities to learn and compete. In all of this, he will step back and make sure every athlete is 'having fun'!

John also coaches Track & Field and Flag Football! He is committed to Special Olympics all year. He promotes it daily in every aspect of his life. Besides bringing with him "his coaching team", he shares with coworkers, alumni from college and high school and many others the benefit of Special Olympics involvement for athletes and for volunteers. John has attended the coaches training and implemented some of the suggestions he was given and has parent meetings stressing sportsmanship and expectations of athletes and spectators. God has blessed me by bringing John Shaffer, Marcia Quinn and Zack Shaw into Special Olympics Toledo Public. He is a coach and a friend!

Congratulations Coach John!!! You are what makes this organization and Ohio great!!!



Coach John Shaffer, on the court at New Philadelphia High School (left), Always watching (right)

(Please forward me nominations for Coaches within your local organizations that deserve some special recognition. Simply send me a brief narrative of "why they are the best" and a coaching photo to my email address: jwysocki@sooh.org and I will take the best of the month and call them out on the monthly newsletter for the difference they are making for our Special Olympics Athletes. I will use these monthly nominations to select a Coach of the Year at our annual awards banquet in October)

Certification Corner: The black Reebok Polo shirts are waiting for your certification sheets to come in! We welcome Coach Jen Capretta (Fairfield County-Lancaster City Schools) to the Special Olympics Ohio Certified Coaches Club! Congratulations on your Cert and Shirt!



Coach Jen Capretta (left), Legacy Certified Coach Debi Williams (right)

Follow this link and keep chipping away at those courses! Earn that shirt!!! ☺

https://www.specialolympics.org/sections/sports-and-games/coaching_resources.aspx

Conditioning Corner: Coaches, send in your favorite conditioning workouts, featuring your athletes and I will upload to the SOOH Channel!! https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_zwnbh97Lks76kJEY039oq

Fun Fact:

Did you know that Special Olympics Ohio began Unified Sports in 1987 with its first Unified Softball Team?? Now going on 31 years strong!! Check out the photo below and maybe you will recognize someone?

Hint...he still has a mustache.



From the Special Olympics Ohio Secret Archives – Credit to Dena Vermillion (also pictured above)

Remember to ALWAYS have your Athlete and Partner Applications for Participation and Release Forms in your possession while training, traveling and/or competing. Should a medical event occur, those forms will be necessary for the athlete to receive treatment!

Until next month,

Coach John