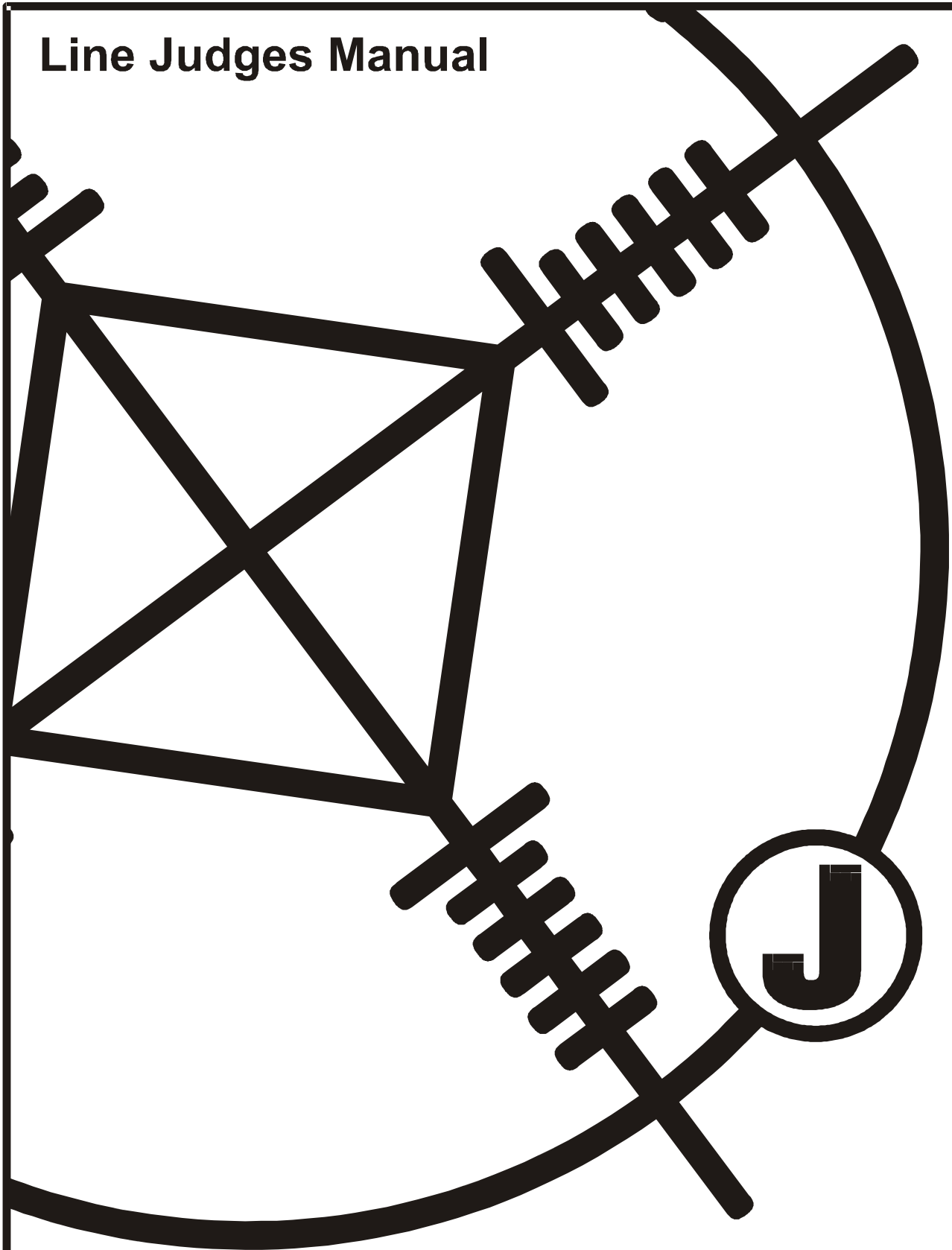


# Line Judges Manual



**Sparks-a-Rama & AwanaGames™**  
Official Rules and Regulations



# Sparks-a-Rama & AwanaGames Line Judges Manual

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# INTRODUCTION TO LINE JUDGING

## **WHAT IS A LINE JUDGE?**

One of four officials who knows the AwanaGames or Sparks-a-Rama events and rules; assists the circle director in the administration of the games on the circle.

AwanaGames officiating requires efficiency and attention to details. Note these four primary roles that a line judge assumes:

**(1) JUDGE** — A line judge determines whether or not players violate the rules.

**(2) SERVANT** — A line judge, by attitude and actions, is a servant to the clubbers and coaches. It is his goal to make the meet(s) as meaningful as possible for them.

**(3) WITNESS** — A line judge, by emotions, attitude, and actions, strives to be a testimony to the unsaved parents and clubbers of the life-changing power of trusting Christ as Savior.

**(4) LEADER** — A line judge is a leader; an example to coaches, clubbers, and spectators in response to pressure situations.

THANK YOU for accepting the challenge of officiating at an AwanaGames or a Sparks-a-Rama meet. We pray you will recognize the value of your ministry. Together we may be used greatly of the Lord to bring unsaved people to Him and to encourage children.

## **The Key — PROPER COMMUNICATION!**

Line judges, as well as all AwanaGames and Sparks-a-Rama staff, **MUST** follow the chain of command as diagrammed in the Rule Books. Remember, line judges are responsible to communicate primarily with the circle director and the coaches. Line judges never “coach” the players. Any coach has the right to request that you join him in discussing an issue with the circle director. However, a coach does not have the right to discuss any situation with the circle director without you being present.

**Each judge must realize the crucial importance of accurate communication.** Here are some important guidelines:

- 1. Relax the coaches** by talking with them and SMILING!
- 2. Understand your coaches.** Remember what they’ve gone through to get a team to the meet; think of yourself in their shoes. You’ll understand their tension.
- 3. Never get upset or take offense** when a coach complains or asks a question. Concentrate on what the coach is saying, rather than on your feelings or emotions.
- 4. Always remain non-argumentative and calm.** Our highest responsibility is to maintain a positive testimony for our Lord. A show of temper could ruin that testimony.
- 5. Never be pushy.** If there is confusion, help the circle director slow things down, so the confusion is cleared up.
- 6. Encourage coaches that might be having trouble.** Say something, if you can, to ease their tension.
- 7. Make sure players are clear on what they are doing** (especially in Sparks-a-Rama) before an event starts. However, never coach them.
- 8. Don’t GUESS!** If you don’t know how to make a call, tell the circle director what you know and let him make the decision!
- 9. Be helpful.** Some officials feel they must be stone-faced in order to show objectivity. But, we want to show our clubbers that we care about them, so we **MUST** treat team members with gentleness and interest. However, never become involved in any way with a coach or the team members that might be viewed as partiality.
- 10. As they are ready to start,** tell the players, “Do your best,” or encourage them in an impartial way.
- 11. Keep the coaches informed.** Tell them the reason for any disqualifications or reruns.

- 12. Congratulate and thank the coach after the meet is over.** Take time to catch the eye of all clubbers as you hand out awards and thank them for their efforts.
- 13. Never look at your responsibility as being against the coaches** or disputing them in any way. We are partners together in this ministry for the Lord! Remain professional, friendly, and helpful, but never become emotionally involved.

Remember. You're an important tool that God uses to create a positive witness for His gospel in the hearts of unsaved clubbers and parents!

### ***BEFORE DAY OF EVENTS ...***

- 1. Review the manual and rulebook(s) several times.**
- 2. Practice officiating** at your clubs' practices. It will help you, and help them, too.
- 3. Select the proper dress.** AWANA RECOMMENDS THAT ALL JUDGES WEAR DARK PANTS (NO JEANS) AND TENNIS SHOES. Awana provides your shirt and other equipment at the meet.
- 4. Pray for God's blessing** on our ministry together.

### ***ON THE DAY OF EVENTS ...***

- 1. Arrive at least one hour early.**
- 2. Report to the staff table** and the staff coordinator will direct you where to go to pick up your line judge shirt.
- 3. Change into your judge's shirt. Report back** to the head line judge or circle director to review rules together before you go out on the floor.
- 4. Be ready to help get the teams into their positions.** This responsibility may involve getting the clubbers on the floor or being a part of the flag ceremony.
- 5. If needed, obtain the roster sheets from your coaches; check the ages** of the children competing.
- 6. Make sure all the team members and their coaches are wearing gym shoes.** If any are not, inform the coach.
- 7. Coaches' meeting:** Circle Directors and line judges should meet with coaches at time and place specified by missionary or event coordinator.

### ***GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS***

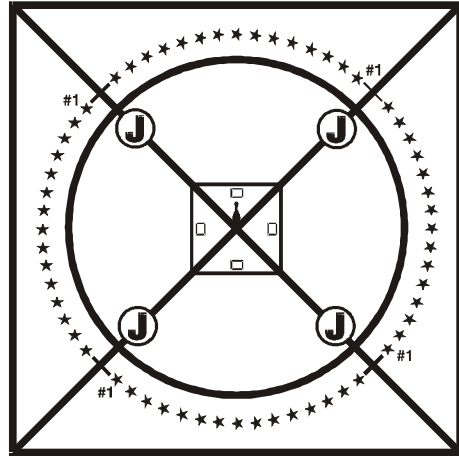
You need to know the following procedures:

- 1. Line up on your own line for the flag ceremony.** Move to the next team for the first event, going counterclockwise. You will continue to rotate counterclockwise for each event. In the Balloon Relay, you will rotate with each heat.
- 2. Raise your hand when your team is ready to begin an event.** The circle director will then raise his hand to indicate the circle is ready.
- 3. Help the circle director determine the order in which the teams finish.** Always remember the place your team finishes. If your team is disqualified, watch the other teams to determine which team is awarded the point.
- 4. When there is a false start in a running event, immediately jump in front of the runners with your hands spread out** to stop them from going further. Then prepare the team for a restart. Awana does not recommend any physical touching of clubbers.
- 5. Notify the circle director of the reason for any disqualifications.**
- 6. Report any cause for deducting sportsmanship points to the circle director** and allow him to make the decision.
- 7. Aid the coaches during the speaker presentation by sitting with the clubbers** and helping them be attentive.

# SPARKS-A-RAMA PROCEDURES

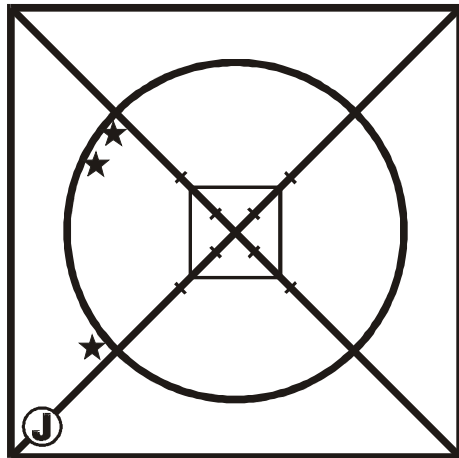
## EVENT 1 — SPARKY BEANBAG - IN AND OUT

- A. Judge's position: Begins inside the circle, between the circle pin and player #1, following the game progression across the team zone.
- B. Before the event:
1. Count to see that there are no more than 15 players on the line.
  2. Make sure that each player is in the proper position.
  3. When the team is ready, give player #1 the bean bag.
- C. During the event:
1. Watch that the players do not step over the line until they are tagged or receive the bean bag.
  2. Make sure that each player does their turn.
  3. Note the place that your team finishes.



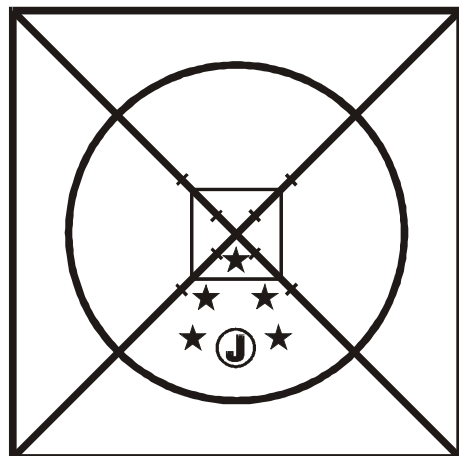
## EVENT 2 — SPARKY SAFARI

- A. Judge's position: Stand on the team starting diagonal outside the running area.
- B. Before the event:
- When the runners are in position, give the first runner a beanbag.
- C. During the event:
1. Check that each team member runs one lap.
  2. Watch that clubbers' hands do not touch the beanbag while the player is moving.
  3. If a clubber drops the beanbag, make certain that it hits the floor before the player touches it, and that the player stops before picking up the beanbag and puts it back on his/her head before resuming.
  4. If clubber does not allow bag to hit the floor, stop him/her briefly to take away the advantage.
  5. Make certain the beanbag is passed and placed on clubber's head within the passing zone.
  6. Determine the place that your team finished.



## EVENT 3 — BALLOON BATTLE

- A. Judge's position: Stand outside team zone so that you can see the entire area.
- B. Before the event:
1. Help get the rope in place. Have a coach from each team hold the rope.
  2. Count the number of players.
- C. During the event:
1. Help the coaches keep the rope tight, forming a barrier that will keep the clubbers in their area.



2. Keep track of the number of times the balloon touches the floor in your quadrant.
3. Keep game moving.
4. Retrieve balloons that hit floor and or go out of your team playing area, then restart balloon from center.
5. Teams may "spike" the balloon.

**EVENT 4 — RABBIT HUNT**

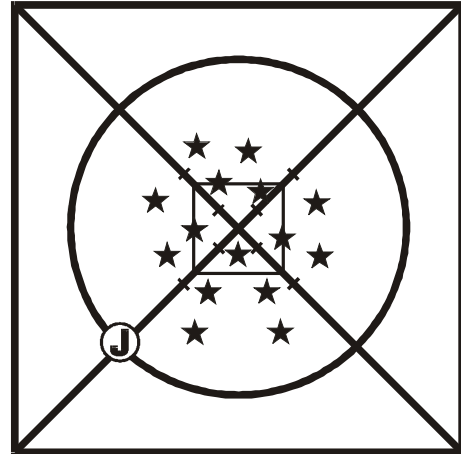
A. Judge's position: On the circle on the diagonal line.

B. Before the event:

1. Make sure the team in the center has no more than 15 players.
2. Help balance the other teams equally around the circle.

C. During the event:

1. Watch to see which players are hit (anywhere on the body) and remove them from the circle.
2. Help get the ball out of the center to keep the game moving.
3. Make sure players are behind the circle line when throwing the ball.
4. Make sure players stay in when hit by a ball thrown by someone who stepped in the circle.
5. At the end of event, quickly help the circle director gather together the "rabbits" (players who were not hit) into the center square to be counted.



**EVENT 5 — SPARKY TRAIN**

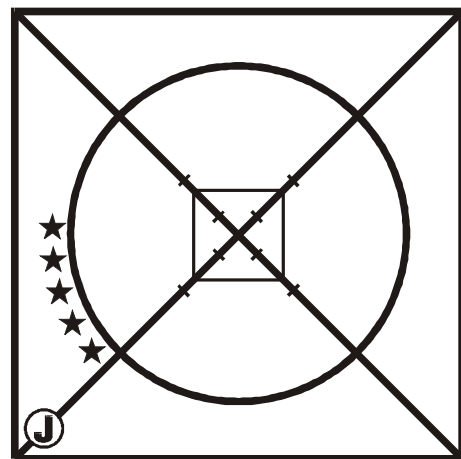
A. Judge's position: Just behind the team starting diagonal outside the circle.

B. Before the event:

1. Check players' handholds.
2. Make certain players are lined up one behind another (spirit of the game). If not, instruct the coach to line them up again.

C. During the event:

1. Watch the team in your **quadrant** to make sure the players stay together.
2. If a team disconnects in your quadrant, stop the first player. Wait for the others to connect before letting them continue play.
3. Make sure last player crosses team starting line and goes into center for center pin or beanbag.



**EVENT 6 — SPARKY BALLOON POP**

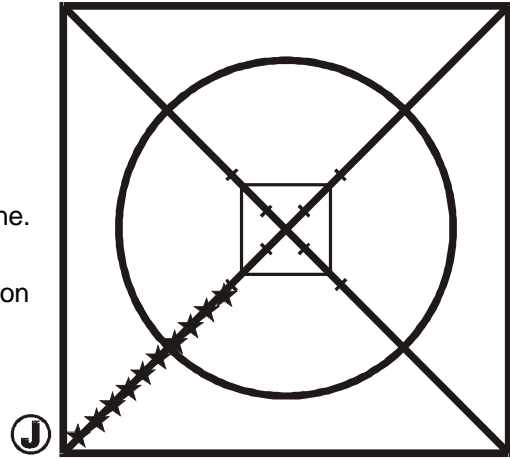
A. Judge's position: Begins next to player #1, then moves with the balloon.

B. Before the event:

1. Count the number of players (15).
2. Make sure the team is straddling the diagonal line.
3. Make sure #15 is on the eight-foot mark.
4. When the players are in position, hand the balloon to player #1.
5. Have 2nd balloon ready.

C. During the event:

1. Make sure the balloon goes through each player's legs.
2. Make sure player #15 goes into his/her inner triangle to sit on the balloon to pop it. Balloon must be popped in this triangle.
3. Make sure fingernails are not used to pop the balloon.
4. Supply a 2nd balloon if first one breaks before player #15 makes first attempt to pop balloon.



**AWARD CEREMONY**

1. Go to the award table. Take the patches back to your team and distribute them.
2. Congratulate each clubber with a handshake and a smile.
3. Place any extra patches back on the award table.

REMEMBER: SPARKS-A-RAMA SHOULD NOT HAVE THE INTENSITY OF AWANAGAMES. BE AWARE OF WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE EVERY CHILD HAVE FUN AND GO HOME FEELING LIKE A WINNER!

# T&T AWANAGAMES PROCEDURES

## EVENT 1 — BEANBAG RELAY

A. Judge's position: Begins inside the circle, between the circle pin and the hash mark, following the game progression across the team zone.

B. Before the event:

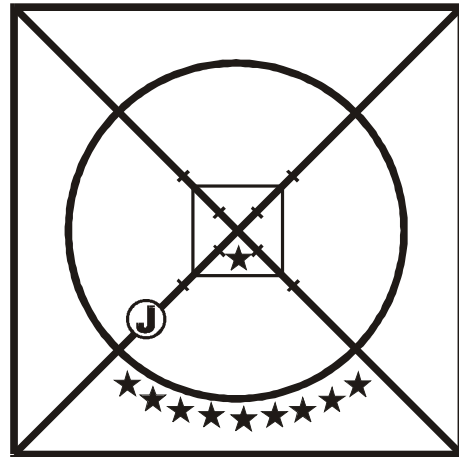
1. Count to see if there are the maximum number of players on the team circle line. If there are not, remind the coach of the extra tosses his team must make.
2. Make sure each player is in the proper location.
3. When the team is ready, give the team leader the beanbag.

C. During the event:

1. Check to make sure the game leader:
  - a. Has one foot inside the box whenever throwing or catching.
  - b. When passing the beanbag, the game leader does not allow his foot to pass through the imaginary plane extending up from the seven-foot line. He may lift his foot, however.
  - c. Does not go out of the team zone in retrieving the beanbag.
  - d. Has possession of the beanbag prior to leaving his box to run around his circle pin.
  - e. Has possession of the beanbag when he gets to the center.
2. Check to make sure the other players:
  - a. Do not step over the circle line and stay in order. No "trailers" are allowed.
  - b. Catch and return the beanbag in succession.

Remember, if the beanbag is dropped or missed by a player, it may be retrieved by any member of the team, providing the player does not step inside the circle or outside the team zone. However, the beanbag must be thrown to the game leader by the player who missed it or dropped it.

3. Note the place your team finishes.



## EVENT 2 — SPRINT RELAY

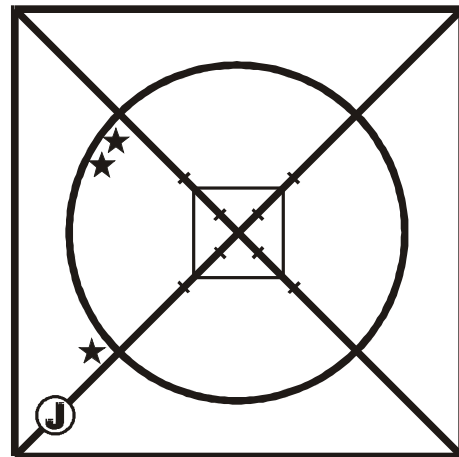
A. Judge's position: On the team starting diagonal out of the running area.

B. Before the event:

1. Check team circle pin for correct position.
2. Make sure runners are in the correct position, and the first runner's feet are behind the starting line. If not, tell the coach.
3. Hand baton to the first runner.
4. Mark hand to assure players only run in specified events – if implemented.

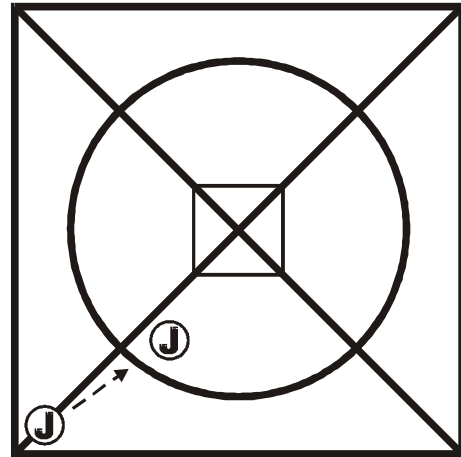
C. During the event:

1. Watch for a false start. If it occurs, quickly jump into the running area with arms spread out to stop the players.
2. Watch the quadrant to the left of you for any rule violations.
3. Make sure the baton is passed each time within the proper zone.
4. Make sure the last runner has his baton when he reaches the center.
5. Note the place your team finishes.



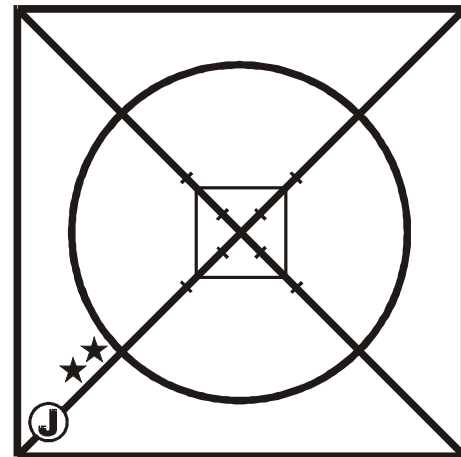
**EVENT 3 — KNOCK IT DOWN**

- A. Judge's position: Stand on the team starting diagonal out of the running area. When player has completed one lap and ready to toss, stand on right side of your team color four-foot mark.
- B. Before the event: When the runners are in position, give them the beanbag.
- C. During the event:
  - 1. Watch for false start.
  - 2. Check that the runner runs one lap.
  - 3. Make sure that he/she is behind his/her team line and in team zone when throwing.
  - 4. Watch to see which team knocks over center pin.



**EVENT 4 — THREE-LEGGED RACE**

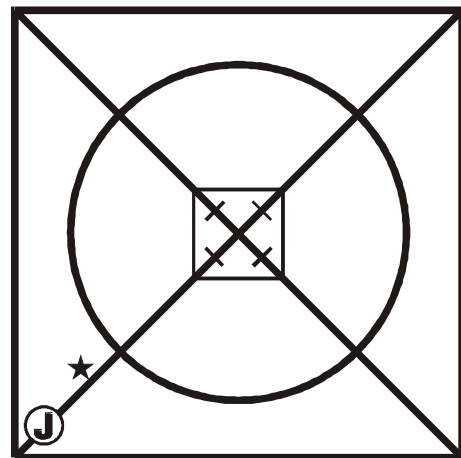
- A. Judge's position: Standing on the diagonal out of the running area.
- B. Before the event:
  - 1. Help set the scoring pins on the five-foot marks.
  - 2. Check the runners' leg tie to see that it is on the ankles. Do not adjust the leg band, but allow the coach to make necessary adjustments.
  - 3. Make sure the runners are behind the starting line.



- C. During the event:
  - 1. If a false start occurs, quickly jump into running area with arms spread out to stop the players.
  - 2. Watch the quadrant to your left for any rule violations.
  - 3. If your runners get tagged or passed, wave them off the circle.
  - 4. If runners fall near you, assist them out of the running path ONLY if they are tagged or passed, and ONLY if you will not be in the way yourself. It is best to move the players to the outside. Verbally instruct them to move out of the path of the other runners.
  - 5. Note what place your team finishes.

**EVENT 5 — SPRINT**

- A. Judge's position: On the team diagonal out of the running area.
- B. Before the event:
  - 1. Put the circle pins in position.
  - 2. Say something to relax the runner as he/she is coming to the line.
  - 3. If the runner's feet are over the starting line, tell the coach.
  - 4. Mark hand to assure players only run in specified events – if implemented.



C. During the event:

1. Watch for false starts; if one occurs, stop the runner coming toward you.
2. Watch your runner, counting his/her laps.
3. If your runner gets tagged or passed, wave him/her off the circle.
4. Note your player's finish. If he/she is out of the competition, note the other players' finishes.
5. Watch the quadrant to your left for any rule violations.

**EVENT 6 — FOUR-WAY TUG**

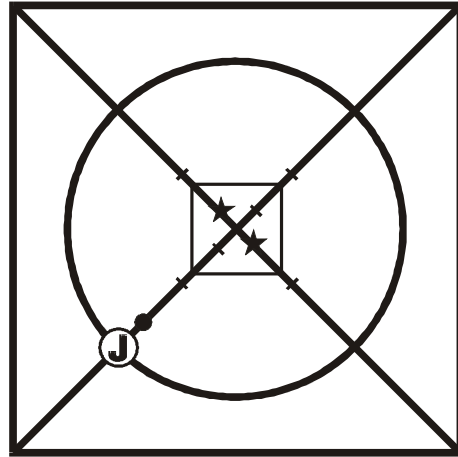
A. Judge's position: Behind the proper mark on the team diagonal.

B. Before the event:

1. Position each player's hands on each side of the marked positions on the rope.
2. Starting position: Have rope taut.
3. Make certain the beanbag is on the proper line.  
3rd-4th grade — 11-foot line; 5th-6th grade — 12-foot line
4. Get into a crouched position behind the beanbag, with your hand near it.

C. During the event:

1. When signaled by the official starter, move the bag up one line, quickly with your hand. Keep bag even with the line as you are moving to the next line.
2. Immediately check each judge beside you to make sure all bags have been moved.
3. If the beanbag is moved off the diagonal line, do not move it forward until it is time to do so. Do not take away an earned advantage.
4. Make sure that the player who grabs the beanbag has hold of the rope at the same time.
5. If the team across the circle lets go of the rope too quickly, move into a position to catch your players from falling.



**EVENT 7 — BALLOON VOLLEY**

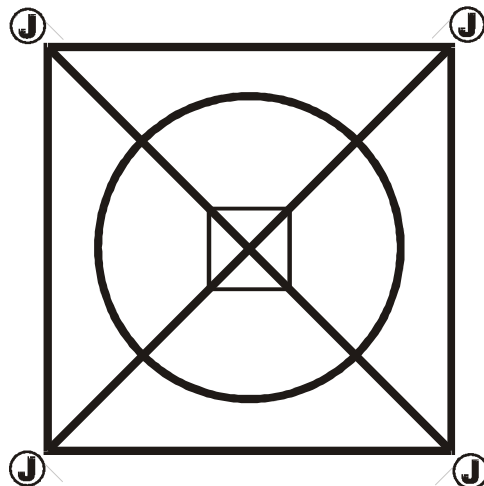
A. Judge's position: Standing at the corner of the game square.

B. Before the event:

1. See that two players from your team are ready and on the game floor.
2. Move the team back from the team line a foot or two.

C. During the event:

1. Watch for unnecessary roughness or not playing in the spirit of the game.
2. Watch the team lines on either side of you. Indicate by a big arm motion when the balloon breaks the plane of a team line.



### **EVENT 8 — MARATHON RELAY**

The guidelines for this event are exactly the same as the guidelines for Sprint Relay, with following addition:

C. During the event:

Make certain that you **count** two laps for each runner.

### **EVENT 9 — MARATHON**

The guidelines for this event are exactly the same as the guidelines for Sprint Race with the following addition:

C. During the event:

**Count** to be sure that your runners run six laps.

### **EVENT 10 — BALLOON RELAY**

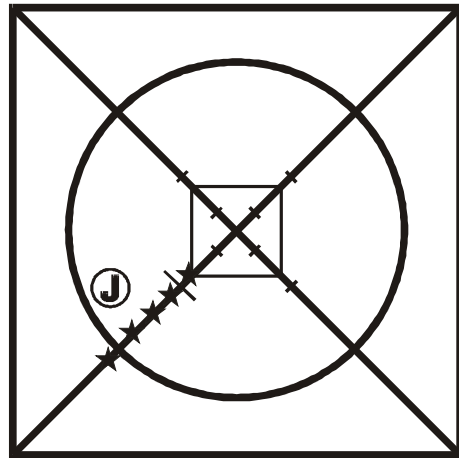
A. Judge's position: Either side of the players adjacent to Zone 2.

B. Before the event:

1. Put wristband on player #1.
2. Make sure each player is in the correct starting position as outlined in the Rule Book.
3. Give the first player the balloon when the team is ready.
4. Make sure the balloon touches the back of the player's neck and that the player is holding it with both hands.

C. During the event:

1. Make sure the balloon goes through each player's legs on each trip.
2. Watch for all the disqualifications listed below.
3. If your team is disqualified, **stop the action immediately.**
4. Note the place of finish of your team and retrieve the wristband from player #1.



D. Disqualifications:

*Zone 1:*

- a. Crossing the floor markings with the feet (or foot) when player is in possession of the balloon.
- b. Not straddling the diagonal line while passing the balloon.
- c. Not passing the balloon between the legs.

*Zone 2:*

- a. Not passing the balloon between the legs of each player in this zone.

*Zone 3:*

- a. Crossing the circle line with the feet (or foot) before touching the balloon.
- b. Not straddling the diagonal line while receiving the balloon.

*General:*

- a. If balloon pops at anytime.
- b. Player not having possession of the unbroken balloon when grabbing center pin or center beanbag.

## **AWARD CEREMONY**

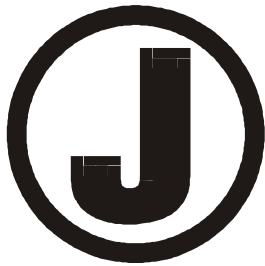
### Semifinals:

1. Line judges go to the award table as soon as event 10 is finished.
2. When your team's place is announced, pick up the appropriate awards and distribute to the team.
3. Return any extras to the award table.

### Finals:

1. Line judges go to the award table as soon as event 10 is finished.
2. Line judges for 2nd- through 4th-place teams pick up awards when their teams are announced and give them out.
3. Line judge for first-place team assists the circle director by helping the team members come to the center of the circle. Coach first, followed by clubbers — tallest to shortest — receive their medallions.
4. Return extra awards to the award table.





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