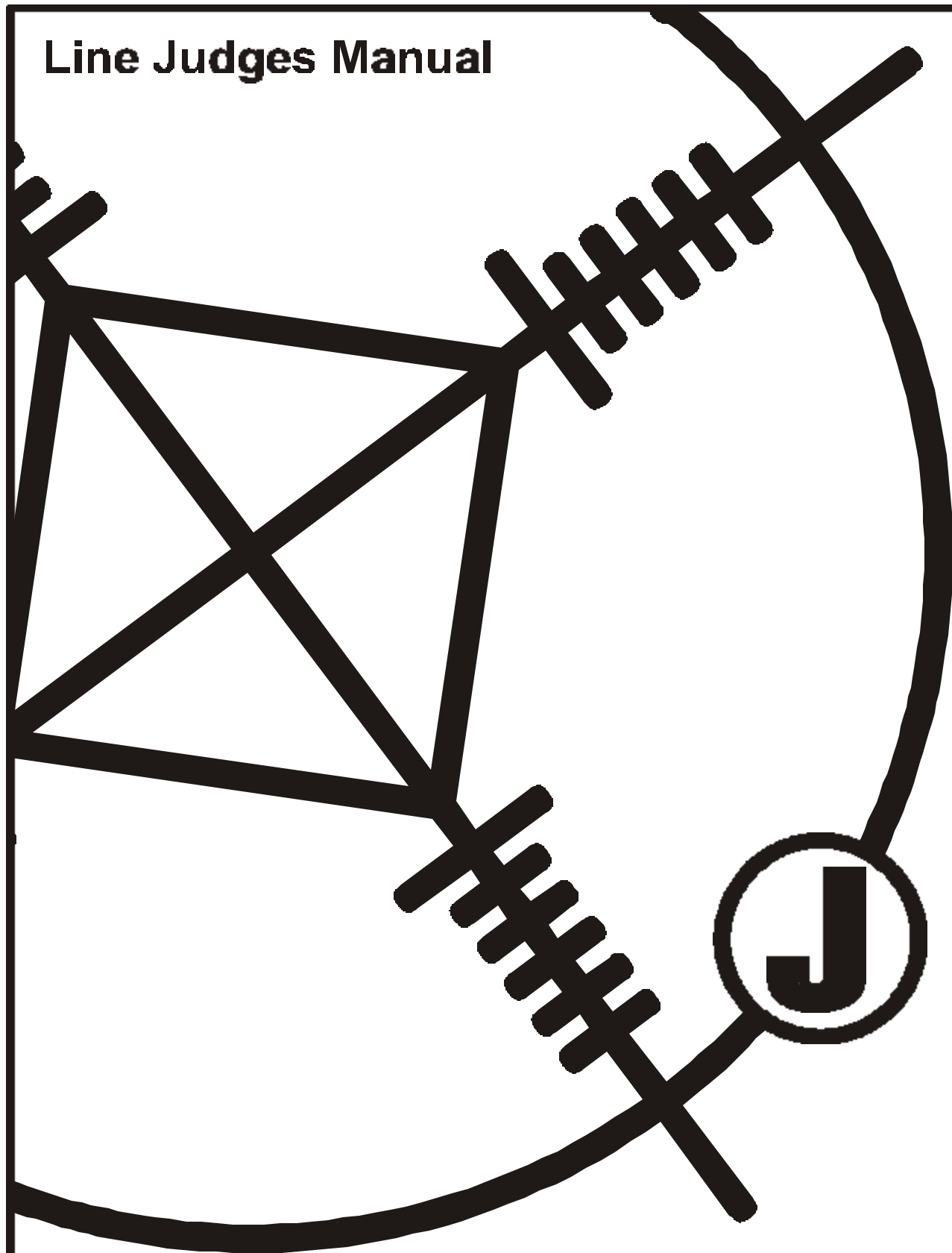


# Line Judges Manual



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



# Sparks-a-Rama & AwanaGames Line Judges Manual

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**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This book may only be altered by Awana Staff. Alterations by Awana Staff are limited to: 1) rearranging the event order, 2) deleting an entire event, and 3) renumbering the events as made necessary by items #1 and #2. Any other alterations must be submitted to the Events Committee for review. Failure to adhere to any part of this notice is subject to disciplinary action.

# 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 to be attentive.

4. Make sure no beanbag goes outside the inner triangle when placed down, and that no beanbag leaves the team zone.
5. Players must stay in position, no bunching or stacking.

**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.

# JV AWANAGAMES PROCEDURES

## EVENT 1 — BASKETBALL RELAY

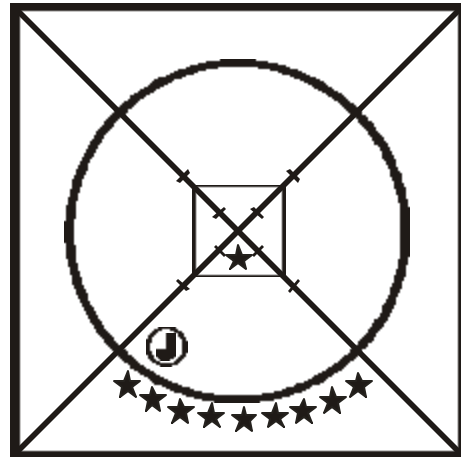
A. Judge's position: Inside the circle, yet out of the way of teams coming in to the center.

B. Before the event:

1. Count to be sure there are the proper number of players on the circle line.
2. Make sure each player is in the proper location.
3. When the team is ready, hand the team leader the basketball.

C. During the event:

1. Check to make sure the game leader:
  - a. Has both feet inside the box.
  - b. When passing the ball, the game leader does not allow his/her foot to pass through the imaginary plane extending up from the seven-foot line. He/she may lift his foot, however.
  - c. Does not go out of the box in retrieving the basketball.
  - d. Has possession of the basketball prior to leaving his/her box to run around his/her circle pin.
  - e. Has possession of the basketball when he/she reaches the scoring pin.
2. Check to make sure the players:
  - a. Do not step over the circle line.
  - b. Catch and return the basketball in succession. If it 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 basketball must be thrown to the game leader by the player who missed it or dropped it.
  - c. No batting or slapping of basketball.
  - d. Make sure all players are standing with both feet flat on the floor.
  - e. Stay in position, no "trailers".
3. Note the place your team finishes.



## EVENT 2 — SPRINT RELAY

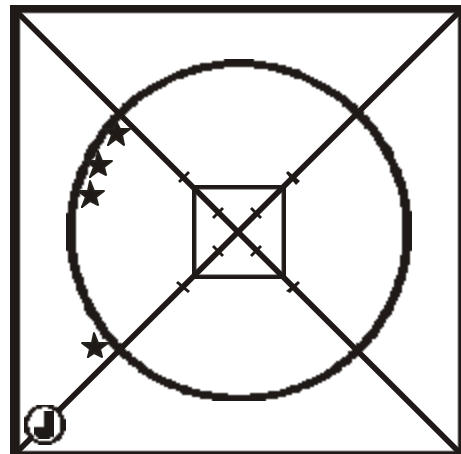
A. Judge's position: On starting diagonal out of the running area.

B. Before the event:

1. Check the team circle pin for the correct position.
2. Make sure the first runner's (guy's) feet are behind the starting line.
3. Hand the 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 play.
2. Watch the quadrant to your left for any rule violations.
3. Make sure the baton is passed each time within the proper zone.
4. Make sure the last runner still has the baton when she reaches the scoring pin.
5. Note the place your team finishes.



### EVENT 3 — THREE-LEGGED RACE

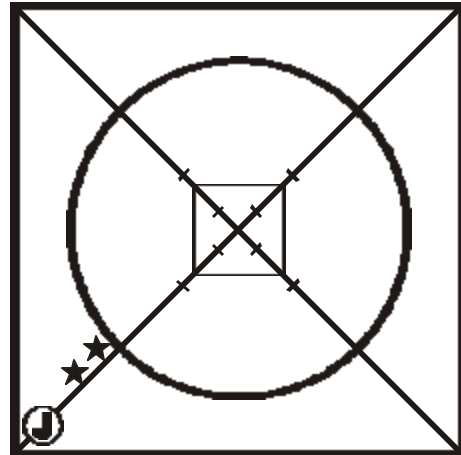
A. Judge's position: Standing on the diagonal out of the running area.

B. Before the event:

1. Check the team circle pin for the correct position.
2. Check the runners' leg tie to see that it's on the ankles. Do not tie or adjust the leg band. Allow the coach to do that.
3. Make sure the runners are behind the starting line.

C. During the event:

1. If a false start occurs, quickly jump into the 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 are 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. Temporarily pull them to the inside, if that will remove them out of the path of the other runners.
5. Note what place your team finishes.



### EVENT 4 — FOUR-WAY TUG

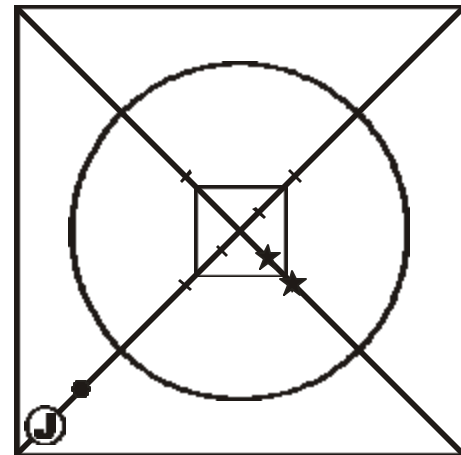
A. Judge's position: On the team diagonal, outside the beanbag.

B. Before the event:

1. Make certain all players are positioned between the five-foot and the eight-foot lines.
2. Make certain no players are wrapping the rope around any part of their body.
3. Make certain the beanbag is on the 17-foot mark.
4. Get into a crouched position behind the beanbag with your hand near it.

C. During the event:

1. When signaled by the starter, move the bag up one line quickly by hand.
2. Immediately check each judge beside you, to make sure he has moved his bag.
3. If the beanbag is moved off the diagonal line, do not move it forward until it is time to do so as long as it doesn't take the advantage from the team. See Rulebook.
4. When a player grabs the beanbag, make certain that both players have hold of the rope; if not, play continues.
5. If the team across the circle lets go of the rope too quickly, move into a position to catch your players – keeping them from falling.



### EVENT 5 — BEANBAG GRAB

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

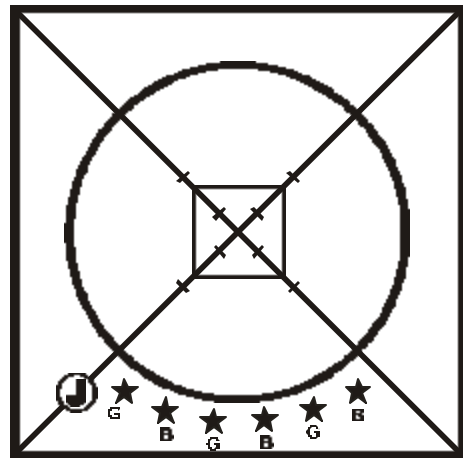
B. Before the event:

1. Make sure the players line up properly.

2. Ask players their numbers to make sure they know them correctly.
3. Check to see that all the players' feet are behind the circle line.

C. During the event:

1. When a number is called, note if the correct player runs out.
2. See if a player whose number was not called steps over the circle line with both feet.
3. Check to see if your player touches any part of his/her body, other than the hands or feet, on the floor inside the seven-foot square on the initial approach. If the player touches the floor, was it because of circumstances beyond his/her control?
4. Watch to see that players do not steal beanbags already in the possession of another player.
5. Watch for a player's foot crossing your team's circle line. All bags in their possession will be counted for your team. All contested bags go to the team whose players' foot crosses the line.
6. Watch for bags thrown across the circle line. Thrown bags are not counted.
7. Obtain beanbag from the player after he/she has finished and report valid units to the circle director.
8. Make sure each player returns to his/her team line after playing.



D. Disqualification of units:

1. A player, other than the one called, steps over the line with both feet.
2. Any part of the body, other than the hands or the feet, touches the floor inside the seven-foot square (until player changes directions), unless caused by circumstances beyond player's control.
3. Stealing beanbags already in the possession of another player.
4. Beanbags are thrown across the circle line.
5. The circle director calls time for the bags still in the circle.

**EVENT 6 — SPRINT**

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

B. Before the event:

1. Place the circle pins in position.
2. Say something to relax the runner.
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 (three laps).
3. If your runner is 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 7 — MARATHON

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

C. During the event:

Watch your runner, counting his/her laps (seven laps).

### EVENT 8 — BEANBAG BONANZA

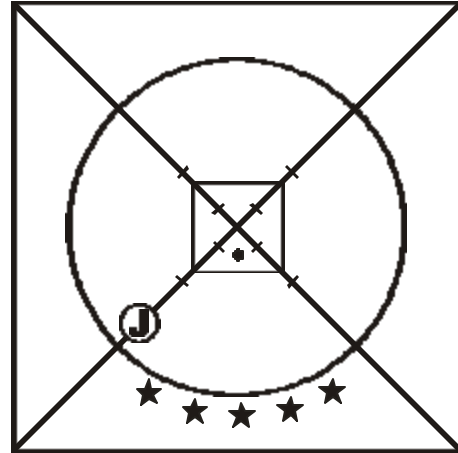
A. Judge's position: Inside the circle on the team diagonal.

B. Before the event:

1. Make sure that the colored beanbag is placed in the center of the inner triangle, in a position consistent with all other team beanbags.
2. Give the striped beanbag to player #1 (player farthest from starting diagonal line).
3. Make sure players are spread out along team's circle line, arm's length apart.

C. During the Event:

1. Look for players stepping over the circle line before receiving the beanbag from the previous player. If any players step over the line, see that they step back behind the line before going in to the center.
2. Make certain players hand the beanbags to each other.
3. Make sure beanbags are placed in the inner triangle, not tossed.
4. Make sure no beanbag goes outside the inner triangle when placed down, and that no beanbag leaves the team zone.
5. Players must stay in position, no bunching or stacking.



### EVENT 9 — MARATHON MEDLEY

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

D. During the event:

1. Make sure you count the laps for each runner. G-1; B-2; G-3; B-4;

### EVENT 10 — BALLOON RELAY

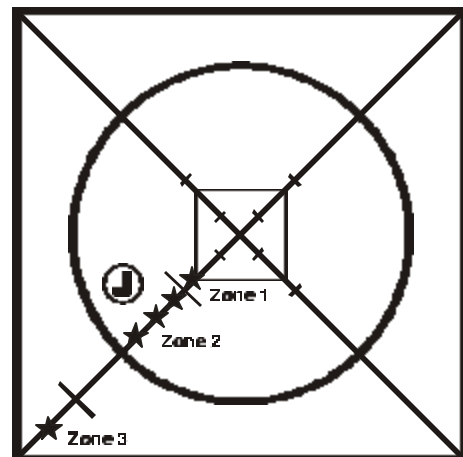
A. Judge's position: Either side of the players, adjacent to Zone 2.

B. Before the event:

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

C. During the event:

1. Make sure 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 players 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 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 each time the balloon is passed back.

*Zone 3:*

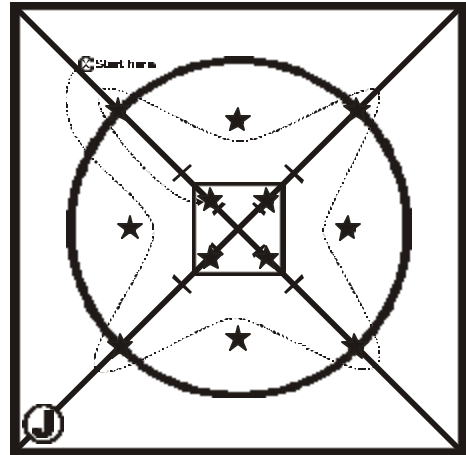
- a. Crossing the circle line with the feet or foot before receiving the balloon.
- b. Not straddling the diagonal line while receiving the balloon.

*General:*

- a. Balloon pops at anytime.
- b. Player not in possession of unbroken balloon when touching scoring pin.

**EVENT 11 — AGILITY RACE**

- A. Judge's position: On the team diagonal out of the running area.
- B. Before the event:
  1. Put the pins on the five-foot marks, have the circle pins and scoring pins in position.
- C. During the event:
  1. Watch for false starts; if one occurs, stop the runner coming toward you.
  2. Watch your team line runner for any rule violations.
  3. Note your players' finish. If he/she is out of the competition, note the other players finishes.
  4. Note the place of finish of your team.



**AWARD CEREMONY**

Follow the guidelines given for the Club AwanaGames.



**J**



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