



2011

**SPARKS
-A-
RAMA**

**Rule
Book**

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SPARKS FUN DAY

Sparks-A-Rama is similar to an AwanaGames meet, but yet it's different. It's a day of fun for young children, a day of exciting participation with new friends, not a day of high-pressured competition. Sparks-aged children are not ready for the keen rivalry of an AwanaGames meet. Don't expect or encourage them to compete as fervently as older boys and girls. Sparkies play games for the fun of playing them. Winning can be one gratifying result of their team effort.

Sparks-A-Rama should also be a ministry to parents. It is an opportunity to present clearly the gospel of Jesus Christ. Remind parents not to stress highly-competitive attitudes with their children on this special day.

INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed for team coaches, Circle Directors, and Line Judges who will participate in an authorized Awana Sparks-A-Rama meet.

AUTHORIZATION OF SPARKS-A-RAMA MEETS

All Awana Sparks-A-Rama meets must be authorized by an event coordinator or Awana missionary. If several registered churches with Sparks clubs are interested in conducting a Sparks-A-Rama meet in an area where none is scheduled, they should contact the area Awana missionary.

COMPOSITION OF SPARKS-A-RAMA TEAMS

A team consists of a minimum of 15 players and a maximum of 17 players, of which at least five must be boys and five must be girls. Every player must participate in at least one game. The number of circles in a meet depends on the number of teams competing.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

REQUIREMENTS

1. Only currently registered churches are authorized to compete in Sparks-A-Rama meets.
2. A Sparks-A-Rama registration form accompanied by a registration fee is required. The fee covers part of the operating costs of the meet. All game equipment is provided. Until the registration fee is paid, a team cannot be officially registered. Teams are accepted on a "first-come, first-paid" basis. **No refunds will be issued to teams withdrawing their registrations.**

PROCESSING REGISTRATIONS

Completed registrations will be accepted according to the order in which they are received. When all team lines on all circles available for the meet have been filled, additional team registrations will be accepted only on a standby basis. Such teams will be notified accordingly.

All teams accepting a "standby" position are expected to practice as if they were an accepted team. They must also be ready to participate if notified at least 24 hours before the meet. If a standby team is unable to participate when notified of acceptance, it loses its registration fee. Standby teams which are not asked to replace another team will be refunded the full registration fee following the meet.

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

The procedure for team assignments to a particular team line/colour or a particular circle (where there is more than one circle) will be specified prior to the meet.

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEAM MEMBERS

1. Sparkie clubbers in Grade Two or lower, who did not reach their 9th birthday by September 1st prior to the meet, may participate.
2. Every team member must have passed 10 sections this club year.
3. Teams may register for only one Sparks-A-Rama meet or league per year.

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

An important aspect of the Awana youth program is teaching good sportsmanship. Whether we win or lose is not as important as putting forth our best effort. Maintaining a friendly attitude at all times demonstrates that Christ can give peace and victory in every circumstance. No coach should destroy a Christian testimony by even one moment's display of poor sportsmanship.

Being a winner for the Lord is more important than winning a Sparks-A-Rama meet. We encourage all team coaches to enthusiastically motivate their team. However, one should not mistake enthusiasm for un-sportsman-like outbursts. Officials in all sports make "wrong calls," but our officials are trained, devoted, impartial, born-again people who do their best to officiate according to Sparks-A-Rama rules.

Sparks-A-Rama affords Awana leaders an opportunity to display a charitable spirit under the pressure of competition. Hundreds of unsaved people may be observing. Therefore, we need to watch our actions and testimony, and all coaches should remind themselves and their teams that our testimony for Christ before others is of utmost importance.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ROSTER SHEET

The team roster sheet, indicating name, age, grade in school, and date of birth of each player, must be submitted to the area event staff before entering the game floor, according to the schedule set by the missionary or coordinator.

TEAM OUTFITS

Coaches are responsible to be sure that uniforms are respectable and in keeping with Christian standards of dress. Gym shoes must be worn by everyone on the playing floor. This includes coaches, Line Judges, Circle Directors, and team members.

Team coaches should wear either the Awana uniform or the special uniform chosen for their team. Awana T-shirts, which may be purchased from Awana headquarters, give a team a good appearance on the floor.

INSURANCE

Awana does not carry insurance covering team members. All churches should obtain insurance information for church-sponsored activities so they can supply their own protection. The coach **must have in his/her possession** on the gym floor a permission slip signed by the parent/guardian of each player stating "emergency treatment may be given if necessary."

Extra players brought by a team on a "standby basis," as well as those recruited from the stands to fill in short teams **must** have permission slips before they can participate.

SPARKS-A-RAMA AWARDS

Team Plaque—To winning team of each participating circle

Ribbons—To all team members and coaches

PROMOTING INTEREST IN SPARKS-A-RAMA MEETS

The Sparks-A-Rama meet provides an enthusiastic introduction to Awana for people who have not had any previous contact with Awana clubs. Here are some ways to encourage spectators to attend:

1. The Sparks-A-Rama meet should be promoted at Sparks club meetings for several weeks preceding the meet. Clubbers who are not selected for the team can encourage the team to victory by attending the meet and cheering for their friends on the team. Clubbers who are not on the team should be made to feel as much a part of the Sparks-A-Rama as the team members.
2. Sparks-A-Rama should be promoted at Sunday School. Boys and girls who don't attend Sparks club, as well as adults who are unfamiliar with Awana, would attend a Sparks-A-Rama meet if invited. Use stunts, skits, or other interesting methods to give announcements.
3. Sparks-A-Rama should be promoted at church. The Pastor can do much to encourage the support of the Sparks club teams in the weekly church bulletin and his announcements.
4. Sparks-A-Rama should be promoted to parents. People who have never seen a meet may need an extra push to get them there for the first time. A visit or a letter may be all they need.
5. Sparks-A-Rama should be promoted in the neighbourhood. An article announcing the team's participating in the area meet may be written for the local newspaper. Radio and TV interviews often can be arranged.

SPARKS-A-RAMA DAY SCHEDULE

ARRIVAL TIME

Teams must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the starting time of the meet.

CIRCLE AND TEAM LINE LOCATIONS

Teams should find their assigned circle team line as soon as possible on arrival. No running or practicing on the circle is permitted before the meet begins. Teams will help reduce congestion if they go to their assigned location and stay there.

MEETING SPARKS-A-RAMA OFFICIALS

The Line Judges and the Circle Director will give last-minute instructions to team coaches. Team coaches will be given opportunity to ask last-minute questions of officials before the meet begins.

FLAG CEREMONY

All team members should be instructed before the meet to face the flag during the ceremony.

SPARKLE TIME

All team members on all circles recite/sing in unison:

SPARKS YELL

Leader—Who are we?

Leader—Who for?

Leader—What to do?

Sparks—Sparks!

Sparks—Jesus

Sparks—Light the world!



SPARKS THEME SONG "Sparks for Jesus"

SPARKS MOTTO "My Friend for Christ"

BIBLE VERSE—I CORINTHIANS 15:3,4

"...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures And that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

GOSPEL PRESENTATION

While Sparks-A-Rama is meant to be exciting and fun, the purpose of all Sparks special events is to reach unsaved families and friends for Jesus Christ. A brief gospel message is given which is skilfully designed to appeal to adults, yet to be age-appropriate for Sparkies.

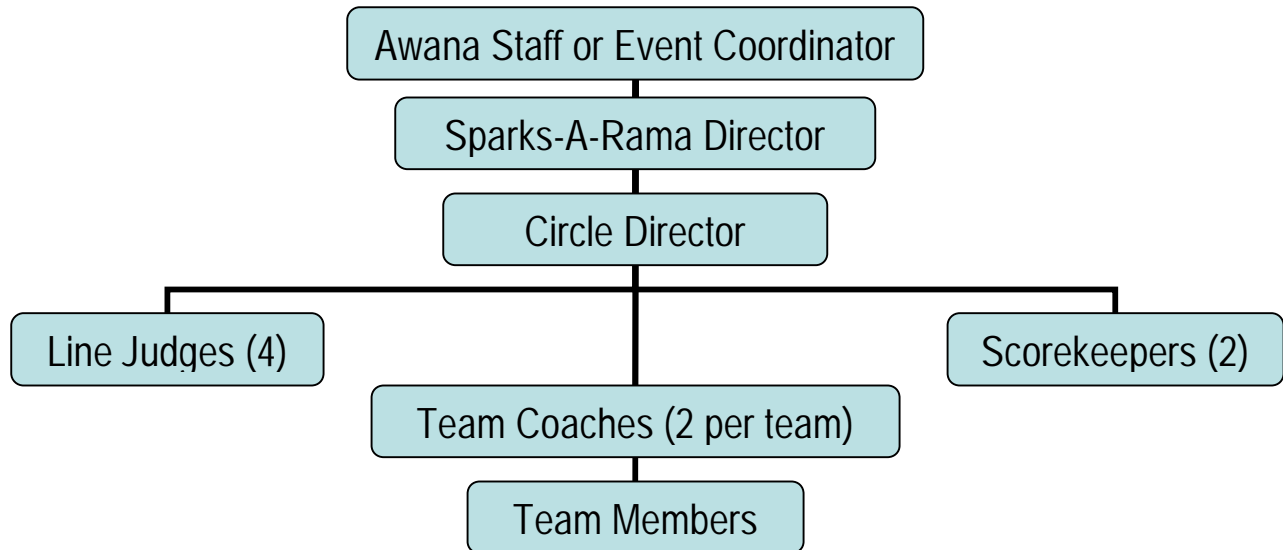
Recognition may also be given to Sparkies for their outstanding achievements.

Coaches should instruct their team members to sit quietly without talking or whispering during the message and recognition time. Players are not permitted to leave their team line.

SPARKS-A-RAMA PERSONNEL

CHAIN OF COMMAND ON EACH CIRCLE

Team members who have questions should ask only their coach. If the coach has a question or comment, he/she speaks only to the Line Judge on his/her team line. If the Line Judge cannot answer the question satisfactorily, he consults with the Circle Director. The Circle Director's decision is final. **Unless requested by the Circle Director, no team coach is allowed on the game floor to consult with him at any time.**



SPARKS-A-RAMA DIRECTOR

He oversees the entire operation from planning through team registrations to supervision of the meet.

CIRCLE DIRECTOR

Is responsible for:

- Coaches' meeting at start of meet
- Circle operation after official start
- Declaring reruns
- Indicating event winners
- Coordination and ultimate responsibilities of Line Judges
- Scorekeepers' activities
- Final word on all matters not covered in written rules

LINE JUDGES

In each circle, four trained officials who are familiar with all Sparks-A-Rama games, rules governing each, and how to resolve tie events, tie heats, or tie score assist the Circle Director in watching for false starts, fouls, broken rules, fallen pins, interference, etc.

OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPERS

Two individuals in each circle record the scores for each event as reported by the Circle Director. Additional helpers post these scores where they are visible to the spectators.

OFFICIAL STARTER

Gives the starting signal for all circles at beginning of most events or heats

TEAM COACHES

Two coaches are required for each team. Team coaches are not permitted in the playing area any time during the Sparks-A-Rama meet, except to position players for the next event. They must give directions from the sidelines only, out of the way of players and Line Judges.

1. Coaches may ask their team Line Judge to review a decision with their Circle Director.
2. A coach may be asked to leave the floor if the Circle Director considers it necessary.
3. All coaches are required to attend the Sparks-A-Rama coaches' training session.
4. All coaches **must** remain behind their team line at all times while events are in progress.

GENERAL RULES AND DEFINITIONS

Arranged alphabetically for quick reference

ADHERENTS

No adherents are permitted on gym shoes, including everything from professional adherents to wet cloths. Violators may be disqualified. The best safety measure is a good pair of gym shoes with a clean tread. No cloths will be allowed on the gym floor.

BALLOONS

Nine-inch balloons are inflated to about eight inches in diameter.

CENTRE BEANBAG

In game events that finish in the middle of the circle, and which have second place, a beanbag is placed on the intersection of the two diagonal lines with the centre pin on top of it. At the conclusion of the event or heat, second-place points are awarded the team of the player who has possession of the centre beanbag (see *General Rules* "Possession").

CENTRE PIN

In events that finish in the middle of the circle, a game pin is set at the intersection of the two diagonal lines. (It is placed on top of the centre beanbag when first- and second-place points are to be awarded.) First-place points are awarded the team whose player has possession of centre pin at end of the event or heat (see *General Rules* "Possession").

CIRCLE PINS

(See Game Circle Diagram) All circle pins must be passed with both feet outside the circle in all running events. No jumping of pins is allowed. If a pin has fallen, that point on the circle normally marked by the pin must be passed with both feet outside the circle as if the pin were in its proper place. (Runners may cut inside the circle between circle pins, but they must be outside the circle at each pin.) Anyone knocking over a circle pin during a game disqualifies his/her team for that event or heat.

DISQUALIFICATION

A team may be disqualified by the Circle Director and/or Line Judges at any time during an event for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Unnecessary roughness or poor conduct
2. Knocking over a circle pin
3. Causing interference to other participants
4. Breaking other game rules not listed here, but described elsewhere in this book
5. Play which is not according to the spirit of the game (see *General Rules* "Spirit of the Game")

Coaches should instruct team members to go all the way into the centre for each event—no matter how hopeless it may seem—because the apparent winners may have been disqualified.

OFFICIAL AWANA SPARKS-A-RAMA CIRCLE

The Sparks-A-Rama Circle is 30 feet in diameter surrounded by a 37 – 40 foot square. Each team is designated by a colour and occupies a quarter-circle or one side of that square.

Key to Diagram:

A—Circle Pins

C—Diagonal or Starting Line

B—Centre Pin; Centre Beanbag

D—Team Lines or AwanaGames Square

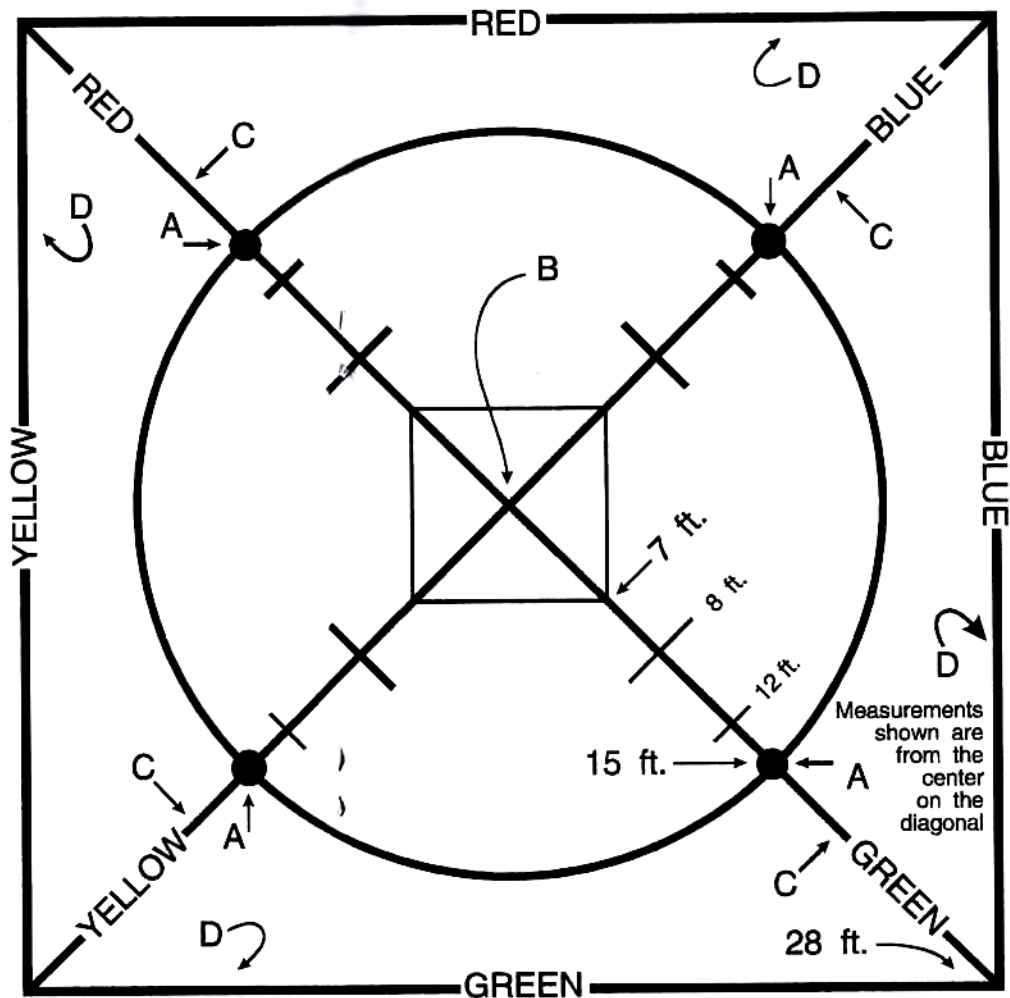
Starting position of player(s) is indicated with the rules for each event. Make sure your team is familiar with the Awana Circle.

FALSE START

The Circle Director and Line Judges will call a "false start" when action is started in an event before the starting signal. The event in that circle is brought to a halt as rapidly as possible, and then restarted by the Circle Director. Two false starts in one event or heat by a single team disqualifies that team for that event or heat. The remaining teams will be restarted.

FLOOR MARKINGS

Lines are marked on the floor with tape. The width of the tape provides a margin for error in games which use tape boundaries. If any player's foot protrudes beyond the tape in these games, his/her team will be disqualified for that event or heat.

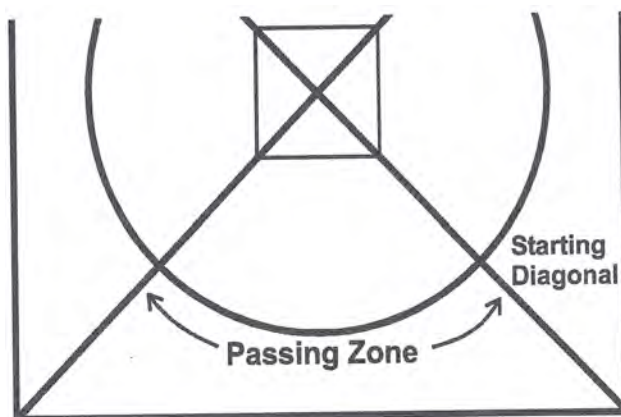


INTERFERENCE

The Circle Director and Line Judges may declare "interference" if, in the opinion of these officials, a team's fair chance of winning is impaired by something other than normal breaks and hazards of the game. This includes hampering of teams' or players' progress by someone other than players participating in a particular event or heat, such as officials, spectators, coaches, and non-participating players of opposing teams. When a team member or coach causes interference, his/her team will be disqualified from that event. Interference may also be called when players' progress is hindered by foreign matter or water on the floor. When interference is called, the Circle Director will declare a rerun.

PASSING ZONE

In Sparky Safari, the beanbag must be passed within that section of the circle contained within the team zone assigned to each team (see Diagram). Passing the beanbag in any other zone—including passing it over a starting diagonal—disqualifies that team for that event.



POSSESSION

In events using the centre pin and centre beanbag to determine the winners, the player must have possession of the centre pin or centre beanbag to be awarded points. Touching the pin or beanbag is not enough. However, if the player who has possession of the centre pin or centre beanbag has been disqualified, the next player into the centre will be awarded points (see General Rules "Winner of an Event").

RERUN

A rerun of an event or heat will be held for interference calls. A rerun is also in order when, in the opinion of the Circle and Line Judges, the awarding of points cannot be determined fairly.

A team will not be allowed to participate in the rerun if:

1. Any of its members were the cause of an interference call, OR
2. The team had already been disqualified for a previous violation (e.g.: Interference call or other situation requiring a rerun). See General Rules "Interference."

SCORING

The scoring for each event is stated in the game rules. The Circle Director determines who the winners are and reports to the scorekeepers. Players should not leave the circle or set down the centre pin or beanbag until the Circle Director has determined their team standings.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

When a team deliberately stretches existing rules to play a game differently from that planned by the national event team, the spirit of the game has been violated. The Circle Director and Line Judges will declare the team disqualified for that event or heat, even though the team may have followed the letter of the rules as written.

STARTING DIAGONAL

(See Game Circle Diagram) Events which are run around the circle will be started with the player outside the circle and behind the starting diagonal for his/her team colour. All running events are run in a counter clockwise direction.

STARTING SIGNAL

When each team is ready, the Line Judge on that line signals the Circle Director. When all Line Judges in a circle have indicated their teams are ready, the Circle Director signals the Official Starter. When all Circle Directors have indicated that they are ready, the Official Starter will start the event.

TEAM LINES

(See Game Circle Diagram) Red, blue, green, and yellow lines forming a square outside the circle give team boundaries. Team members not participating in an event must stay behind these lines.

TEAM ZONE

The triangle within the square bounded by the team line and the two diagonal lines forms the team zone.

TIE GAME (EVENT)

When two teams, in the opinion of the Circle Director, gain possession of the centre pin or centre beanbag at the same instant, a tie is declared. Available points are divided equally between the tied teams. If it is a tie for first place in a game having second place, first and second-place points are split. Should this result in a half-point, the half-point is set aside until the end of all events and is used to break a final tie.

TIE SCORE

When two or more teams are tied at the end of the last event, the tie may be resolved by playing one heat of the Sparky Balloon Pop—coaches choose who plays.

WINNER OF THE EVENT

The Circle Director declares the winner(s) of each event. (He may consult with the Line Judges to determine the winner.) Players should hold the centre pin or centre beanbag until the Circle Director indicates which teams have won. If the player holding the centre pin has been disqualified, the player with possession of the centre beanbag will receive first-place points. If the Circle Director can determine the third-place player, that player will be awarded second-place points. If the player with the centre beanbag is disqualified, the Circle Director will award second place to the third-place player. Where it is not possible for the Circle Director to determine the winner, he may call for a rerun.

GAME EVENTS

EVENT 1—SPARKY BEANBAG – IN AND OUT

15 players—two heats

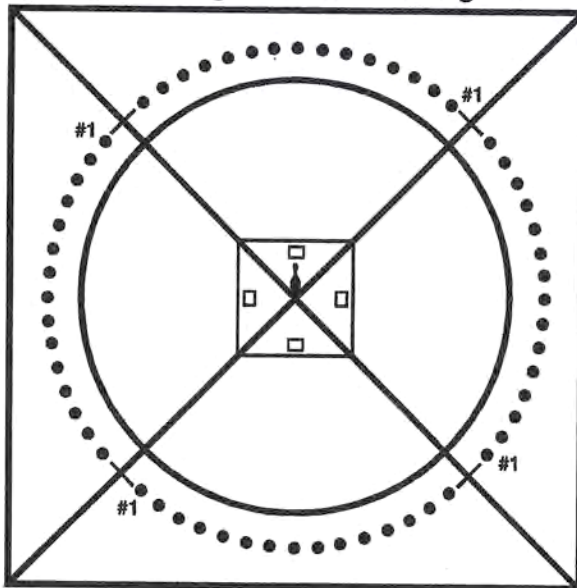
1st place—four points

2nd place—two points

Equipment: Four small containers, four beanbags, four circle pins, centre pin and beanbag

Players line up on their team's circle line. Container is set in team's small triangle, and the beanbag is given to player #1 (farthest from his/her team's starting diagonal). At signal, player #2 runs to container and places beanbag into container, returns to team line and tags player #2. Player #2 retrieves beanbag and brings it back to player #3. **Players may not proceed into the circle before being tagged or given the beanbag.** Action continues until all team members have participated. The last player with beanbag in hand runs into the centre for pin or beanbag. The winners must retain possession of their beanbag. The winners must retain possession of the beanbag when they grab the centre pin or centre beanbag.

Sparky Beanbag — In and Out Diagram



EVENT 2—SPARKY SAFARI

Six players (one lap each)—two heats

1st heat—three girls

2nd heat—three boys

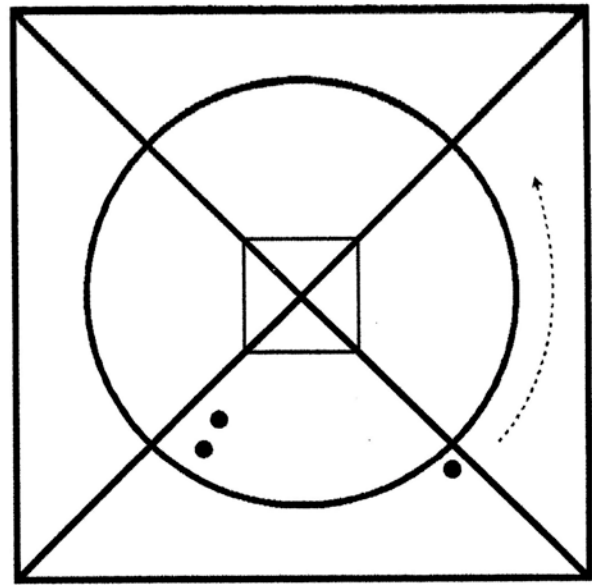
1st place—four points

2nd place—two points

Equipment: Four circle pins, four beanbags, centre pin and beanbag

First player is positioned at starting pin. The other two runners wait inside the circle within their team zone. Beanbag is placed on first player's head. At signal, player #1 runs around circle and passes beanbag to player #2, who places beanbag on his/her head and runs around circle. Player #2 passes beanbag to #3 who runs around circle, around player's starting pin, and into centre for pin or beanbag. Player #3 must have beanbag on head until he/she crosses the circle line for the approach to the centre pin. If bag falls off while player is running around circle, player may not touch bag with hands until it hits the floor. Player **must** then **stop** and place bag back on the head **before** continuing. While moving, player may not touch bag with his/her hands. Beanbag must be passed (handed off, not thrown) and placed on the next player's head within passing zone. After passing beanbag, player returns to team line.

Hairstyles and accessories should not be used to enhance winning.



EVENT 3—BALLOON BATTLE

15 players—three heats

Five players (girls and/or boys) per heat

1st place (lowest number of units)—six points

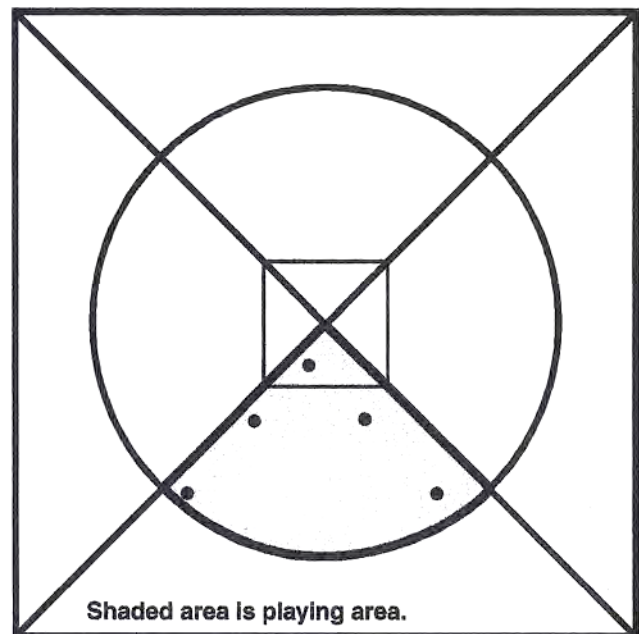
2nd place (2nd lowest number of units)—four points

3rd place (3rd lowest number of units)—two points

Equipment: two nine-inch balloons, two sixty-foot lengths of lightweight rope

One coach from each team holds rope stretched from corner to corner, making visible boundaries to help players stay within their triangles. (Balloons do not have to go over the rope.)

Players stand anywhere within their own playing area. Circle Director holds balloons and stands in centre of circle. At signal, balloons are tossed into air. Players bat balloons with their hands to keep them from touching the floor in their area. Players may not hold balloons or step out of their area. When a balloon touches floor within a team's playing area, that team receives one unit. There is a **60-second** time limit for each heat. Circle Director starts new heat in centre of circle. If a balloon lands outside of playing areas, Circle Director or Line Judge restarts play from centre of circle until time runs out. Players may participate in only one heat.



EVENT 4—RABBIT HUNT

15 players—four heats

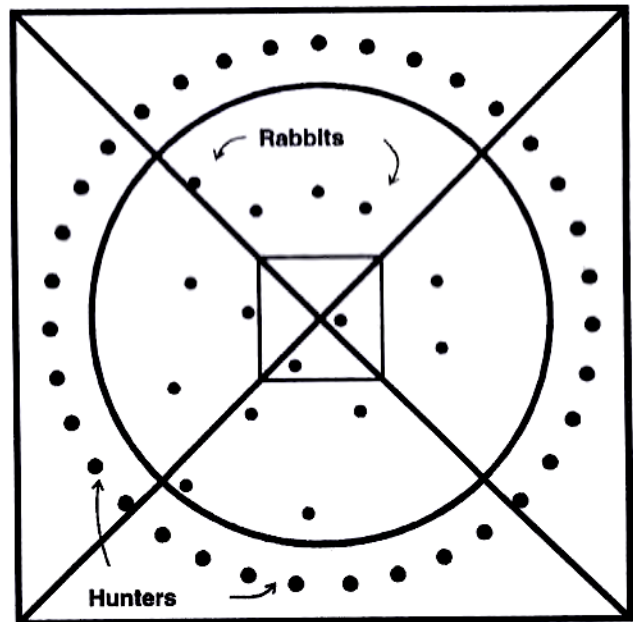
1st place—six points

2nd place—four points

3rd place—two points

Equipment: two sport balls

One team (rabbits) stands anywhere within the circle. The three other teams (hunters) position themselves evenly anywhere around the circle. At signal, hunters toss balls, trying to hit rabbits. When hit, rabbits leave circle, returning to their team line. Rabbits are disqualified if they step outside circle before being hit. Hunters may not step inside circle while tossing ball. Action stops after 30 seconds; rabbits still in circle are counted. Play is repeated until all teams have had a turn to be rabbits. Team with the most rabbits left in the circle wins.



EVENT 5—SPARKY TRAIN

10 players (one lap each)—two heats

1st heat—five girls

2nd heat—five boys

1st place—four points

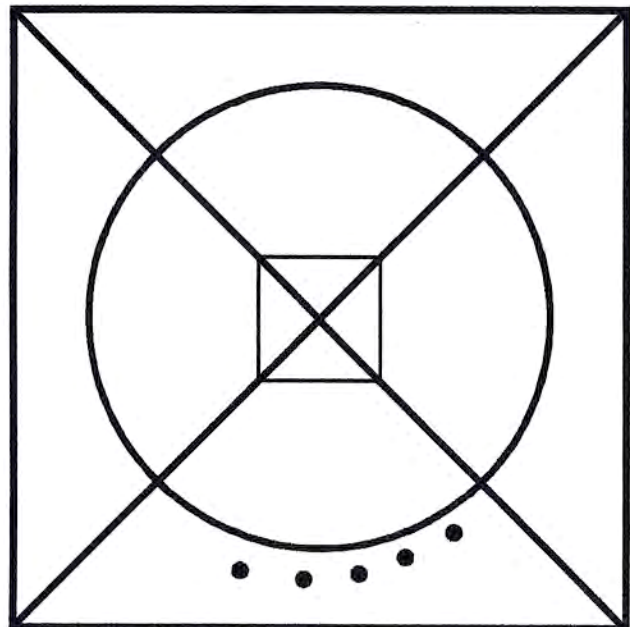
2nd place—two points

Equipment: Four circle pins, centre pin and beanbag

***Optional Equipment:**

Three-legged bands (supplied by team)

Players line up behind one another, outside their circle line, as pictured on diagram. Using both hands, each player grasps the waist of player in front of him/her to form a train. At signal, train runs around circle. If train becomes disconnected (player loses hold of another player), train must stop, rejoin itself, and then continue. When all five players cross the starting line, the last player separates from the train and runs into the centre for centre pin or beanbag.



*using optional equipment: A three-legged race band (available through Awana) may be secured tightly around first four Sparkies' waists, so that Sparks may have a means to hold on to one another securely (rather than holding on to waists.).

EVENT 6—SPARKY BALLOON POP

15 players—two heats

1st heat—player #15 is a girl

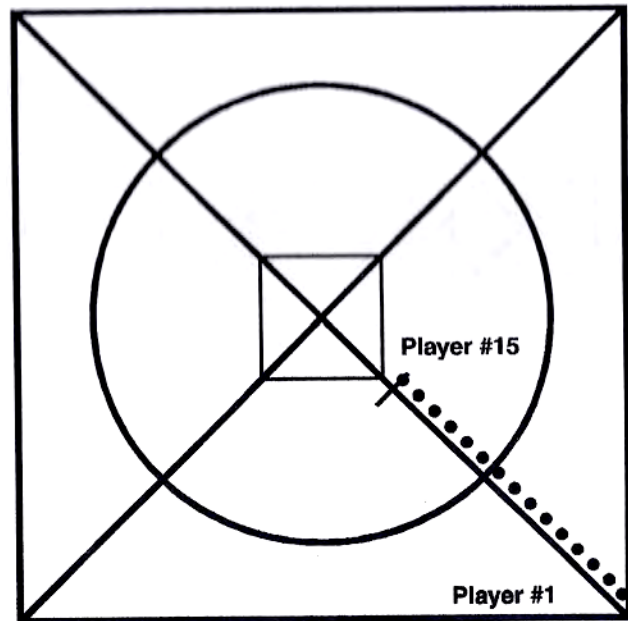
2nd heat—player #15 is a boy

1st place—four points

2nd place—two points

Equipment: Four nine-inch balloons per heat

All team players straddle their team diagonal line with their backs toward centre of circle, as close together as they wish. Player #15 (last in line) stands on the eight-foot hash mark. Player #1 holds balloon on back of his/her head. At signal, the balloon is passed through the legs of the first 14 players to the 15th player. It is not necessary that each player touches the balloon. When last player in line has possession of balloon, he/she runs into his/her team's inner triangle, places balloon on the floor, and sits on balloon until it breaks. First player to break balloon within his/her triangle wins. If balloon breaks before it gets to player #15, Line Judge may insert another balloon.



EVENT 7—SPARKY BOWL

Six players—six heats

Heats one – three: one girl per heat

Heats four – six: one boy per heat

One point—each heat

Equipment: Four circle pins, four bean bags, centre pin

The player stands outside the circle with the beanbag, just behind the starting diagonal. At starting signal, player runs one lap around the circle, and then goes around player's own circle pin to the 12-foot hash mark. Standing behind the 12-foot hash mark, player tosses (either over or under hand) the bean bag at the centre pin. First player to knock down centre pin wins. Players retrieve their own bean bag and go back to their own 12-foot hash mark and continue play until one player knocks down the centre pin.

