

**Sparks-a-Rama
Rules and Regulations**



Colorado
Sparks-a-Rama
Rulebook



SPARKS FUN DAY

Sparks-a-Rama is similar to an T&T Games meet, but yet it's different. It's a day of fun for young children and a day of exciting participation with new friends. **Coaches, remember this is not a day of high-pressured competition.** Sparks-aged children are not ready for the keen rivalry of a T&T Games meet. Don't expect or encourage them to compete as fervently as older boys and girls. Sparks 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 judges who will participate in a Sparks-a-Rama meet.

COMPOSITION OF SPARKS-A-RAMA TEAMS

A team consists of a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 17 players, of which at least three must be boys and three, must be girls. Team size may vary at the discretion of the event coordinator. Every player must participate in at least three games. The number of circles in a meet depends on the number of teams competing.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

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

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEAM MEMBERS

1. All Sparks clubbers in 2nd grade or lower who did not reach their 9th birthday by September 1 prior to the meet may participate.
2. All Sparks-a-Rama participants must have passed 10 sections this club year by day of the meet.

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Each Team is awarded 2 Sportsmanship Points per event. For unsportsmanlike conduct, sportsmanship points will not be given.

An important aspect of the Awana ministry 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 unsportsmanlike 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 leaders an opportunity to display a charitable spirit under the pressure of competition. Hundreds of unsaved people may be observing. We need to watch our actions, and all coaches should remind themselves and their team that their testimony for Christ before others is of utmost importance.

ROSTER SHEET

The team roster sheet, indicating name, grade in school, age and date of birth of each player, must be prepared by the team coach and submitted to the area event staff prior to the meet, according to the schedule set by the event specialist.

TEAM OUTFITS

Coaches are responsible to be sure that uniforms are respectable and in keeping with Christian standards of dress. Everyone on the playing floor must wear gym shoes. This includes coaches, judges, circle directors, and team members. Team coaches should wear either their Sparks uniform or the special uniform chosen for their team. T-shirts, which may be purchased to give a team a good appearance on the floor.

Please, no shorts are allowed by players or coaches

INSURANCE

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 copy of the required parental consent form signed by a parent of each player stating, "emergency treatment may be given if necessary."

Extra players recruited from the stands, **must** have a copy of the required parental consent form before they can participate.

SPARKS-A-RAMA AWARDS

Team plaque - To winning team of four teams participating

Participation patch - To all team members and coaches

Ribbon / Bookmarks -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. Here are some suggestions for encouraging spectators to attend:

1. The Sparks-a-Rama meet should be promoted at Sparks' club meetings for several weeks preceding the meet. Clubbers not on the team can encourage the team to victory by attending the meet and cheering for friends on the team. Clubbers not on the team should be made to feel as much a part of the Sparks-a-Rama as 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 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 Sparks-a-Rama 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 neighborhood. An article announcing the team's participation in the area meet may be written for the local newspaper.

SPARKS-A-RAMA DAY SCHEDULE

ARRIVAL TIME

As announced at your coaches' meeting and/or in confirmation communication, A general guideline would be for teams to arrive about 60 minutes prior to the starting time of the event. A coach from every team must bring a completed required Parental consent form for each team member and a completed roster sheet.

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 and lead in prayer. 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 and to place their hands on their heart at the given signal.

PRAYER

SPARKS' VERSE

John 3:16

BIBLE VERSES

I Corinthians 15:3

I Corinthians 15:4

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 skillfully designed to appeal to adults, yet to be age-appropriate for Sparkies and where unsaved parents and friends (as well as team members) are confronted with the plan of salvation. This is a central focus of the meet, since many parents, relatives and friends who might never attend a church-based Awana function may have their only opportunity to hear the gospel. It is most commonly done just prior to the start of the events, or at a "halftime" break during the event.

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 should ask questions only of 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 judge cannot answer the question satisfactorily, he consults 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 him at any time.

SPARKS-A-RAMA EVENT SPECIALIST

He oversees the entire operation from planning through team registrations to supervision of the Sparks-a-Rama 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 judges
- Scorekeepers' activities
- Final word on all matters not covered in written rules

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, 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.

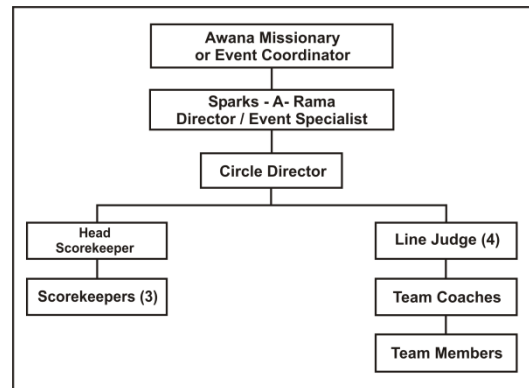
OFFICIAL STARTER

He 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 judges.

1. Coaches may ask their line judge to review a decision with the circle director.
2. A coach may be asked to leave the floor when the circle director considers it necessary.
3. All coaches are *asked* to attend a Sparks-a-Rama coaches' "Zoom Meeting" training session.
4. All coaches must remain behind their team line at all times while Sparks-a-Rama events are in



progress.

GENERAL RULES/DEFINITIONS:

Arranged alphabetically for quick reference

ADHERENTS

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

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. (Players may cut inside the circle between circle pins, but they must be outside the circle at each pin). Players knocking over a circle pin during a game disqualifies his/her team for that event or heat. It is recommended that 6 oz. of sand be added to each pin.

DISQUALIFICATION

A team may be disqualified by the circle director and/or judges at any time during an event for one or more of the following reasons:

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

Teams are not disqualified if a player steps outside of the game square during a running event.

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

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 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 nonparticipating players of opposing teams. When a player 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 may declare a rerun.

PARTICIPATION

All players must play in a minimum of three events.

PASSING ZONE

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

PRACTICES

In preparing for the Sparks-a-Rama, practices are recommended. Each team is allowed an unlimited number of practices in preparing for the Sparks-a-Rama meet.

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 director and 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 players were the cause of an interference call, **or**
2. The team had already been disqualified for a violation previous to an 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 in consultation with the line judges determines who the winners are and reports to the scorekeepers.

SCORING PINS

Game pins set at the five-foot mark which are to be touched or tipped by player's hand(s) only.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

When a team deliberately stretches existing rules to play a game differently from that planned by the event committee, the spirit of the game has been violated. The circle director and 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 color. All running events are run in a counterclockwise direction.

STARTING SIGNAL

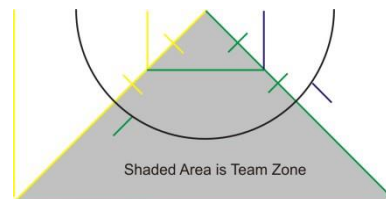
When each team is ready, the line judge on that line signals the circle director. When all line judges in a circle have indicated their teams are ready, the circle director signals the official starter. When all circle directors have signaled, the official starter will start the event.

TEAM LINES

(See Game Circle Diagram) Red, blue, green, and yellow lines forming a square outside the circle give team boundaries. Players not participating in an event must stay seated 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) OR TIE HEAT

"When two teams, in the decision of the circle director, touch their scoring pin at the same instant, a tie is declared." If it is a tie for first place in a game having second place, first and second place points are added together and split, eliminating second place. If it is a tie for second place, full second place points are awarded to both teams that tied for second place. (Example: If first place is four points and second place is two points and two teams tied for second, the two tied teams would both be awarded two points.)

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 Ball Relay – coaches choose what players.

WINNER OF AN EVENT

The circle director declares the winner(s) of each event. He may consult with the line judges to determine the winner. If the player touching the scoring pin has been disqualified, the second place player receives first place points. If the second place player is disqualified, the circle director will award second place points to the third place player. Where it is not possible for the circle director to determine the winner, he may call for a rerun.

SPARKS GAME EVENTS

DIAGRAM CODES: CP=Circle Pin, TP=Team Scoring Pin, SB=Striped Bag, LJ=Line Judge, CD=Circle Director, P1= Player 1, P2=Player 2, etc.

EVENT 1 - SPARKY IN & OUT

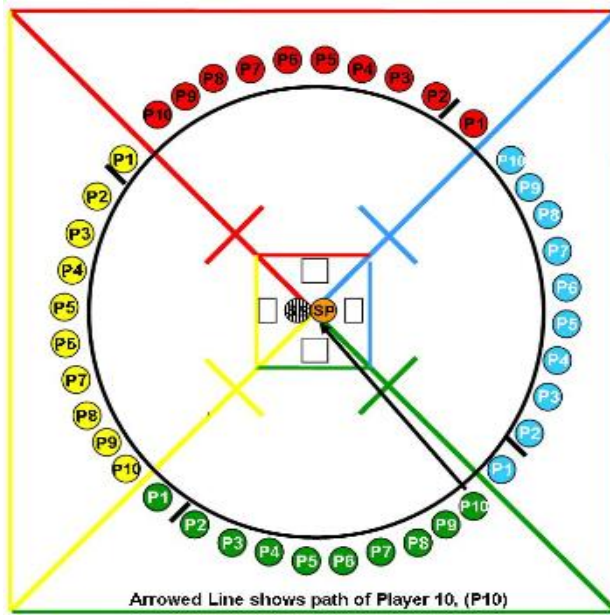
10 players; two heats

Scoring: 1st place - four points
2nd place - two points

Equipment: 4 baskets, 4 color beanbags.

Player #1 runs to container and retrieves beanbag from container and returns to circle line and hands bag to player #2. Player #2 returns beanbag to container and returns to the circle line to tag player #3. Play continues until player #10 receives their beanbag and then continues into the circle to touch or tip their color pin.

Players may not proceed into the circle until tagged or given the beanbag. All players must compete in at least one heat.



EVENT 2 - SPARKY SAFARI - WITH ANIMALS

8 players - 2 heats

1st heat - 4 players

2nd heat - 4 players

Scoring: 1st Place - four points
2nd Place - two points

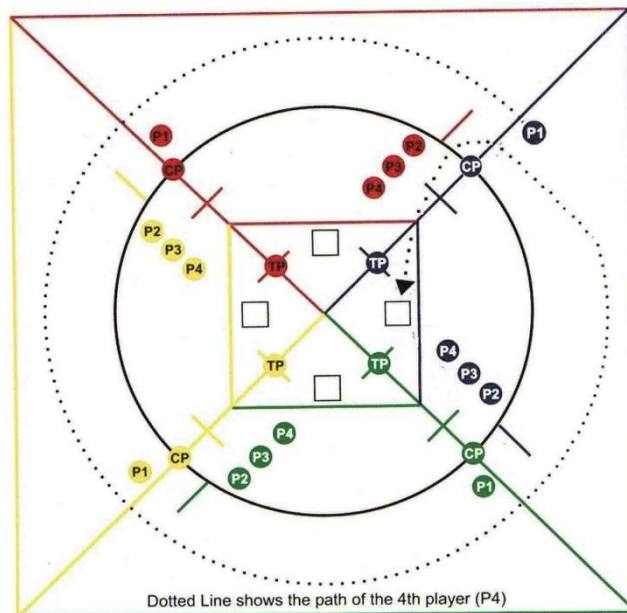
Equipment: Four circle pins, sixteen 6-10 inch stuffed animals, 4 small (about 12 inch) round plastic baskets upside down, 4 scoring pins.

First player is positioned at starting pin. The other three runners wait inside the circle within their team zone. Each player has a stuffed animal. At signal, player #1 runs around circle and hands-off stuffed animal to player #2, who runs around circle with two stuffed animals. Player #2 hands-off two stuffed animals to player #3, who runs around the circle with three stuffed animals. Player #3 hands-off three stuffed animals to player #4, who runs around the circle with four stuffed animals and then around player's starting pin, and into the team's inner triangle where he/she places the four stuffed animals in the 'cage' (small round basket turned up-side-down) and then into the center for scoring pin.

All parts of the animal must be completely in the 'cage' (under the small round plastic basket) with no parts sticking out of the bottom. The 'cage' must be flat on the floor (it is okay if parts of the animals are sticking out of other parts of the 'cage'). If a player drops an animal while running around circle, player may pick up the animal and continue. The animals must be completely handed-off within team passing zone (see *General Rules* "Passing Zone"), or the team is disqualified. Animals must be handed-off (given, not thrown) to the next player. After passing the animal(s), player returns to team line. At the start of the event the small round plastic basket is upside down. When player #4 runs into the center, he/she may turn the basket upright, place the animals in and then flip it back down to the 'cage' position.

YOU CAN PURCHASE ANIMALS FROM: orientaltradingcompany.com.

YOU CAN PURCHASE SMALL ROUND PLASTIC BASKETS IN R B G Y FROM: *dollar store, dollar tree, etc.*



EVENT 3 - SPARKY BOWL

Six players; six heats

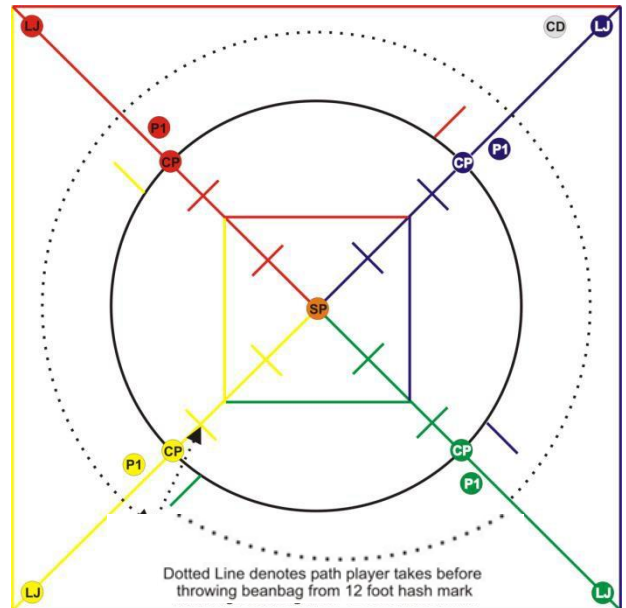
1st 2nd & 3rd heats: one girl per heat

4th 5th & 6th heats: one boy per heat

Scoring: One point - each heat

Equipment: Four Beanbags, 1 center 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, then goes around player's own circle pin to the 12-foot hash mark. **If they back up and knock down their own color circle pin, they are not disqualified. Their color pin is dead once they go around it without knocking it down and run to their 12-foot hash mark.** Standing behind the 12-foot hash mark, player tosses (either over or under hand) the beanbag at the center pin. First player to knock down center pin wins. Players retrieve their own beanbag and go back to their own 12-foot hash mark and continue play until one player knocks down the center pin. Beanbags going outside of team zone may be retrieved. If a player steps across the 12-foot hash mark when making their throw, that throw will not count, but the player is not disqualified.



There will be a time limit for each heat of 60 seconds. If no one knocks down the center pin within 60 seconds from when the heat begins, time will be called and no points will be scored for that heat.

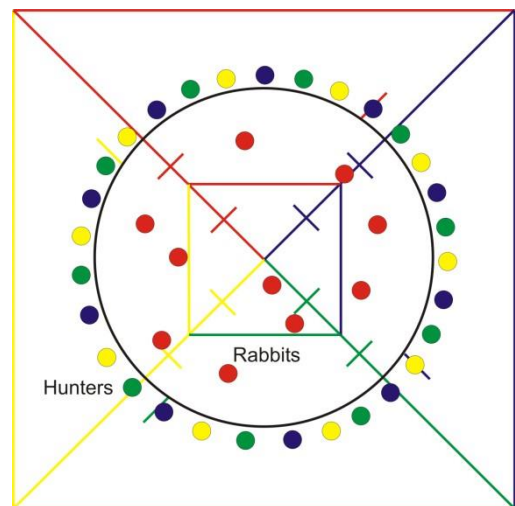
EVENT 4 - RABBIT HUNT

10 to 15 players; four heats

Scoring: 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; two heats

1st heat - five players (one lap each)

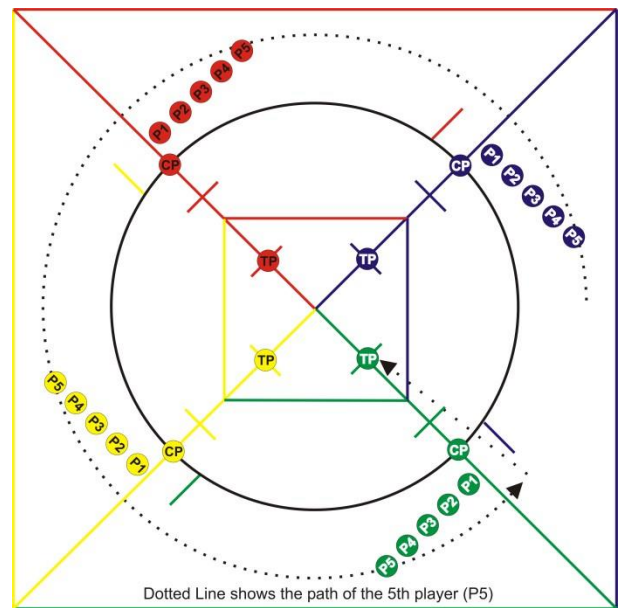
2nd heat - five different players (one lap each)

Scoring: 1st place - four points

2nd place - two points

Equipment: Four circle pins, 4 Scoring Pins, 8 swimming noodles

Players line up behind one another outside their circle line, as pictured on diagram. Each player grasps a pool noodle on their right and left side to form a train. At signal, train runs around circle. If train becomes disconnected (player loses hold of a pool noodle), train must stop, rejoin, and then continue. When all five players cross the starting line, the last player separates from the train and runs into the center for scoring pin.



EVENT 6 - SPARKY Ball Relay

10 to 15 players; two heats

1st heat - last player is a girl

2nd heat - last player is a boy

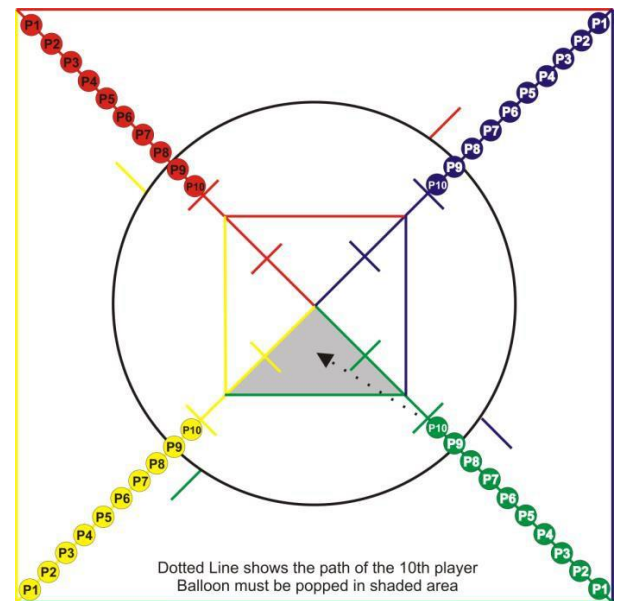
You must use all players on your team in this event.

Scoring: 1st place - four points

2nd place - two points

Equipment: Four scoring pins, four sport balls, four small (about 12 inch) round plastic baskets

All team players straddle their team diagonal line with their backs toward center of circle, as close together as they wish. Last player stands on eight-foot hash mark. First player holds ball on back of his/her head. At signal, the ball is passed through the legs of the players to the last player. It is not necessary that each player touch the ball. When last player in line has possession of ball, he/she runs into his/her team's inner triangle, places ball in the basket and turns the basket upside down with the ball inside, then touches the scoring pin with their hand.



If the ball goes outside the player's legs, a player must retrieve the ball and continue play where the ball went out so that the ball passes through everyone's legs except the last player who places the ball in the basket and turns the basket upside down with the ball inside the basket then touches the scoring pin.

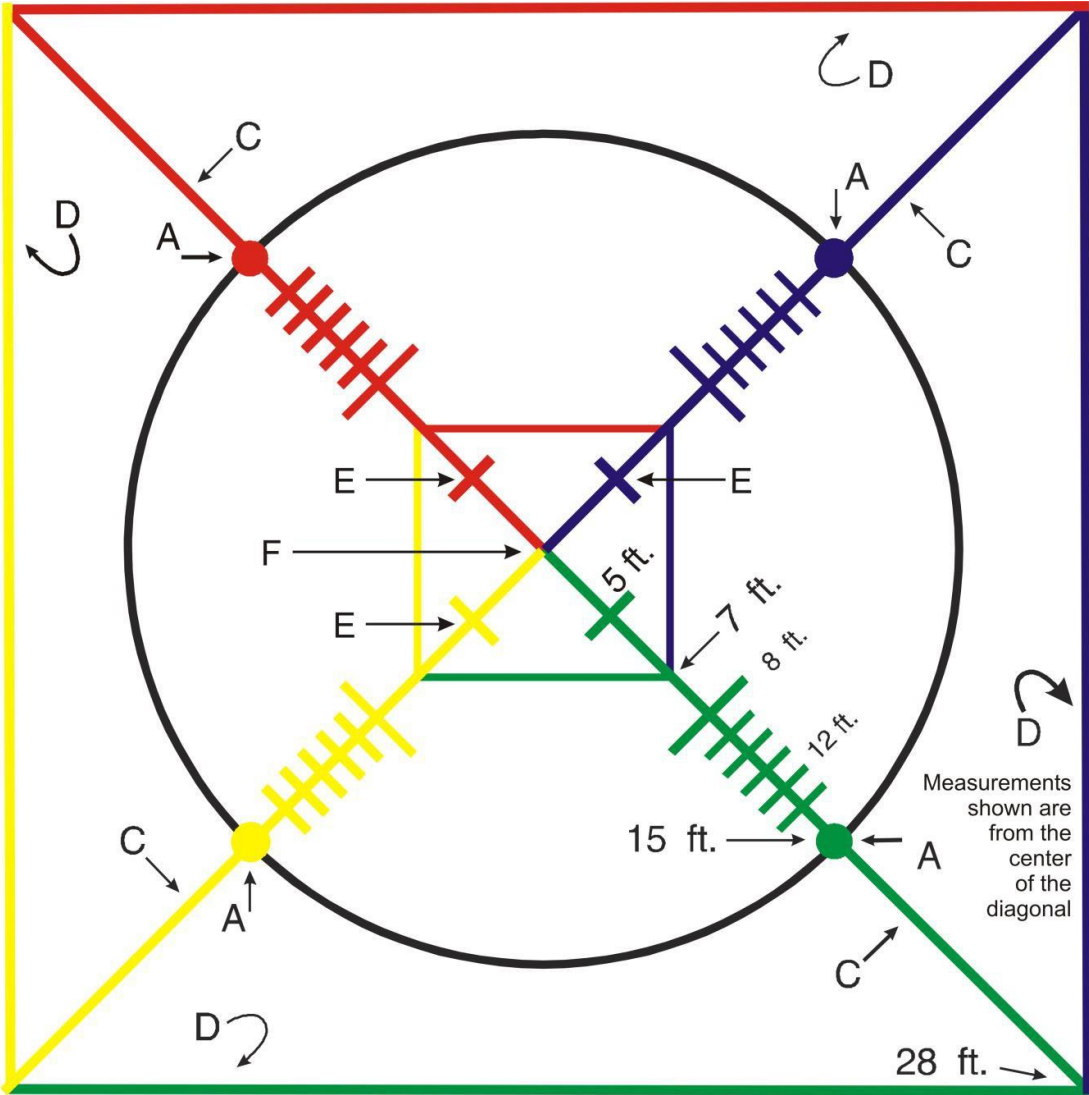
OFFICIAL AWANA SPARKS-A-RAMA CIRCLE

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

Key to diagram:

- A—Circle Pins
- C—Diagonal or Starting Line
- D—Team Lines or AwanaGames Square
- E—Scoring Pins
- F—Center Pin

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



Sparks -A-Rama™

Your Church Name and Contact Information

