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Sparks-a-Rama Official Rules and Regulations



Eastern Virginia





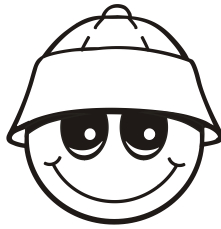
Sparks-a-Rama

Official Rules and Regulations

Awana Clubs International
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NOTE: This book was created for use in Eastern Virginia. Please verify this is the version your event will be using before training your teams.



SPARKIES' 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 and a day of exciting participation with new friends. **Coaches, remember this is not an event 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 judges who will participate in an Sparks-a-Rama meet.

Composition of Sparks-a-Rama teams

A team consists of a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 14 players, of which at least four must be boys and four must be girls. Team size may vary at the discretion of the Games Coordinator. Every player must participate in at least three events. The number of circles in a meet depends on the number of teams competing.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Requirements

1. The registration process requires payment by check. The fee covers part of the operating costs of the Sparks-a-Rama. 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 registration.**
2. Registration will close one week prior to the event.

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 that are not asked to replace another team will be refunded the full registration fee following the Sparks-a-Rama meet.

Team Assignments

Team assignments to a particular team line/color or a particular circle (where there is more than one circle) will be done by the games coordinator based on a first registered / first color choice approach.

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.
3. If short players, 4 year old Cubbies may be used to supplement the team.
4. Teams may register for only one Sparks-a-Rama meet.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Good Sportsmanship

Each Team is awarded 2 Sportsmanship Points per event or heat at the discretion of the Games Coordinator or Circle Director. 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 Awana 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, age, grade in school, and date of birth of each player, must be prepared by the team coach and submitted to the area event staff during check-in. The current parental consent form for each team member must be turned in with the roster sheet at team check-in.

Team Outfits

Coaches are responsible to be sure that uniforms are respectable and in keeping with Christian standards of dress. Non-marking athletic shoes must be worn by everyone on the playing floor. This includes coaches, judges, circle directors, and team members. Team coaches are encouraged to wear the special uniform (t-shirt) chosen for their team.

Insurance

The event organizers do not carry insurance covering team members. All churches **must** obtain insurance information for church-sponsored activities so they can supply their own protection. The coach must turn in, a copy of the Parental Consent form signed by a parent 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 a copy of the Parental Consent form before they can participate.**

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 selected for 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.

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 meet. **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 no later than 15 minutes prior to opening ceremonies. 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

Sparkle Time

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

Sparks Theme Song

“Sparks for Jesus”

Sparks Yell

Leader - *Who are we?*

Sparks - Sparks!

Leader - *Who for?*

Sparks - Jesus!

Leader - *What to do?*

Sparks - Light the world!

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 or other 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 meet.

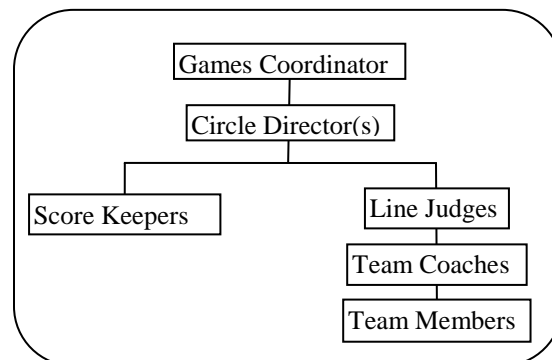
Recognition may also be given to Sparkies for their outstanding achievements.

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 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.**



Games Coordinator

Organizes the games 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, 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

Each team may have two coaches. At least one coach must be over 18 years old. 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 if permitted by the circle director. 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. A coach is required to attend the Sparks-a-Rama coaches' meeting with the circle director.
4. All coaches must remain behind their team line at all times while Sparks-a-Rama events are in progress.
5. Coaches are members of their teams and are requested to wear the same shirt (style, color) as the team.

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 for the purpose of shoe cleaning 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.

Balloons

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

Center Pin

The orange pin is set in the center of the circle when required by the event. It is recommended that sand be added to pin to bring the total weight to 16 oz.

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 sand be added to each pin for a total weight of 16 oz.

Cups

Stacking Cups manufactured by SpeedStacks (sold through Awana) are used for cup stacking events. The Jumbo Cups are used for Sparky events.

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 (see Sparky Bowl)
3. Breaking other game rules not listed here, but described elsewhere in this manual.
4. 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 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

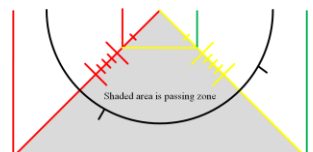
The circle director and judges may declare “interference” if, in the opinion of these officials, a team’s fair chance of winning is impaired by something other than normal breaks and hazards of the game. This includes hampering of teams’ or players’ progress by someone other than players participating 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, 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. The animals must be entirely in the passing zone.



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. Players should not leave the circle until the circle director has determined their team standings.

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, 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

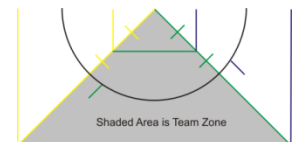
When each team is ready, the judge on that line signals the circle director. When all judges in a circle have indicated their teams are ready, the circle director signals the official starter. When all circle directors have signaled, the official starter will start the event.

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/tip their scoring pins, 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 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. (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 Balloon Pop – coaches choose who plays.

Winner of an Event

The circle director declares the winner(s) of each event. He may consult with the 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 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

EVENT 1— SPARKY BEANBAG – IN AND OUT

10 players; two heats (You must use all players on your team during this event.)

1st heat – 10 players

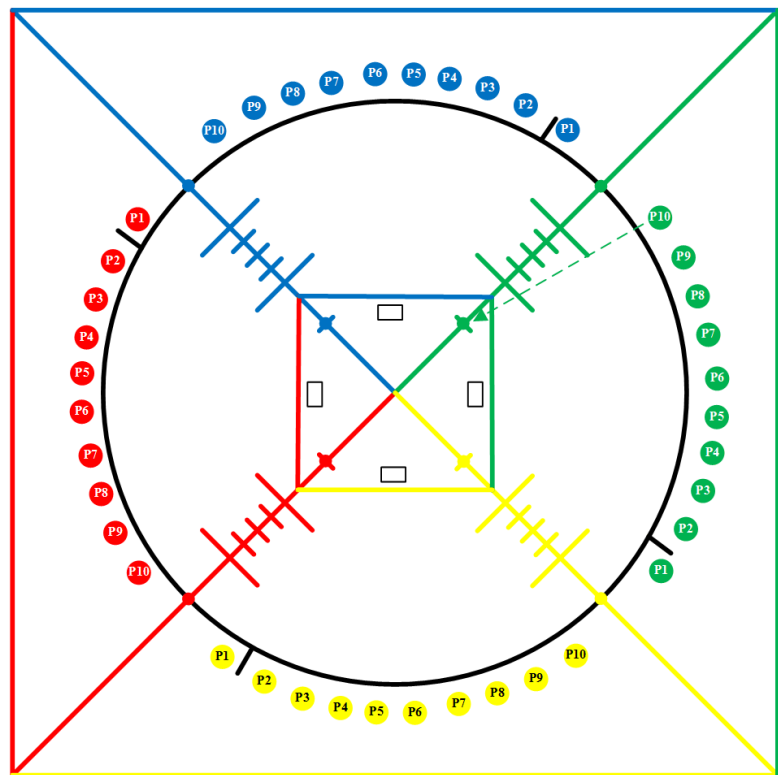
2nd heat – 10 players

1st place - four points

2nd place - two points

Equipment: Four small containers, four beanbags, four circle pins, four scoring pins

Players line up on their team's circle line. Container is set in team's small triangle, and the beanbag is placed in the container. At signal, player #1 (farthest from his/her team's starting diagonal) runs to container and retrieves beanbag from container, returns to team line and passes beanbag to player #2. Player #2 runs to container and puts beanbag into container (for Sparks we use grace as to how they put it in), returns to team line and tags 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 center and touches with hand(s) their scoring pin. First player to touch, tip, or knock down their scoring pin with his/her hand(s) wins. The winners must retain possession of their beanbag when finishing the event.



Player 10 path shown

EVENT 2 – SPARKY SAFARI

8 players - 2 heats

Heat 1 - 4 players - 4 girls

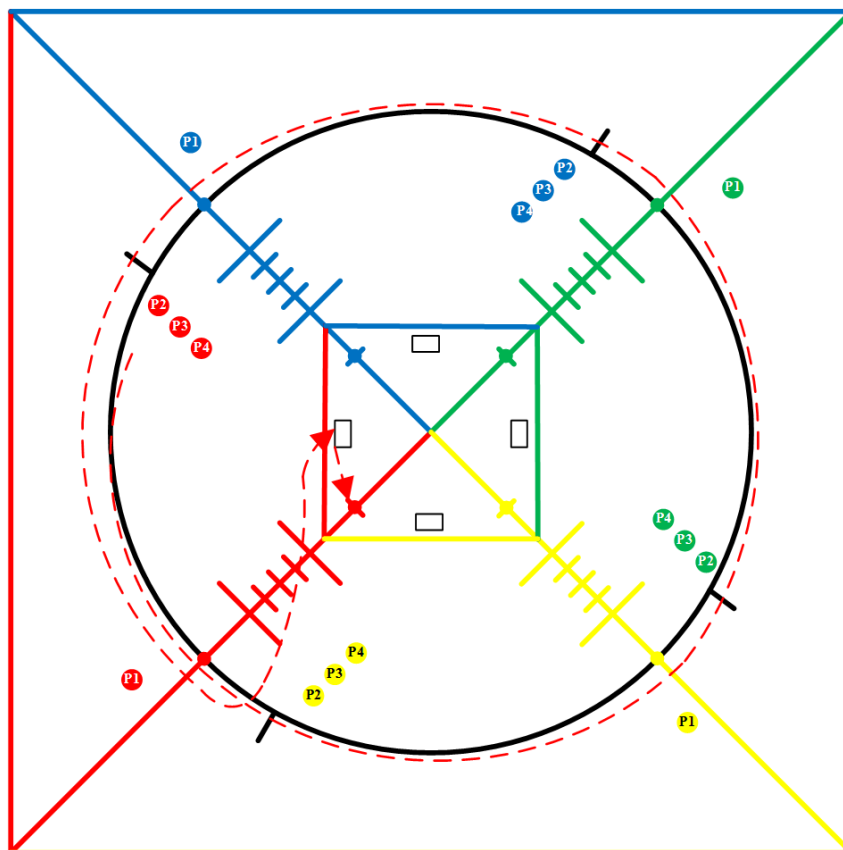
Heat 2 - 4 players - 4 boys

1st place - four points

2nd place - two points

Equipment: Four circle pins, 4 scoring pins, sixteen 5-8 inch stuffed animals, 4 small laundry baskets

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 laundry basket turned up-side-down) and then touches with hand(s) their teams scoring pin ending team play. All parts of the animal must be completely in the 'cage' (under the laundry 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 laundry 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.



Red player 4 approximate path shown

EVENT 3 —SPARKY CUP STACK

10 players; two heats

1st heat - five players (one lap each)

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

1st place - four points

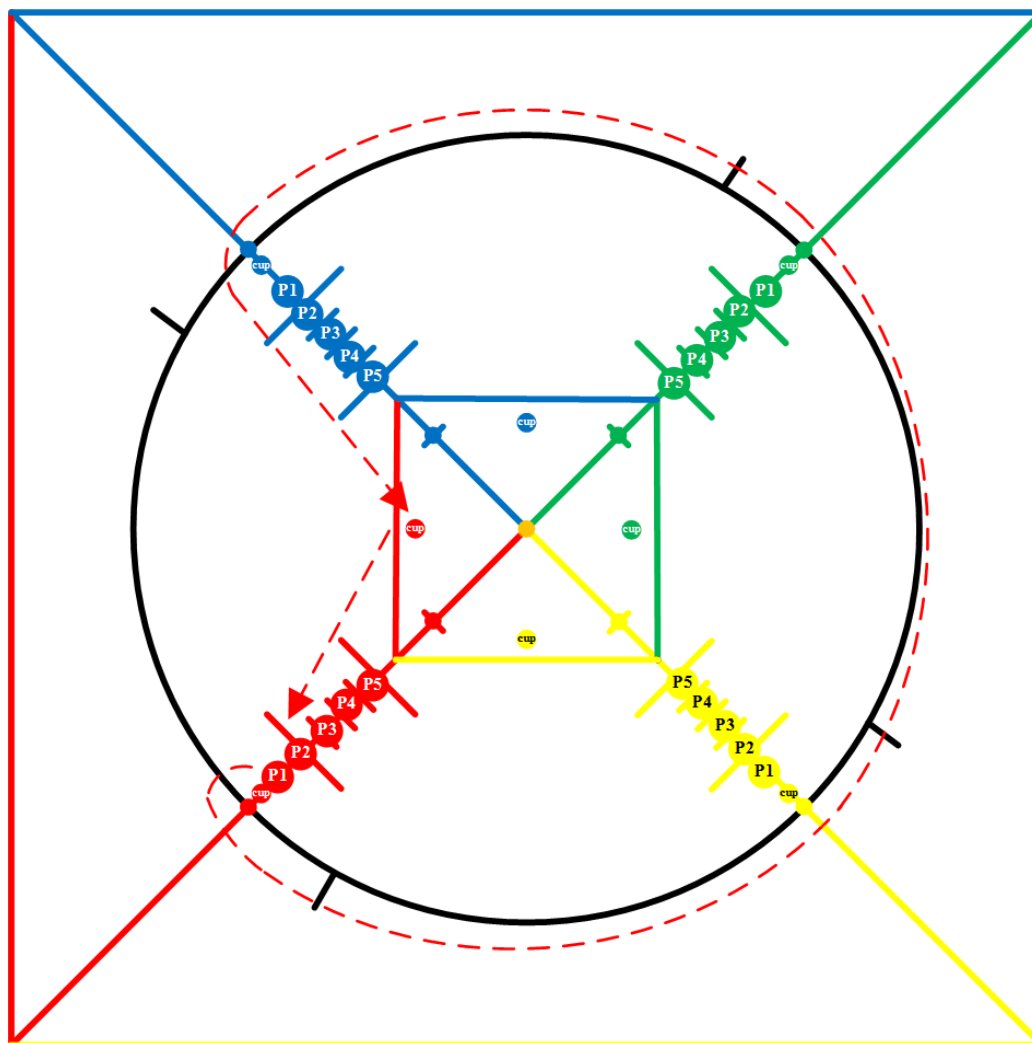
2nd place - two points

Equipment: Four circle pins, four scoring pins, six colored jumbo cups per team.

One cup is placed inside the seven foot triangle, centered, approximately one foot from the line. The other five cups are downstacked just inside the circle pin on the diagonal.

Players line up on the team diagonal inside the circle pin and cups. At starting signal, player 1 grabs one cup and runs outside **all** circle pins and heads to the triangle to stack their cup. Once stacked, player 1 tags player 2 who then grabs a cup. Play continues until player 5 stacks their cup forming a 6 stack pyramid. Player 5 then touches/tips their scoring pin with their hand. Players may not touch the downstacked cups until they have been tagged (or the starting signal is given for player 1). If a fumble occurs (cups fall down) the player that was stacking must restack the cups before tagging the next player. If the fumble occurs after the tag has been made, then the player with the cup should run around the circle, and stack all the cups that fell plus theirs.

Players **may** move forward on the diagonal once a player has started running around the circle.



Tag next player path shown; player 5 touches pin to finish

EVENT 4 —RABBIT HUNT

10 players; four heats

1st place - six points

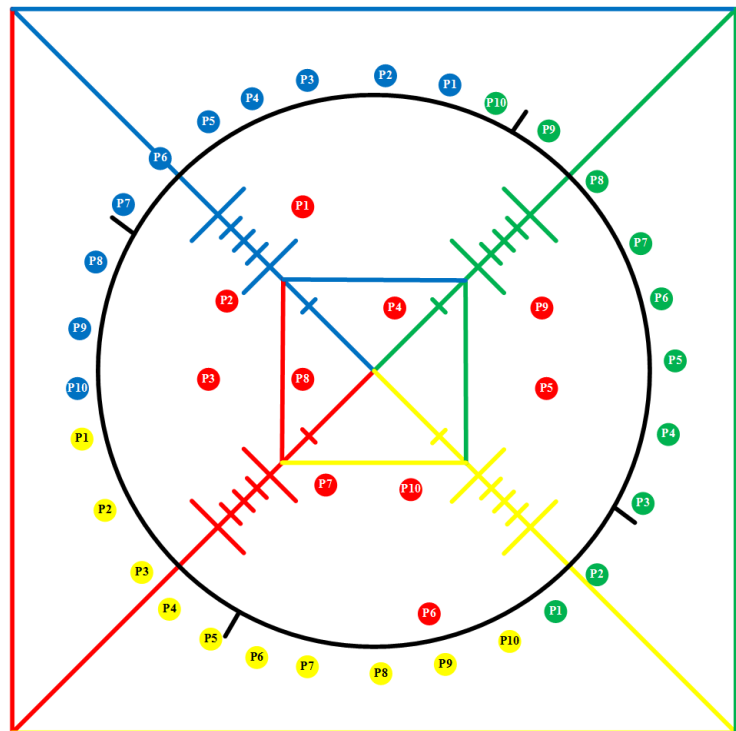
2nd place - four points

3rd place - two points

Equipment: two dodge or 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; if they do the ball is dead until it leaves the circle, and any rabbit that contacts that ball does not leave the circle. 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.

A direct throw at a rabbit's head does not count for the rabbit hit in the head.



Red Rabbits; Blue/Green/Yellow Hunters

EVENT 5 —SPARKY TRAIN

10 players; two heats

1st heat - five players (one lap each)

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

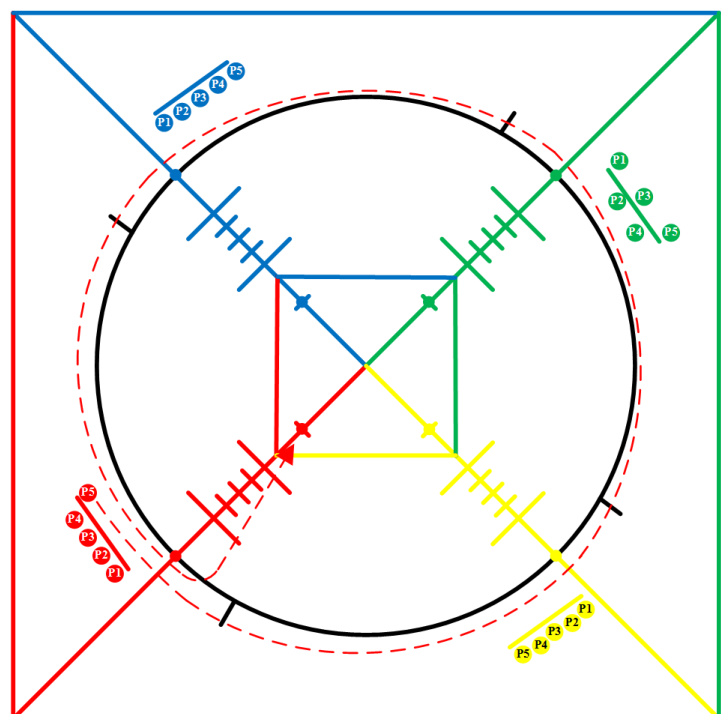
1st place - four points

2nd place - two points

Equipment: Four circle pins, four scoring pins, four pool noodles, & optional wristband to identify last player.

Players line up in order outside their circle line. Each player grasps the noodle to form a train. Diagram shows noodle and player line ups. At signal, train runs around circle. If train becomes disconnected (player loses hold of noodle), train must stop, rejoin its players, and then continue.

When all five players cross the starting line, the last player separates from the train and runs into the center to touch with hand(s) their scoring pin.



Player 5 must be holding the noodle when crossing the diagonal.

All players must be holding somewhere on the noodle while running around the circle. Only player one and player five must be retained their order if the train separates and reattaches.

Only player five may run into the circle to touch the scoring pin.

EVENT 6 — SPARKY BALLOON POP

10 players; two heats (You must use all players on your team during this event.)

1st heat – player #10 is a girl

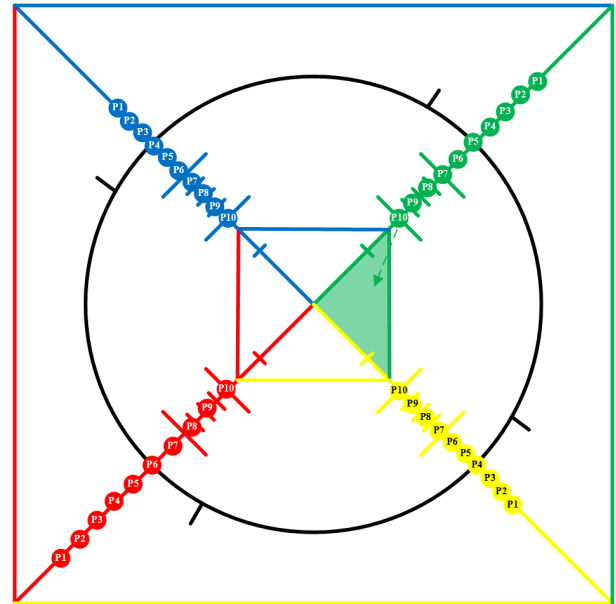
2nd heat – player #10 is a boy

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 center of circle, as close together as they wish. Last player stands on the eight-foot hash mark. First player holds balloon on back of his/her head. At signal, the balloon is passed through the legs of the players to the last player. It is not necessary that each player touch 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 last player, a line judge may insert another balloon.



Player 10 path shown; spacing is up to the coach

EVENT 7 – SPARKY BOWL

Six players; six heats

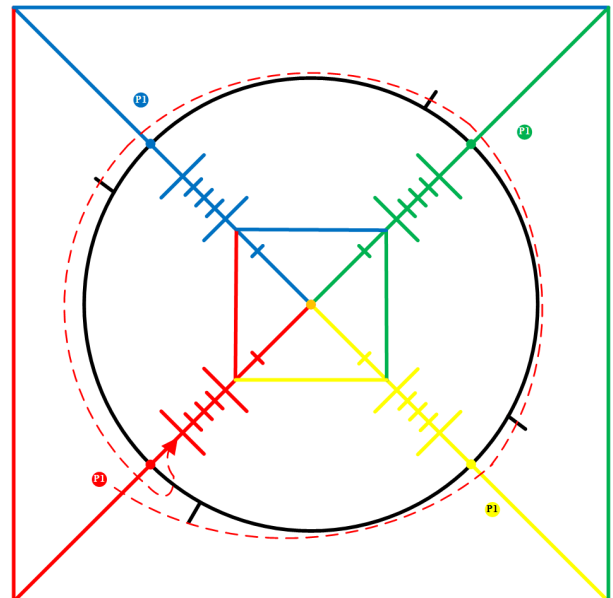
Heats one to three: one girl per heat

Heats four to six: one boy per heat

One point - each heat

Equipment: Four beanbags, 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. Circle pins are dead once they go around it without knocking it down and run to their 12-foot hash mark. If they knock a pin with their throw, or bump their own pin returning for another throw, they are not disqualified, as long as they had gone around their pin successfully and run to the 12 foot mark. Standing behind the 12-foot hash mark inside the circle, 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.



Path before the first throw

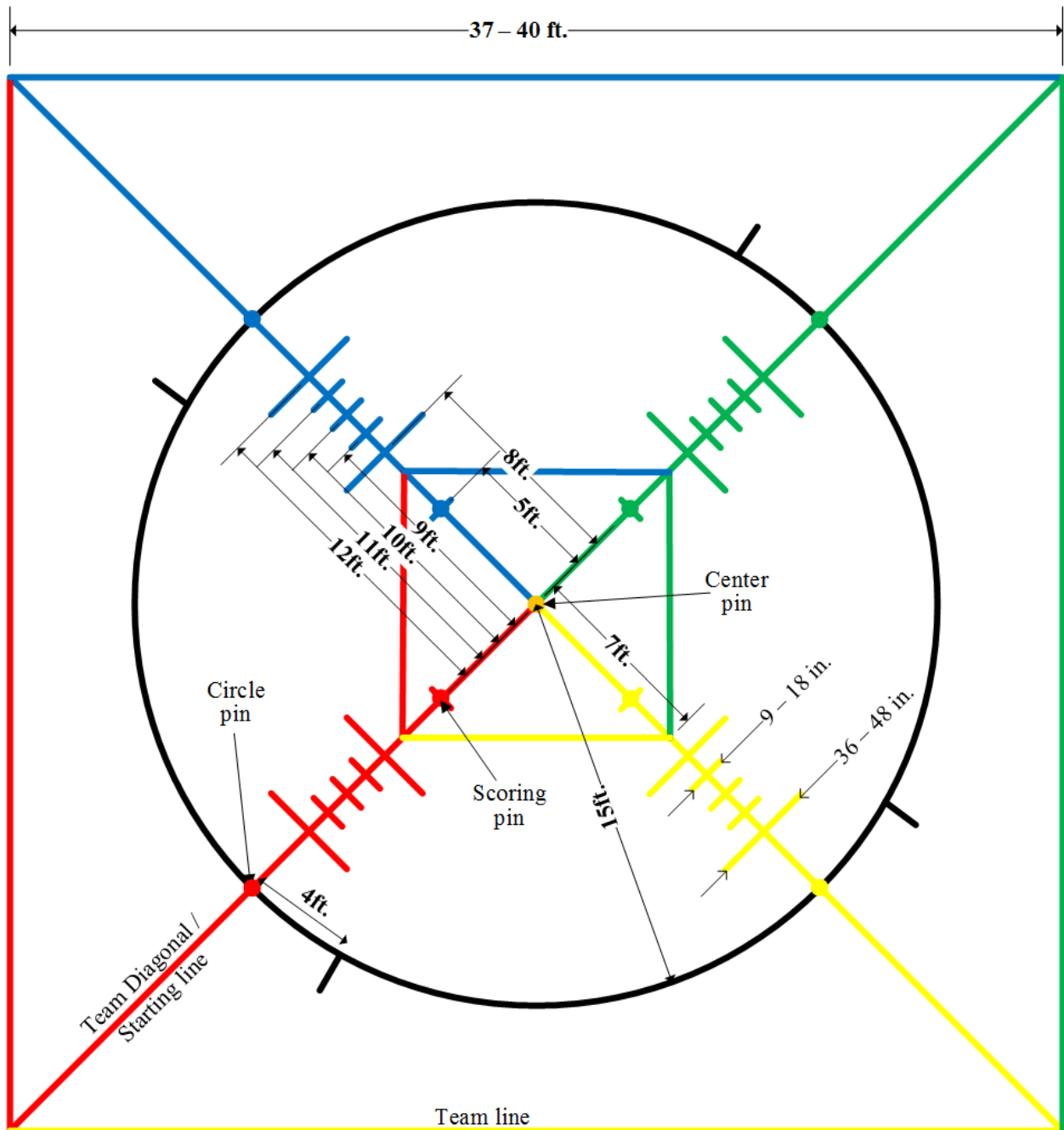
Each heat has a time limit of 60 seconds. If no one knocks down the center pin within 60 seconds from when the heat begins, time will be called and no points will be scored for that heat.

Players do not have to run around their circle pin after retrieving their bean bag.

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 color and occupies a quarter-circle or one side of that square. The 9, 10, and 11 ft hash marks are shown, but are only required for T&T AwanaGames.

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



White lines shown in black

Sparks-a-Rama

Sparks -A-Rama™

