

SECTION

END OF SEASON

8

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INTRODUCTION

Tournaments which declare “winners” are not recommended for children under 10 years old. Team achievement tests, where players are tested as a “team”, can be used in conjunction with an end of the year round robin tournament or as an “Achievement Day”, which includes a variety of activities and treats.

Team achievement tests and awards are a positive alternative for the following reasons:

- ▶ Emphasis is put on the importance of developing skills rather than “winning” games.
- ▶ More players experience success, which develops self-esteem.
- ▶ Team concept and development is encouraged.
- ▶ Equal opportunity for contribution so each player feels a valued part of the team.
- ▶ Encourages coaches to develop skills of all players because awards depend on abilities of every player - not selected players.
- ▶ Achievement tests can also be used by individual teams for motivation and to measure improvements.

ORGANIZATION OF ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

- ▶ Stations could be set up so teams can participate between games at round robin tournaments.
- ▶ If the “Achievement Day” approach is used, the number of stations will have to equal the number of teams, so they can rotate through the stations. Some stations may include activities from the Lesson Plans (ie: Shark in the Tank; Hot Potato).
- ▶ Awards are always based on **team totals**. **Each player on each team must be given an equal number of repetitions**. Since teams may not have the same number of players **team average** is used for awards.
- ▶ Number of repetitions depends on the total time allotted for the achievement tests. If rotating stations are set up, consideration should be given to try to equalize time at each station.
- ▶ Second and third place awards can also be considered, with participation awards to the other teams.
- ▶ Team scores should be given to teams so players/coaches see improvements if they are done more than once.

SUGGESTED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

TIMED HOME TO FIRST (equipment - stopwatch, Home plate, 1st base)

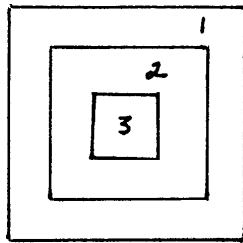
Each player is timed as they run H to 1B using a track start with front foot starting at edge of Home plate on the 1B side. Total the times, divide by number of players to get an average. Team with the **lowest** average wins this award.

ROUNDING BASES - TIMED (equipment - stopwatch, home plate, 1st and 2nd bases)

Same as timed Home to First test, except now the players round 1B and run to 2B. A bonus point is given for each player who steps on the **inside corner when rounding 1B**. Consideration could be given to awarding bonus points for a slide at 2B.

THROWING ACCURACY (equipment - target, balls)

Put a large target up with 3 target areas. Designate a line which players have to stay behind when throwing. Distance doesn't matter as long as it is equal for all players on each team. (probably 20'-40') Total points, divide by number on team to get average. The team with the **highest average** gets award.



THROWING VELOCITY (equipment - radar gun (if available), balls, target)

Each player's throwing speed is recorded. Total speeds, divide by number of players for average. Team with **highest average** gets throwing velocity award.

THROWING DISTANCE (equipment - markers, balls)

Mark 3 lines at progressively further distances from a throwing line which players have to stay behind when throwing. Distances will depend on level of participants. All players should be able to throw over the 1st line to experience success. The 3rd line should be challenging enough so only the players with the strongest throws can make it over.



Each player, standing behind the throwing line, throws as far as they can over the lines. Points are awarded as follows: throw over 1st line - 1 point; throw over 2nd line - 2 points; throw over 3rd line - 3 points. Total points, divide by number of players for average. Team with **highest** score wins award.

DISTANCE HITTING (equipment - batting T, balls, bat)

Mark 3 lines, at progressively further distances from a start line, where a batting T is placed. Score the same as in the throwing distance test.



BALL OF FIRE (equipment - stopwatch, balls, gloves)

Mark lines 20'-50' apart (depending on ability level), with 1/2 of team lined up in a file behind each line. Ball starts with first player in one line. On "Go", the ball is thrown back and forth until all players have thrown. Players go to end of **their own line** after completing throw. Start watch on "Go" and stop when catch is made on last throw. Team with lowest time wins Ball of Fire award.



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