

# 3

## GAMES

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# Introduction

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## WHY WE USE GAMES

Games are part of all the fun of Cub Scouting. Skills and interests boys develop now teach self-confidence, independence, and the ability to get along with others. Children learn through play.

For these reasons, games are an important part of Cub Scouting. Games not only help to accomplish Cub Scouting's overall objectives of citizenship training, physical fitness, and character development, they have educational benefits, too. Games teach a boy to follow rules, to take turns, to respect the rights of others, to give and take, and to play fair. Some games help boys to develop skills, body control, and coordination. Some teach self-confidence and consideration for others. Games stimulate both mental and physical growth, as well as providing an outlet for excess "boy energy."

## HOW TO CHOOSE GAMES

When choosing a game, you should consider three things: the physical aspects, mental values, and educational values of the games as they relate to Cub Scouting.

Consider first the *physical aspect*: the release of surplus energy. An active game should be satisfying to the strongest boy and yet not overtax the weakest. It should stimulate the growth and development of muscles. Most outdoor games meet this test.

Boys of Cub Scout age are growing rapidly. They like to run, jump, climb, lift, balance, crawl, bend, yell, chase, and hide. Generally, long walks or runs and other exercise involving endurance are not as suitable for boys of this age. (Also, boys who have had recent severe illness should not take part in active games.)

Some games are selected for their *mental values* because they have an element of excitement or accomplishment. Games can help boys develop quick thinking, alertness, and strategy. Many games offer boys opportunities to express their feelings and emotions, which is healthy.

Boys need to learn to play fair and to follow the rules. They also need to learn that they can't always be winners. Many boys of Cub Scout age have not yet learned to lose gracefully. Your task as leader is to make it clear that losing a game is not the end of the world and that a loss should be an incentive for the boy to try to improve his skills.

Some games are selected for their *educational value*. Boys' minds are more receptive to learning when learning is fun. Their interest and concentration are probably never higher than during play. Games are a way to help boys learn that rules and self-discipline are necessary and that doing one's best is important. Most Cub Scout games help in character development because they require teamwork, fair play, and consideration for others.

Consider these factors when choosing games:

- Purpose (physical, mental, educational)
- Space available
- Number of players
- Equipment available
- Skills and abilities of players

Whether the game involves group competition with team winners or individual competition or is just for fun, the results should be positive and lead to building character and helping boys grow and develop.

## FITTING GAMES TO THEMES

Games don't have to fit the monthly theme, but theme games help tie the month's program together. Many of the games included here will fit monthly themes; others can be easily adapted to themes. Sometimes, all you need to do to fit a game to a theme is change the name of the game. For example, a Cowboy Relay could become a Bareback Rider Relay to fit a circus theme.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADING GAMES

Boys will like most games if leaders have fun leading them. Anyone can be a successful games leader by following these simple suggestions:

- Know the rules of the game and have the necessary equipment on hand. Plan not only *what* you are going to do, but *how* you are going to do it.
- Start with your best game—one that is easy to explain and enjoyable to play. In addition to bolstering your own confidence, a successful game can enhance the morale of the players.
- Make sure the space available is large enough so everyone can play. Mark off boundaries for active outdoor games with brightly colored cones.
- Remove potential hazards from the play area. Follow health and safety rules.
- Get the full attention of the group and then explain the rules of the game simply, briefly, and in proper order. Be enthusiastic.



- For team games and relay races, you must have equal numbers of players on each team. If the teams are unequal, one or more boys on the smaller team must compete or race twice.
- As a rule, Webelos Scouts are larger and stronger than first-grade Tiger Cubs and second- and third-grade Cub Scouts. For some pack competitions, have boys in the same grade compete against each other, but not against older or younger boys. With this method, several winners can be recognized. An alternative is to mix the groups so that each team has boys from each age or grade.

If you have a boy with special needs, look for additional ideas in Chapter 7 of this book.

- Teach the game by steps or through demonstration.
- Ask for questions after explaining and demonstrating the game.
- Be sure boys follow the rules. Insist on good sportsmanship and fair play.
- If the game is not going right, stop it and explain the rules again.
- Don't wear a game out. Quit while the boys are still having fun.
- Have enough leaders to handle the group.
- Keep It Simple; Make It Fun (KISMIF).

Teach games to boys with the hope that they will be able to play and lead these same games independently in other settings, such as at school or in the neighborhood. Coach your den chief in leading games. This will enhance his leadership role. Find creative ways to develop leadership skills among the boys so that they may soon be able to play on their own without the assistance of a den leader or den chief.

## CHOOSING "IT" AND TEAMS

There are many ways to choose the boy who will be "It" for any game. Here are some suggestions, but make up others that work for your group.

- By birthdays, starting with January 1
- By alphabet, using first or last names
- By drawing a name out of an "It" box. After a name is drawn, it goes into a second box marked "It." When all names are in the second "It" box, put them back in the first box to begin again.

When choosing teams, try one of these ideas:

- Even-numbered birthdays against odd-numbered birthdays
- First half of the alphabet against the last half
- Drawing names from a box. Each boy decorates a craft stick with his name on it and any other creative artwork he wishes. When you need teams for a game, pull out two sticks and put them in separate

piles. Continue to pull out pairs of sticks, separating them into two piles, which will be your teams. When you are finished, replace all the sticks so they will be ready for the next team game.

You can also make a game of choosing sides. Have boys sit in a circle and then whisper in each boy's ear the word "Wolf" or "Bear." Then they must make the appropriate animal sound to find the other members of their team.

## REFLECTING AFTER GAMES

What is *reflecting*? Reflecting is guiding the players to think about what has happened as a result of the game or activity and try to learn from it. It is remembering thoughts, feelings, and actions and their effects. It is making comparisons and contrasts. Reflecting is making sense of the game or activity by using a series of questions to fit the needs of the group. In the section below on "Noncompetitive, Cooperative, and Team-Building Games," reflecting is an integral part of many of the games.

You should ask the boys five important questions at the end of each activity or game regardless of whether the game is cooperative or competitive. Be sure to allow time for these questions:

- Did you do your best?
- Was anyone left out of the game?
- Was anyone physically hurt?
- Did anyone have their feelings hurt?
- How would you make the game different next time?

Reflecting is a learning experience for you, the leader, as well. Enjoy this opportunity to help your Cub Scouts learn by doing.

## EQUIPMENT FOR GAMES

The games included in this book require inexpensive equipment or no equipment at all. You can find most of the needed materials around the house, or boys can make them during a den meeting. Here is a list of some useful items for games.

**Balloons:** Use balloons in the place of balls for many indoor games. (Be sure to pick up and discard all the pieces of broken balloons.)

**Small Balls:** Try softballs, tennis balls, table tennis balls, foam balls, or beanbags. They can be pitched, tossed, passed, batted, kicked, bounced, dribbled, carried, or rolled.

**Large Balls:** Rubber playground balls, beach balls, volleyballs, and soccer balls can be kicked, bounced, thrown, carried, or batted.

**Clothespins:** Use them as game pieces or to secure other equipment, such as newspaper or balloons.

**Sticks:** Broom handles are ideal. They can be used to jump over, for pushing other objects, or for batting. (Be sure that sticks won't give boys splinters.)

**Tin Cans:** Roll or kick them along a course or between obstacles; set them up as targets or markers; or use them to roll objects into. (Make sure that edges are clean and smooth.)

**Rings:** Use rubber, metal, or margarine tub lids with the centers cut out, or rope rings, for tossing over nails, pegs, hooks, or stakes. Use them to play shuffleboard or throw them into tin cans, boxes, or other containers. Curtain rod rings are useful, too.

**Paper Bags:** Use them for masks or blindfolds, to blow up and burst, or to wear as hats.

**Ropes:** Use clothesline or sash cord to jump over, spin as a lariat, or thrown as a lasso. Try rope as a marker for start and finish lines or to tie knots. For tug-of-war, use ¾-inch-diameter or larger rope, and avoid using nylon or polyethylene rope, which can more easily cause rope burns.

**Newspapers:** Use them as stepping stones, markers, or obstacles; roll them to make swatters or balls.

**Bottle Caps:** These can be markers or obstacles, checkers, small objects to hide, or objects to throw for accuracy.

**Beanbags:** They don't roll or bounce. Make them from old denim in many different sizes.

Store equipment for games in a den game chest, which can be as simple as a large cardboard box. It is helpful for all game materials and equipment to be stored in one place, easily accessible to the den. Your game chest can also be useful for those moments when you find yourself with a little free time and nothing prepared!

Here are some ideas beyond the items listed above that you might want to keep in a game chest:

Foil pie pans	Feathers
Chalk	An old umbrella
Toothpicks	Playing cards
Plastic spoons	Washers
Old work gloves	Paper cups
Jars	Marbles
Straws	Checkers
Whistles	A muffin tin
Golf tees	

## DEN GAMES

Den games are designed for a small group of boys. Quiet games are helpful when weather prohibits out-

door activities. Active games help boys release excess energy and prepare them for quieter den activities. Most of the games in this book are suitable for dens.

Den games may be competitive or noncompetitive. Remember: Some games are played just for the fun of it. Most of these games don't need a winner.

## PACK GAMES

Pack games are played with larger groups of boys, adults, and siblings at pack meetings and activities. Relay games are a great favorite. Note that shuttle relays require less space.

Pack games should include as many boys as possible—preferably all boys in the pack. If all cannot participate, select representatives from each den. Involve parents and leaders whenever possible. Boys love to see their parents or guardians participating in a game.

If you award prizes, keep them simple and inexpensive, such as suckers, bubble gum, balloons, or stickers.

Remember: Above all, pack games should be fun for everyone—those who play *and* those who watch.

## Active Games With Equipment

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### BALLOON BATTLE ROYAL

**Activity Level:** High

**Needed:** Any number of players, balloons, string



Arrange Cub Scouts in a large circle, each with an inflated balloon tied to his ankle. On a signal, players try to break all other balloons by stamping on them, while not letting their balloon get broken. When a



balloon is broken, that player leaves the game. The game continues until only one player is left.

## **BEANBAG SNATCH (OR STEAL THE BACON)**

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed: Large playing area, even number of players, beanbag**

Form two lines facing each other about 25 feet apart. Place a beanbag in the center. Count off the boys in each line from opposite directions. The leader calls out a number, and the opponents with that number run to the center. The object of the game is for a Cub Scout to snatch the beanbag and get back to his side without being tagged by the one with the same number from the other side. Score two points if a player brings the beanbag back without being tagged. Score one point for the opposing team if the snatcher is tagged.

## **BLAST OFF!**

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed: Any number of players, chairs**

One boy is Mission Control. The others are given the names of planets and are seated in chairs around the room. Mission Control walks around the room, calling out the names of various planets. When a player's planet is named, he gets up and follows Mission Control. When most of the boys are walking, Mission Control calls "Blast off!" and all players, including those still sitting, must find a new seat. The player left standing is the new Mission Control.

## **CAT'S TAIL**

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed: Even number of players; pieces of cloth or yarn, different colors for each team**

Divide the group into two teams. Hide several pieces of cloth or yarn—a different color for each team. One boy on each team is a Cat Without a Tail. On a signal, all players search for "tails" of their color. As each is found, it is tied to the belt of their Cat. The winner is the team whose Cat has the longest tail at the end of 5 minutes.

## **CHANGE CARS**

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed: Any number of players, chair for each player, cards with the names of different cars on them**

Prepare for the game by fastening to the back of each chair a card with the name of a different automobile. Each boy checks the car name on his chair and sits down. One player is "It" and stands in the center of the circle of chairs. "It" calls the names of two cars (e.g., Ford and Toyota), and the boys in those chairs try to exchange seats while "It" tries to get a chair for himself. The boy left without a chair becomes "It."

*Variation:* Use different types of transportation, such as car, plane, boat, or train, or names of animals or states in the United States. Ask the boys for other ideas of things to use.

## **COVER THE CHAIR**

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed: Any number of players, chair for each player**

Boys are seated in chairs in a circle. One player is "It" and stands in the center of the circle, leaving his chair empty. When he commands, "Move to the right," all players try to get into the chair to their right. While this is going on, "It" tries to get a seat. If he succeeds, the person who should have gotten that chair becomes "It." To confuse the players, "It" may suddenly call, "Move to the left"—and he stands a good chance of finding a place.

## **DEFENDERS AND INVADERS**

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed: Large playing area, even number of players, slips of paper, pencils, newspaper**

Divide boys into two groups—the Defenders and the Invaders. One Defender is the Starving Captain, who sits in the "stockade" (marked with a piece of newspaper). Give each of the other Defenders a slip of paper with the name of a food and its allotted playing value: flour, 25; baking powder, 20; dried beef, 15; hardtack, 10; jam, 10; fruit, 5; sugar, 5; and corn, 5. A Leader chosen by the Invaders places his men in the Invaders' territory, which surrounds the Defenders' stockade. The Defenders surround the Invaders and look for ways to break through the Invaders' lines to take supplies to their Starving Captain in the stockade. The Invaders try to capture the Defenders by tagging them. They search their captives and confiscate any "food" found on them. After about 15 minutes of play, tally the score. The Invaders add up the value of the captured supplies. The Starving Captain figures the value of the supplies that have been delivered to him. The side with the highest value of supplies wins.

## DISK FOOTBALL

*Activity Level:* High

*Needed:* Large playing area, even number of players for two teams, plastic flying disk



Divide the group into two teams, which begin play at opposite ends of a play area. Play begins with one team “kicking off” (throwing the disk). The receiving team tries to score a touchdown by passing the disk and advancing it downfield to the other team’s goal line. The other team tries to intercept and score a touchdown. No player may run with the disk and no player may hold it for more than 5 seconds. Play is continuous. There are no downs.

## FLYING DISKS

*Activity Level:* Moderate

*Needed:* Large playing field, any number of players, plastic flying disk for each team, three or more hula hoops or bicycle tires

Set the hula hoops or other targets up at three different spots, each farther away from the participants. The object is to throw the plastic flying disk so that it lands inside the hula hoop or bike tire. The hula hoop closest could be worth two points; the hoop in the middle, three points; and the one the farthest away, five points. Landing on the hoop or tire doesn’t count.

*Variation:* Two teams can play against each other to see which team can score the most points in a specific time period.

## POP OR PROTECT

*Activity Level:* High

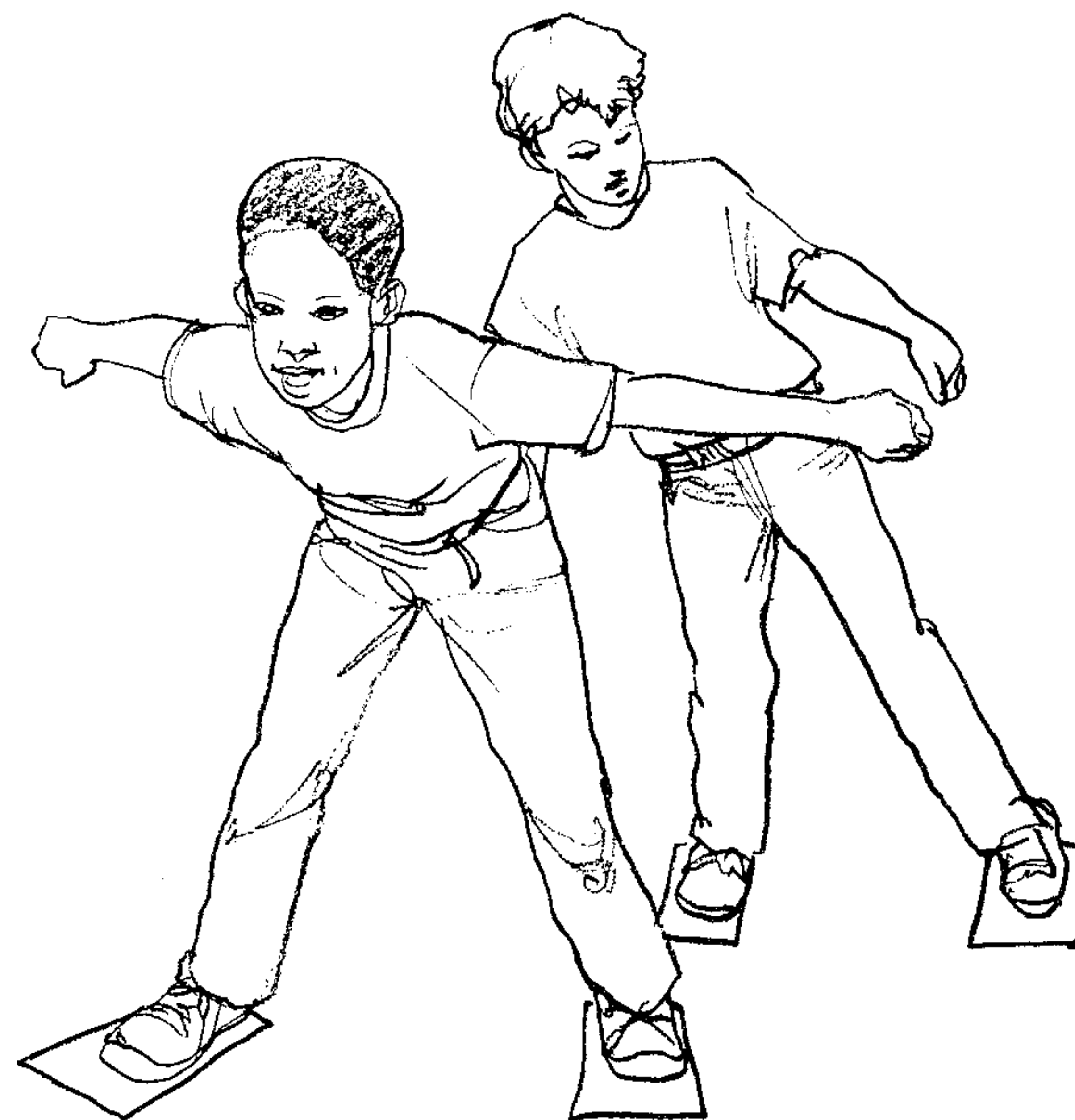
*Needed:* Large playing area, even number of players, inflated balloons, neckerchief or similar piece of fabric to signify Defenders

Divide the group into two teams—the Defenders and the Invaders. Distinguish the two teams by having the Defenders tuck their neckerchiefs in their belts. Toss an inflated balloon between the two teams. The Invaders try to break the balloon by grabbing it, clapping their hands on it, or stepping on it. The Defenders try to protect it by batting it out of reach. Keep track of the time required for the Invaders to break the balloon. When it is broken, the Defenders become the Invaders. Give each team three turns as Invaders, and then add their times. The team with the least total time wins.

## INDOOR SKI RACE

*Activity Level:* High

*Needed:* Large room with a smooth floor, any number of players, 12-by-18-inch construction paper for each boy



Line up boys along a starting line and give each a sheet of construction paper. On a signal, boys tear their sheets in half and place a piece of construction paper under each foot. They then “ski” to the goal line. This game must be played on a smooth floor so the “skis” won’t tear.

*Variation:* Play as a relay, with each team member skiing to a line and back, and the next boy taking the “skis” and doing the same.



## LINK PASS

*Activity Level: Low*

**Needed:** Even number of players, 20 pebbles (10 for each team)

Divide Cub Scouts into two teams facing each other. They lock elbows with those next to them in their line. Place 10 pebbles on the floor near the first player in each line. On a signal, those two boys each pick up a pebble and pass it to the next player in line, who passes it on. The players' arms must remain linked throughout the game. If a Cub Scout drops a pebble, he must retrieve it without breaking the chain. The first player may start another pebble right away. The first line to pass the 10 pebbles to the end wins.

## NEWSPAPER SOFTBALL

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed:** Large playing area, even number of players, softball plates, two tin cans, rolled up newspaper



Divide players into two teams. Place two tin cans on either side of home plate and a rolled newspaper across the tops of the cans. The first "batter" stands behind the newspaper and kicks it with his instep, and the game is on. From that point, follow softball rules.

## QUICKSAND

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed:** Any number of players, long piece of rope

Tie the ends of a long rope together to form a large rope circle. Mark off another circle (the "quicksand") on the floor or ground, about one-third the size of the rope circle. Boys take hold of the rope with both

hands, forming a ring around the quicksand. On a signal, they all try to pull as many of the other players as possible into the quicksand while keeping out of it themselves. As soon as a player steps into the quicksand, he is out of the game. The game continues until only one player remains.

## SLEEPING GUARD

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed:** Large room or playing field; any number of players; blindfold; rock, beanbag, or neckerchief for precious object

Choose one boy to be the Sleeping Guard. The others are Stalkers. The Guard sits blindfolded on the ground, guarding a precious object. The Stalkers form a ring around the guard about 20 feet away. On a signal, they advance as quietly as possible, trying to get close enough to steal the object without waking up the Guard. When the Guard hears an approaching Stalker, he points a finger in that direction. If his finger points at the Stalker, the Stalker is out. If a Stalker succeeds in getting the object without being caught, he is the Guard for the next game.

## SPOT CHECK

*Activity Level: Low*

**Needed:** Blindfold; key, button, coin, or other small object; small pad of paper and pencils; masking tape

This game is like Pin the Tail on the Donkey—but without a tail and the donkey!

Place a small object in the center of the floor. Each player writes his name on a small slip of paper and tapes a piece of masking tape to it. At one end of the room, mark a starting line with a line of tape. One by one, players are blindfolded, turned around a few times, and told to walk to the spot where they think the object is located without actually touching the object. As each player reaches his selected spot, he tapes the slip of paper next to it. The player whose paper is closest wins.

## TAILS

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed:** Large playing field, even number of players, neckerchief or piece of cloth for each player

Divide boys into two teams. All players tuck their neckerchiefs loosely into their belts in back to signify tails. On a signal, each team rushes toward the other, trying to capture their tails. Once a boy's tail is taken, that boy is out of the game. The capturer ties the tail to the front of his belt. The team that captures the

most tails wins. This is a good “stalking game” to play in a place where brush or shrubbery provides cover.

*Variation:* Set a time limit. If the game is played outdoors, define a specific area that boys must stay in and have a signal for them to return when time is up. Once a tail is taken, the boy who loses it stays in the game to confuse the other players. Boys without tails should still pretend to “hide” their tails by keeping their backs to as many players as possible so others won’t know whether they have a tail. The team that captures the most tails within the allotted time wins.

## Active Games Without Equipment

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### ANIMAL GUESSING GAME

*Activity Level:* High

*Needed:* Large playing area, even number of players

Divide the group into two equal teams. Each team chooses an animal and thinks up six riddle clues for that animal (e.g., “I eat flying insects”; “My front teeth are large and I gnaw a lot”; “My eyes are very large”). When both teams are ready, they face each other across a line. Mark a line for each team’s home base about 15 feet behind the teams. The teams take turns giving one clue at a time. When one of the teams guesses correctly, they begin to chase the other team toward their home base line. Players who are caught switch teams.

### AUTO RACE

*Activity Level:* Moderate

*Needed:* Any number of players

Arrange boys in a circle, with the den chief in the center. He gives each player the name of a car, being sure to use the same name more than once so that several players have the same car. To start play, the den chief calls out the name of a car. The first player with that car name to touch the den chief and return to his place wins the race. The game continues as the den chief calls out another car.

### BEAR IN THE PIT

*Activity Level:* High

*Needed:* Any number of players

Boys form a circle. One player inside the circle is the Bear. While the others hold hands tightly, the

Bear tries to get through the ring by force or by dodging under their arms. He may not use his hands to break the grip of the players in the ring. When he does break through, the others try to catch him. The first one to tag him is the next Bear.

### CROWS AND CRANES

*Activity Level:* High

*Needed:* Even number of players

Divide boys into two teams—the Crows and the Cranes. The teams line up facing each other about a yard apart. Mark off a base line 30 to 50 feet behind each team, or line them up in the center of a room and use the walls for bases. When the leader calls “Crows,” the Crows must race to their base without being tagged by the Cranes. When the leader calls “Cranes,” they try to get back safely. Players who are tagged become a member of the opposite team. The team with the largest number of people at the end of a given time period wins. The leader can add suspense by prolonging the commands, “Cr-r-r-rows” or “Cr-r-r-anes.”

### FOX AND CHICKENS

*Activity Level:* High

*Needed:* Any number of players

Line up the group in single file. Each boy holds the waist of the player in front of him. The boy at the head of the line is called the Mother Hen and the others are Chicks. Another boy, the Fox, stands in front of the line. On a signal, the Fox starts around the line, trying to catch the last Chick. The Mother Hen flaps her wings and follows the Fox to prevent him from catching the Chick. The others turn away from the Fox as they keep in line with their leader. If the last Chick is caught, he falls in behind the Fox. The game continues until all Chicks are caught.

### OWLS AND CROWS

*Activity Level:* High

*Needed:* Large playing area, even number of players

Divide the group into two equal teams—the Owls and the Crows. The teams line up facing each other, about 2 feet apart. About 15 feet behind each team is their home base line. The leader makes a statement that is true or false (it could be related to the monthly theme). If the statement is true, the Owls chase the Crows toward their base line. If it is false, the Crows chase the Owls. Anyone caught must join the other team.



## RED LIGHT

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed:** Large indoor or outdoor playing area, any number of players

"It" turns his back on the rest of the boys, who are lined up 30 to 50 feet away from him. The object is for the boys to walk or run toward "It" while his back is turned as he counts to 10. At "10," he shouts "Red light!" and turns quickly. Any player who is moving when "It" turns must go back to the starting line. The first to get to "It" and touch him wins the game.

## SHERE KHAN (THE TIGER GAME)

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed:** Large room or outdoor area, any number of players

One boy is Shere Khan, the tiger, and stands in the center of the playing area. All others line up against a wall. The object of the game is to cross to the opposite wall without being tagged. To start the game, Shere Khan says, "Who's afraid of Shere Khan?" The others answer, "No one," and immediately run across the open space toward the opposite side. All boys tagged help Shere Khan tag the remaining players in the next round. The last one tagged becomes Shere Khan the next time.

*Variation:* With a big field and a large number of players, half can be Shere Khans and half men. This game is also known as Pom-Pom Pullaway.

## Ball Games

### BALL OVER

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed:** Large playing area, odd number of players, blindfold, whistle, playground ball

Draw a line to divide the area. Divide the group into two teams—one on each side of the line. Players must not cross the line. Blindfold one boy and give him a whistle. When he blows the whistle, the ball is put into play by throwing it from side to side. The object of the game is to keep the ball on the opposing team's side. One point is counted against the team that has the ball each time the whistle is blown. The blindfolded player can blow the whistle whenever he wishes. The lowest score wins.

## BALLOON BASKETBALL

*Activity Level: Moderate*

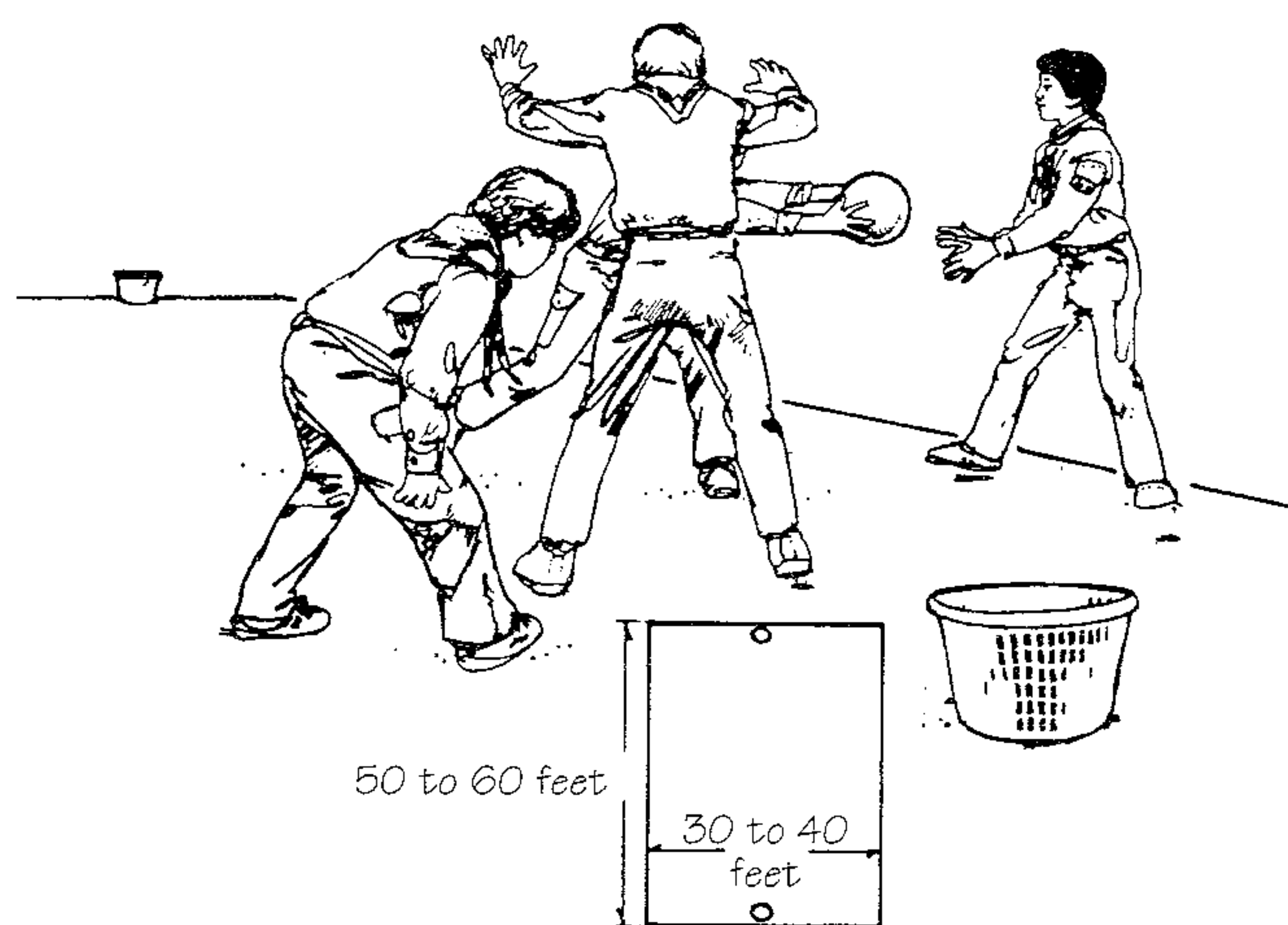
**Needed:** Large to medium-sized playing area, any number of players, inflated balloons, empty cardboard box or wastepaper basket

Use an inflated balloon for the ball, batting it around from player to player, and boxes or wastepaper baskets for the goals. Score as in basketball, except that a broken balloon counts five points off for the side that broke the balloon.

## BUCKETBALL

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed:** Large room or playing area; even number of players; ball; two baskets, boxes, buckets, etc., for goals



This basketball-type game can be played with any type of ball that bounces and a couple of large containers such as laundry baskets, bushel baskets, or large wastepaper baskets. Place the baskets (goals) about 60 feet apart (less if necessary because of space). Divide boys into two teams and play using basketball rules. No points are scored if the ball doesn't remain in the basket or if the basket turns over.

## CALL SOCCER

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed:** Large playing area, even number of players, soccer ball or volleyball

Divide the players into two teams and line them up facing each other about 30 feet apart. Number the

players on each team from opposite ends of the line. Place the ball midway between the two lines. The leader calls a number, and the two players having that number run to the ball, each trying to kick it back to his goal line. The player who kicks it to his goal line scores two points for his team. Then the leader calls another number, and two more players begin. The first team with 10 points wins.

## CHAIN DODGE BALL

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed: Large playing area, two teams of five or six players, playground ball**

Arrange one team in a single file, with each player grasping the player in front of him around the waist, forming a chain. The other team forms a circle around the chain and tries to hit the player at the end of the chain with the ball. The players forming the circle may pass the ball around in any manner while those in the chain try to keep the player on the end from being hit. Only the first player in the chain may use his hands to bat the ball away. When the end player is hit, he leaves the game. Continue until all players in the chain are eliminated, and then change sides.

## CIRCLE BASEBALL

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed: Large open area with defined boundaries, even number of players, plastic flying disk or a large playground ball or beach ball**

Divide players into two equal teams, with one team up to bat and the other in the field. Batting team members line up single file, one behind the next. Fielding team members scatter in the field. The first batter throws the disk/ball into the field and runs in a circle around his teammates as many times as he can until the other team yells "Stop!" Each time the batter goes around his team is counted as a "run."

In the meantime, the players in the field go after the disk/ball. After a player gets it, all his teammates quickly line up behind him. The player with the disk/ball passes it over his head to the next player as soon as there is someone behind him. This continues until the last player has the disk/ball. He runs to the front of the line, and all members of his team sit down as they yell "Stop!" The batting team can score no more runs now.

The second person in the batting team now throws the disk/ball to the fielding team, and the action is repeated until everyone on the batting team has had a chance "at bat," adding the score for each "inning."

## DODGE BALL

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed: Large playing area, any number of players to form two teams, playground ball or volleyball**

Divide the boys into two groups. One group forms a large circle, and the other group scatters inside it. The players in the circle throw the ball at the boys inside, who try to avoid being hit without leaving the circle. Boys who have been hit by the ball join the circle players. The last player in the circle is the winner. When all have been eliminated, the sides change places.

## FIVE HUNDRED

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed: Large playing area, any number of players, bat, softball**

A batter tosses a softball up and bats it to the other players, who try to catch it. A fielder scores 100 points for catching a fly ball, 75 points for catching the ball on one bounce, 50 for two bounces, and 25 for fielding a grounder cleanly. When a fielder reaches a score of 500, he exchanges places with the batter. With each new batter, the scoring starts over.

## HIT THE BAT

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed: Large paved area or field (the flatter the better), two to 12 players, softball, bat, gloves**

The object of this game is to hit the bat with the ball—rather than hitting the ball with the bat. A player throws the ball up and hits it into the field, where the other players are waiting to catch it. The batter then places his bat on the ground in front of him. The player who catches the ball or retrieves it from the ground then throws or rolls the ball, trying to strike the bat without moving from the spot where the ball fell. If the fielder succeeds in striking the bat, he trades places with the batter. Otherwise, the batter takes another turn.

## KICK BALL

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed: Large playing field; enough players for two teams; playground ball, soccer ball, or volleyball; bases**

The play area is similar to a baseball field, with 45 feet between bases and 30 feet from the pitcher's box to home plate. The pitcher rolls the ball to the "batter," who kicks it. Outs are made when a batter kicks



three fouls, a fielder catches a fly ball, or the runner fails to circle the bases ahead of the ball. The runner must try for a home run. On a fair ball not caught on the fly, the fielder throws the ball to the pitcher, who throws to either the first or third baseman, who then relays it around the bases. Each baseman must be standing on his base before he can pass the ball to the next base. If the batter succeeds in beating the ball around the bases, he scores a run for his team. Three outs make an inning, and nine innings are a game.

## LINE-UP BALL

**Activity Level:** Moderate

**Needed:** Large playing area; enough players for two teams; playground ball, soccer ball, or volleyball; bases

One team takes the field. The pitcher rolls the ball to the first “batter,” who kicks it into the field and runs to the far base 80 to 90 feet from home base and then runs back home. The fielder who retrieves the ball holds it over his head, and all other fielders line up behind him in single file. If the runner gets back home before the line is formed, he scores a run for his team. If the line forms before he reaches home base, he is out. Three outs for a team make an inning.

## MONKEY IN THE MIDDLE

**Activity Level:** Moderate

**Needed:** Medium-sized playing area, three players, playground ball or volleyball

Three players play this game. Choose one to be the Monkey. The other two players stand about 10 feet apart while the Monkey stands between them. The two end players toss the ball back and forth, trying to keep it high enough or moving fast enough so the Monkey can't catch it. If a player fails to catch the ball, the Monkey can scramble for it, or he can intercept it as it is thrown back and forth. If the Monkey gets the ball, he changes places with the player who threw the ball.

## ONE O'CAT

**Activity Level:** Moderate

**Needed:** Large playing area, any number of players, bat, softball, bases

Set up home plate and a first base. One player is the batter; the others are the catcher, the pitcher, and fielders. The batter is out when he makes three

strikes or when a fly or foul ball is caught. When he makes a hit, he must run to first base and return home before the ball is returned to the catcher, who must touch home plate to put him out. When the batter is out, all players move up in rotation. The batter moves out to right field. If a player catches a fly ball, he replaces the batter.

## ONE-PITCH SOFTBALL

**Activity Level:** High

**Needed:** Regular softball diamond, any number of players, bat, softball

This is a very fast game that any number of boys can play. Play it on a regular softball diamond.

- The team in the field has a catcher, four or five infielders, and any number of outfielders. The pitcher is a member of the team at bat. He tries to pitch in such a way that his teammates hit the ball. He does not field a batted ball.
- Each batter gets only one pitch. The batter runs on a fair ball; anything else (foul ball, strike, ball, or whatever) is an out.
- After the third out, the batting team runs to its fielding positions, running in a counterclockwise direction to get from “up to bat” position to “in the field” position. Players must run around the outside of first and/or third base, and if any player fails to do so, all players must go back and run around the bases.
- Here's the catch: As soon as the pitcher and batter are in position, they may start play *whether or not the fielders are ready*.
- Each team establishes its own batting order.

## PASS BALL

**Activity Level:** High

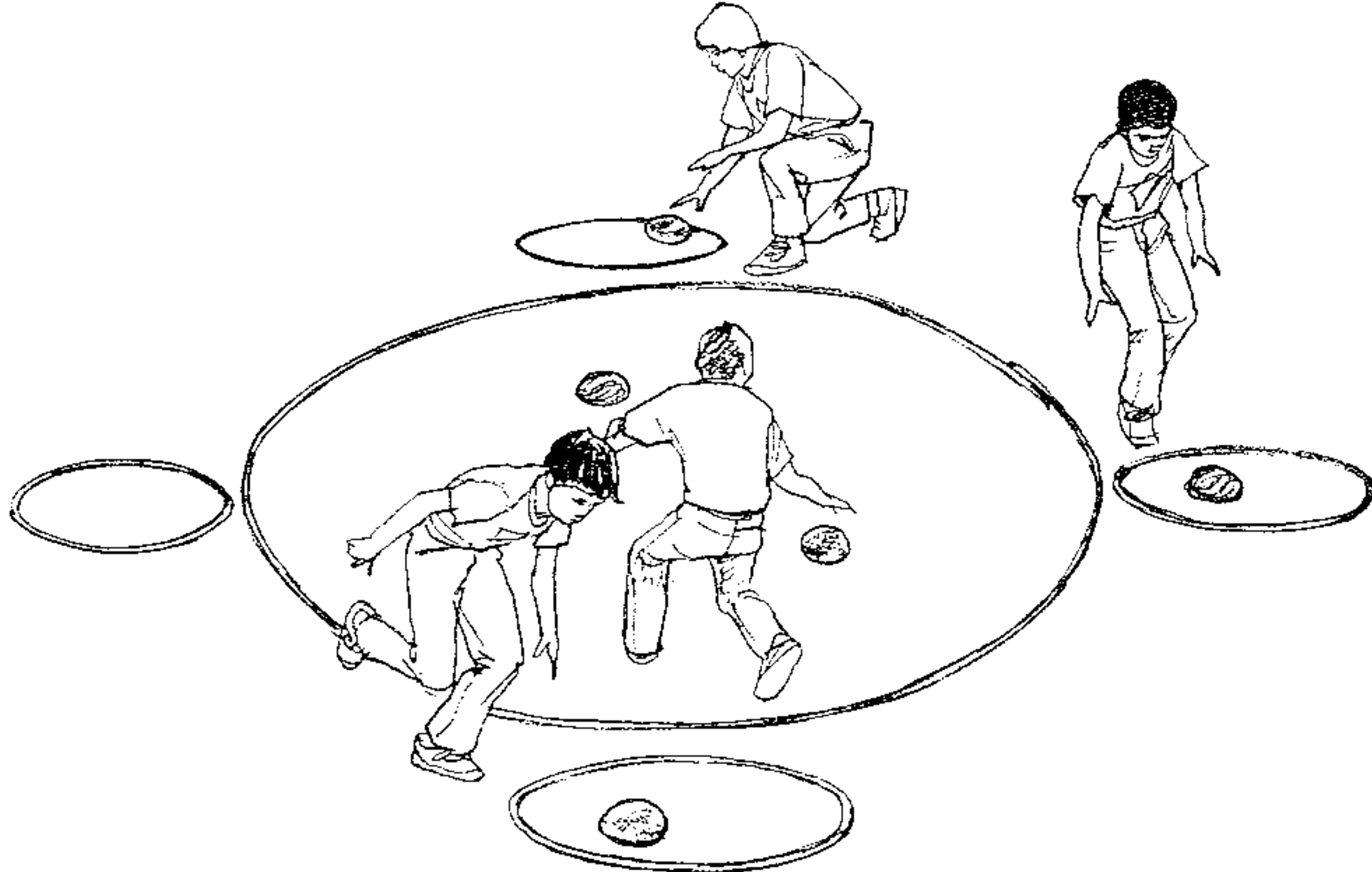
**Needed:** Medium-sized playing area, enough players to form two teams, six playground balls (three for each team)

Two teams form two circles, one inside the other, with boys' backs to one another. Give three balls to each circle. The object is to pass these balls around the circles—one circle passing the balls clockwise and the other counterclockwise—and to keep them going as fast as possible. If a player drops a ball, he is out of the game. The team with the most players at the end of an allotted time wins.

## REMOVING COCONUTS

*Activity Level: Moderate*

**Needed:** Large room or playing area; four players for each group (you may have more than one group); long piece of rope; four hula hoops; five coconuts, oranges, or balls per group



This game rarely has a winner; play it for the fun of it.

With the rope, make a large circle in the middle of the playing area. Place the four hula hoops evenly outside of it. Set five coconuts (or balls) in the center of the large circle. One player starts in each of the four outside circles (hula hoops). The object of the game is for each of the four players to try to get three coconuts into his personal hula hoop. He can carry only one coconut at a time. Players can take coconuts from other players. Players cannot guard their coconuts, and they must place—not throw or roll—the coconuts in their circle. By being aware of the other players, boys can work together to keep the game going until everyone decides to stop.

## SOAKOUT

*Activity Level: High*

**Needed:** Large playing area; enough players for two teams; playground ball, soccer ball, or volleyball; bases

This is a variation of kick ball. The pitcher, using an underhand pitch, rolls the ball to the “batter,” who kicks it and runs all four bases while members of the defensive team try to “soak” him by hitting him with a direct throw. Boys may not relay the ball from player to player.

The batter is out after three strikes, when a fly ball or foul tip is caught, or when he is soaked by a member of the defensive team. After he kicks the ball, he must try a home run but may run the bases in any order. He may halt, dodge, or run any direction

on the playing area but must touch all bases before coming home. If he gets a base on balls, he is not permitted to leave first base until a succeeding batter hits the ball.

## SOCCER BOWLING

*Activity Level: Low*

**Needed:** Medium-sized playing area; any number of players; 10 2-L. plastic bottles, 10 wooden blocks, or 10 paper milk cartons; soccer ball or basketball

Set up 10 objects like bowling pins. Players kick the ball at them from a line 25 to 35 feet away. Keep score as in bowling.

## THREE-PIN BOWLING

*Activity Level: Low*

**Needed:** Large indoor space or level outdoor playing field; three plastic bottles, milk cartons, tin cans, or other items for bowling pins; playground ball

Set up three “pins” in a triangle with the two rear pins a little farther apart than the width of the ball to be used. Draw a foul line with a stick or chalk 20 to 30 feet from the head pin. It also helps to mark the spots where the pins are placed.

In scoring, credit the player four points for knocking down the head pin and three points for either of the back pins. Strikes, spares, and number of frames played are as in regular 10-pin bowling. All other bowling rules apply. To speed the game along, it helps for one of the players to act as pinsetter.

*Variation:* Use beanbags rather than balls, particularly when playing indoors. Beanbags don’t bounce and don’t need to be chased.

## Bicycle Games

**Note:** All boys must wear a bicycle helmet whenever they are riding a bicycle! (Since March 1999, all helmets sold in the United States must be approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission [CPSC]. If boys are using older helmets, make sure they are certified by either ASTM [American Society for Testing and Materials] or the Snell Memorial Foundation [Snell].)



