

Guard Dog



A throwing & catching physical education game



“What kind of Guard Dog are you?”

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"The only source of knowledge is experience"

-Albert Einstein

Introduction:

What is Guard Dog? Guard Dog (GD) is not a single game, but rather a progressive series of 10 throwing and catching games. Guard Dog 1 is simple, GD 3 adds some cooperation and GD 7 is more complex with five positions and play zones. GD 7 is for very large play spaces and older students, like 5th graders. No one grade plays all 10 games, each plays just a few. As you will see, the games are ideal for first through fifth grades due to the fact that it is very active, competitive, fun, exciting, risky, and definitely requires physical skills, teamwork and thinking. Differentiated instruction is added for modification. What more could we ask for?

Origin story:

About twenty years ago, from the time of this writing in 2004, I realized that I needed a much better T & C game to culminate the unit. I was no longer teaching Dodgeball, and was struggling to find an exceptional game to challenge my students' skills. We played modified team handball, with side line players and zones, but the game was slow and students kept getting hit in the face while playing the goalie position. Some students even refused to play goalie. I had personally seen that other PE teachers struggled as well; there was a real need to find a better and exciting T & C game.

I went to work and spent a year thinking, researching, and investigating what would make a good game? **Guard Dog** is the result. In November 2005 I launched the game and taught it to all my students. The year of work paid off. Over the last two decades we never missed the game. I would like to thank the handful of PE teachers that have used my materials and played the game. Thank you for your sharing your positive experiences with me. I am honored by your comments. I am excited to share the game with the rest of the PE world.

Appropriate?

Feel confident in learning Guard Dog is a safe and highly appropriate game, and students are not the targets. There is no elimination and a high activity quotient is a certainty. Full disclosure, for sure, the *Softi* balls may accidentally touch children from time to time, more rarely than you would expect, and the contacts are benign. Incidental ball contacts happen in sports, but it is clearly not the play purpose.

Therefore, as you will see, each individual Guard Dog game fulfills all the Shape America NASPE standards of the important skills of throwing, catching and team cooperation while keeping the exciting opportunity of firing shots at a target, and the joy of blocking these shots. The middle and higher number GD games expand the NASPE standards by instilling off the ball movements, passing and defending. Quality play. There is a GD game for you and your school. You will quickly see, it is your choice what GD game to play, how much you would like to modify it, and how far you delve into Guard Dog.

Contents and Activities:

- **Why are we playing Guard Dog?**
- **Prerequisite skills and concepts**
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- **Teaching Tips**

Shape America Standards



You got this:

Rest assured if you glanced at the following diagrams, all Guard Dog games are fun and easy to teach and it is delightful to see the students discover the physical education experience. All GD games use a simple same basic system and rules, and the beauty of it is each new GD game and structure is a slight progression and challenge. In my career I have yet to find a game that all kids, from 1st –5th grade, simply enjoy so much. My hope is you and your students do as well...

Why are we playing Guard Dog?

- ✓ to practice OH throwing skills in a game
- ✓ to practice catching skills in game
- ✓ to practice OH throwing to target and to teammates
- ✓ to practice defensive skill of blocking shots
- ✓ to practice defensive skill of guarding, blocking or intercepting passes
- ✓ to practice on and off the ball passing and catching in a game

Prerequisite skills and concepts:

- Over hand throwing skills.
- Catching with two hand skills.
- Moving through space effectively and safely.
- Playing introductory games with honesty, sportsmanship and fair play.
- Sharing and caring with equipment (*Softi* balls)
- Playing within the rules and follow basic game rules.
- Knowing the quote and showing the PE policy:
 - *“Why are we playing games?”*
 - *“To practice being honest!”*

Fundamental skills and challenges prior to playing GD:

Throwing and catching programs are needed to learn and develop basic motor patterns, without them there is usually little basic skill and comprehension. As a review there are simple programs used throughout the year to foster sound basic OH throwing and catching skills.

- **Mr./Ms. Wall:** (without assessment booklets)
- **Rebounder:** (with individual booklets)
- **Partner Practice T & C:** informal, brief and T & C with a buddy
- **Partner Cooperative T & C Challenge:** lots of equipment and sequential

All four are progressive, and the programs themselves sequenced throughout the school year. By the time the students reach T & C lead up games, they have considerable fundamental skill. (See T & C section)

Game play: potential lead-up games prior to GD.

As a review, there are several distinct games dedicated to learning T & C with on and off the ball movement. (See T & C section)

- **T & C Collective Score**
- **Have One, Need One**
- **Intensity Lines**
- **Keep Away:** small mini groups/multiple games/Learning Leagues
- **Pass Ball:** three team rotation
- **Football Patterns:** route trees

Facility:

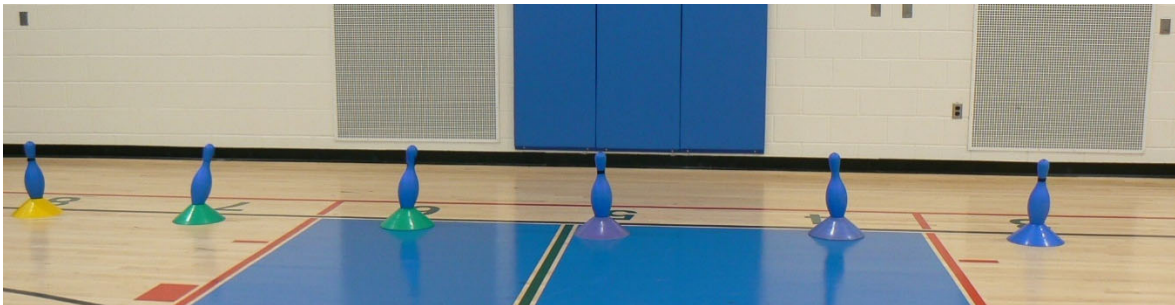
- Typical size gym or multipurpose room.
- Outside play, on a black top is possible.
 - For grades 1-2 classes play across the width of the gym; a smaller game.



GD set-up sideways in the gym
Scoreboard on a stool



GD set-up sideways in the new big gym
 Larger pins (see below) on dome cones
 Using jump ropes for center dividing line
 JR part of the electric fence, is helpful for younger players; *Learner Game*



StrikerPins, larger size, set on small and large dome cones!

- Sideways for grades K-2.

- For grades 3-5 play the typical full length of the gym; a longer more challenging game.
- Use your best judgement on creating sizes of the GD games.
- Various taped lines and traffic cones are needed to create the play zones. For example I pull a long tape one inch line about 12-24 inches from the back walls and write 10-12 tick marks to indicate where the *StrikerPins* are to set. Also pre tape the basic lines for the zones/positions games.

Equipment:

- For simplicity and clarity in the following game description the two teams use **blue** and **red** colors for most games.
- **Scoreboards:** and **blue** and **red** numbers. GOPHER, Great Lakes and Sportime options.



GOPHER Sport *PointPro* GL11-005



Great Lakes Sports *Flip-A-Score* GY153M



Sportime *Deluxe Scorer* #1394127

Highly recommended, durable, folds flat and portable, great for storage

GOPHER Rainbow and MVP Tabletop Scoreboard

For additional games, Learning Leagues, other colors



Rainbow Scoreboard
Offers various team colors
#GL11-340



MVP Tabletop Scoreboard
#GL11-977

Pro Tip: for the Sportime and Great Lakes scoreboard, place the scorersboard on a tall stool, and use a long bungee cord to hold in place atop the stool, work like magic! (See photo above)

- Two sets of pinnies: blue and red. Are needed in the intermediate and advanced game.



- Two-four additional colors pinnies: yellow and green, purple and orange for DI / Learning League play



Pins/targets:

- Two complete sets of Bowling Pins (*StrikerPins*) 10+ for each side; **blue** and **red**
GOPHER Sports *UltraPin*: fantastic pins, used for over a decade, not one broken pin.



#GL45-988



#GL45-984

GOPHER UltraPin Bowling Sets



1/3 larger than a normal pin



JUMBowl Set #GL45-506

- These used to come in blue and red, but now are only available in red. Wrap blue tape around the top and bottom, should do the trick!
 - Extra size assist the target size. (See photos above)

- **Homemade targets:** As discussed on the website, Pringle cans with colored tape works effectively as target. Several teachers have inquired about the best way to make them so they last. My Pringle pins/targets lasted over a decade of constant use and abuse. You can get 60 of them for virtually free-the kids bring them in! 10 for each of the rainbow colors.
 - **Size?** They are available in two sizes. **5 oz.** 9” tall, and **7 oz.** 11.5” tall. I recommend the taller ones, however, they are a tad more difficult to find.



- Place one tennis ball in the bottom for base weight and stuff in newspaper to fill the top. Yes, a tennis ball fits in! Your students can also donate tennis balls and tennis organizations are willing to give up used ones.
- Tape X mark on top of the lid. Holds the lid in place.
- Wrap with 2” floor tape. This is only expense, one roll=10 pins.
- Both fit: Place in milk crates, both sizes fit. Smaller and larger. Organization.



Balls:

As discussed throughout the website the specific ball types makes a difference. Too light it doesn't fly, too heavy and hard, it creates additional safety risk.

- **Volley *Softi*** 6 inch balls (#D-88353) made by Hanus. The Volley *Softi* may be the finest ball available. The balls are lighter, and of course soft like the name says. They are superior to any other brand. In fact these specific balls are the only ones I used with GD. They are difficult to find now, and may not be sold in the USA. (Please notify me if you know of a USA provider.)

Volley brand: made in Germany by Hanus

Set of 6 6 inch low bounce #? \$?



Great Lake Sports: their house brand

Shark Skin Set of 6 6 inch low bounce # SS6SET \$70.00



ULTRA SKIN: made in Sweden by COG

Softi: a tad more firm than other Softi balls, flies straighter and further

Set of 6 6 inch low/medium bounce # G6SET \$80.00



ULTRA SKIN: made in Sweden by COG

Allround: a tad more firmer, for 4th and 5th grade

Set of 6 7 inch medium/higher bounce # G725SET \$120.00



GOPHER Sports: *Dura Coat* their house brand, well made

Squeeze: softer feel and low to medium bounce

Set of 6 6.3 inch low/medium bounce

GL71-652 \$125.00



GOPHER Sports: *Dura Coat* their house brand, well made

Versa: a tad livelier, medium bounce, better for 4th and 5th graders

Set of 6 7 inch medium bounce

GL71-653 \$165.00



- Wall display with various mini posters. The mini posters (included) aid in the different modalities of learning and of course look great hanging on the wall. (See below for print copies)



- Word wall and flash cards with the game specific terms of course assist as well. (See below)

Skills and concepts practiced and learned with GD games:

- **Physical/Psychomotor:**
 - Throwing and catching
 - Passing to teammate
 - Fundamental movements
 - Dodging, blocking
- **Thinking/Cognitive**
 - Terminology with word wall/flash cards
 - Counting, decision making about on and off the ball moving tactics, field/ zone and invasion game strategy
 - Learning to play various positions, in zones
 - Following directions, playing with rules and procedure
 - Scoring and using a flip type scoreboard.
- **Social/Affective**
 - Character education skills such as: cooperating with teammates, opponents and teacher, developing social abilities to communicate, win and lose games with honor, trustworthiness, honesty, following rules and safety. More on this.
- **Fitness/Exercise**
 - Interval cardiovascular and muscular endurance by quick bursts of intense action followed by brief periods of rests for recovery. All students will get a great workout in this game as discussed in the Fitness section. Test GD with heart rate monitors and pedometers and see the results.

Word Wall and Flash Cards:

Example of GD game terms:

Opposition, offense, defense, goalie,
defender, midfield, forward, attack, on
the ball, off the ball, pass, block,
intercept, *StrikerPin*, clear, advancing,
zone, lines, scoreboard, penalty box

Theme:

A theme adds impact, purpose, fun and adventure to games. Furthermore by adding a theme, the instructor is able to teach more than just the game into the general school curriculum in unique ways. GD is a cool game with or without a theme. With Guard Dog, I don't use an elaborate theme other than a brief discussion of what is a guard dog, etc. One of my students asked, "*Are we protecting our bones!*" Hilarious... For the youngest pupils, I will from time to time ask to hear each team's growl before start play. It is a little scary though...

Basic Rule: See enclosed mini poster. (Adaptive for special needs)

Rules are critical to the success of PE games. Without them we have ambiguity. I feel rules must be meticulously written, posted, previewed, checked for understanding, and when needed, reviewed for each game I teach. Throughout the game experience and in game closure I will positively challenge them to follow detailed rules. This is the last thing that I omit in my teaching.

On a fairly complex game like GD with lots of balls zones, pins, scoring and movement if we do not have excellent behavior and honesty we have nothing but a mess. Therefore, each child, in grade 2-5, receives a paper copy to read and preview before play.

Fortunately many of the rules are similar to others games we play, making comprehension smooth. Kids understand quickly the game system and structure.

Actors Studio

The best teachers are excellent actors. When previewing the rules, physically dramatize the information and the kids will know it cold. Role play some of the rules with students. (See mini poster rules below/printables)

Basic GD Game Rules:

Grades 1 & 2, enough rules to get the game started...

1. Protect yourself and face/head at all times.
2. Play on feet, no dropping to knees, falling down or diving for ground balls.
3. Ground ball, first to touch the ball gets it.
4. One or two balls in players possession at a time
5. Play only in your zone. Do not step over the center line, electric fence.
6. You may move with the ball in your zone.
7. Players reset **StrikerPins** during the game.
8. When you score, record your point on the scoreboard. You earned it!

Advanced GD Game Rules:

Grades 3 – 5, complete rules, incidentally teach them as needed

1. Protect yourself and face/head at all times.
2. Play on feet, no dropping to knees, falling down or diving for ground balls.
3. One step & arm rule = No touching another player.
4. **Cold Defense:** No reaching in, but you may reach to sides and up to defend passes.
5. No bumping into or over backs of others to catch or intercept passes.
6. Ground ball, first to touch the ball gets it.
7. Play only in your zone.
8. You may move with the ball in your zone.
9. Only the Attack player shoots and may score; other players are not allowed to shoot on goal. Forwards, Midfielders, Defenders, or Goalies do not shoot, they pass.
10. Only the Goalie is allowed in the Goalie Zone.
11. Balls are rolled to Goalies after each rotation.
12. Goalies reset **StrikerPins** during the game.
13. When you score, record your point on the scoreboard. You earned it!
14. Do not run over to the scoreboard carrying a ball. Drop it on the floor or toss it to teammate.
15. Player may only score one point at a time on the scoreboard. (Even if one shot knocks down two **StrikerPins** on one throw.)

How we play Guard Dog:

Guard Dog Play Procedure:

1. **Unit prep time:** Preparing this game for the first time may take several hours or more. Pulling the equipment, taping the lines, making the tick marks, hanging the posters and signs all takes time and is a necessity.
2. **Daily set-up:** Each morning set-up the game before class if at all possible. Using taped lines and small traffic cones to separate the various zones has worked wonders with my students. However, do not use the traffic cones in front of the goalie zones or they will block shots.
3. Introduce basic safety rules and procedures.
4. Explain consequences for rule infractions, rough and dangerous play. Penalty points or bonus points can be used. Younger students, in K-1st grades, will need to revisit the purpose of the center dividing line, jump rope and traffic cones-the electric fence. Also, it will be necessary to pre-teach them where and how the **StrikerPins** are placed.
5. Show the students the mini poster and diagram of which game they will play. Briefly explain the positions, zones and how they will rotate. Younger grades start with the **Learner** and **Test** games, the other grades begin with GD 1. All classes play the game until it is time for them to **graduate** to the next progressive game. Grades 3-5 start with GD 1, then skip to an intermediate game like GD 3. Older students do not play GD 2. Keep it simple, let the kids play a more simple short “*practice game*” and then they “*graduate*” to the next more challenging game. After that we are off and flying.
6. For the older students, remind them how the scoreboard works-only allowed to flip a single point even if they were to knock down two pins in one shot. A logistical note here: I set the scoreboard on a stool, place it on one side of the game, in the middle and stand behind it during games. (See photos)
7. Also by standing behind the scoreboard I can assist the kids with flipping the correct score, assuring fairness while managing the class.
8. Divide the students into two heterogeneous teams and have them wear the proper colored pinnies.
9. Structural Differentiation or no differentiation? (See variation/progression below) No differentiation works well too. A theory I have about this, the older they are the more *structural differentiation* is educationally useful. For 1st and 2nd graders it is probably not needed in this game, for 5th graders I recommend it. For the middle grade games, I have played it both ways with good results. When in doubt, using **structural differentiation/Learning Leagues** makes GD a better educational experience. (See last section)
10. **Starting positions:** Place the students into starting positions/zones and if applicable the leagues they will play. Briefly show the students which direction to pass and shoot. Even fifth graders can be tad confused at first. Goalies (GD 3-7) always start by passing the balls.
11. **Balls:** About 1/3 ball per player ratio is a good baseline percentage. More balls in any games creates more action, less balls in a game requires better passing and tactical skills, not to mention more player patience. Experiment to find the correct ratio for each GD game and grade. If in doubt, I always err with an extra ball or two.
12. **Practice game:** Play a “*practice game*.” In my mind a “*practice game*” is the first game experience. It’s an opportunity to play with teacher stops and incidental instruction when necessary to reinforce the basic rules. Each practice game will take only between 5 minutes or so. During the first practice games I really stress to the kids that they must play with

complete honesty/trustworthiness. This means not bending the rules. Challenge the students to play as absolutely and utterly by the rules as possible. Compliment and encourage them at every opportunity possible for this and you will hardly need to use penalty points.

13. **Rotate:** In most games players rotate to a new position. After time a short period of a couple minutes, pupils need a rest period, and they are enticed to play a different position. Rotating (switching position) is always from the goalie towards attack position. For example in **GD 4:** Goalie to Defender, Defender to Midfield, Midfield to Attack, Attack “*goes all the way back*” to Goalie. During rotation, balls are rolled not thrown, to the goalies if playing GD 2-7. When rotating for the first time, it may be necessary to assist the learners through it and to their new positions and zones.
14. **Real game:** A “*real game*.” After the practice game(s) has proven the student have it down cold and are really ready to rumble. For a real game, two specific teacher behaviors occur in my gym.
 - **Discovery:** I get “*real quiet*,” much less talking when we play a “*real game*” and use less incidentally instruction and implore more discovery learning. Students learn through internalized game experience and my personal philosophy has always been, I generally like students to discover their own problem-solving and tactical issues of games. I feel that it is their job to do this and truly the joy of learning and life itself. Why would I take that peak experience away from them? I may occasionally prompt them with questions, but they do most of the fun discovery.
 - **Penalty points:** Breaking rules or not playing with honesty. I expect complete honesty and following rules, therefore, when needed, I will quickly deduct penalty points. Again this theory is very powerful, and if you only remember and use one thing from this document, this is it: no warnings and give penalty points.
15. **Outgrown:** “*Boys and girls, you have outgrown this game and it is now time to graduate to*”... (The next GD game!) Once the students have played and rotated through all the position/zones of a GD game and develop some proficiency, it is time to up the ante. Show them the new mini poster and game and explain the new positions/zones and rules. Quickly move the players into their new position, quick check for understanding and boom. Play ball! Nothing to it...
16. **Secret Play Plan (SPP).** Also it is a fantastic idea to call a halftime and ask the kids to form a team huddle and discuss tactics and make a SPP. This is their ***reflection time***. What kid wouldn’t like this? It is wonderful to see and hear their plans and see how they will modify their play. As teacher we need to contemplate some facts too. We need a mini reflection time. **Teacher Play Plan (TPP).** Such as the size of the zones, how many balls are in play, team balance and modify accordingly.
17. **How did it go?** After SPP, it is interesting to see how the kids have solved the tactics and game problems. Are they now communicating better, moving better on and off the ball, passing sideways and with angles, etc.? How is each team’s defense? Did they switch-up game player positions? All great stuff!
18. **Teacher stuff.** Speaking about stuff, if one team is getting ahead too much, by all means we can stop play and repair things, like switching players to balance out teams, suggest throwing or moving techniques. Also do not hesitate to end a game. *Congratulations red team you won by three points. Blue are you ready to win this next game?* Shorter play times with more rotations and shorter games, not long drawn out ones seem to work well.

I close out the game with a couple character education statements like. *“I was so proud of your trustworthiness and fairness. I saw so many instances of players following the rules. This was just a wonderful game for me to watch. All the players played so helpfully... I couldn’t believe my eyes when saw Johnny, helping...”* You get it. I end with the score, if at all. *The final scores today are...* By the time we get to the score(s) the student’s minds have drifted pass just winning and losing, and to the overall peak educational experience just lived. One glorious consciousness enjoyed together.

19. **Next class.** *Boys and girls, this is what to expect for our next game...* A fairly complex game like this deserves the time investment of more than one class period. Called distributed programming/practice. Students need additional time to practice all the potential skills and concepts through play. Some teachers will assign permanent teams some recommend new teams each new class. If the games were close, then I generally keep teams for several games, but never the entire remaining time of the GD experience/unit. (I have played the GD for several weeks.) A benefit to keeping same teams is that saves some time getting kids into the teams and it adds addition boost of team spirit. Also, kids of course can practice passing, catching and tactical issues at recess and for PE homework. Either way, new or same teams your students will relish the opportunity to play again.

The following Guard Dog mini posters are useful wall displays and teaching guides. It nearly impossible to instruct and play the game without this information.

They are meant for color printing on heavy duty, quality cardstock paper and laminating.

Included:

- Game notes/helpful hints/Pro Tips
- Diagram
- Player positions/jobs

Guard Dog-LG

The Learning Game: first steps...

1 Zone and 1 Position

Court Player

Grades K - 2

GD-LG is the *Learning Game*, the discovery and teaching game. It is dedicated to new players and very young students to game play.

Game goal: in all Guard Dog games is the throw to and knock down pins opponent's pins, while defending your team pins.

The *purpose* of the Learning Game is for players to learn very basic rules and apply them as honestly as possible. Framing the game.

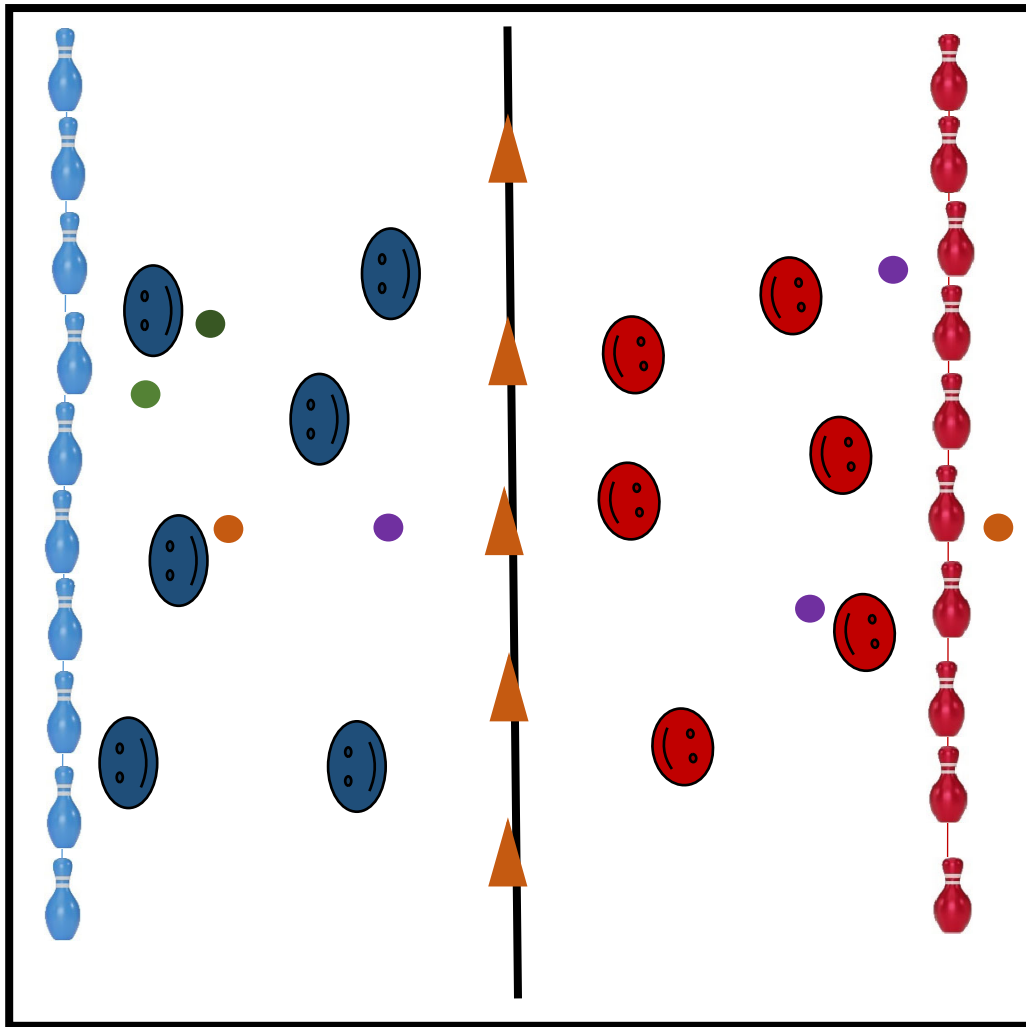
No scoring by the students or teacher at this stage. The sole focus is on being crystal clear on the very, very basic rules and playing with personal honesty:

- Playing on your side. Honor the electric fence. They don't cross over center line-jump ropes and cones are very helpful creating the EF. (See photo above)
- Playing on feet, not knee sliding, diving or fighting for a ball.
- OH Throwing at opponent's pins.
- Defending pins.
- Resetting pins.

Frequent stops with quick refinement, re-teaching is common in the *Learning Game*. Be very positive and encouraging. Focus on potentiality.

Once the students are showing very good basic rule following they quickly progress to the next game-*Guard Dog Tester*.

Guard Dog-LG



Guard Dog-LG

Guard Dog-LG

The Learning Game: first steps...



1 Zone and 1 Position

Court Player

Grades K - 2



What kind of Guard Dog player are you?

Court Player: offense and defense

- Play on your side of the court/game (electric fence)
- Safety: play on your feet, no diving, sliding for balls.
 - (Sharing is caring-share the balls)
- Throw and knock down other team's pins!
- Throw with OH proper skill. Point, step and throw.
- Guard your pins.
- Yes: you may block and catch the balls.
- Reset pins on X marks, after the game is over.
- No scoring, focus on rules and honesty.

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog *Tester*

The test game!

1 Zone and 1 Position

Court Player

Grades K - 2

GD *Tester* is big step up from the Learning Game both in following rules and playing skills.

We use a fantastic motivating device. The **Scoreboard!** Oh no, not how you think it functions.

The teacher demonstrates how the scoreboard works. Mr. / Ms. Gym is the only one who flips the scoreboard, *by taking away points*; yep, the instant a mistake is made by a team member. For any broken rule or unsafe play, a point is taken away!

Start each team starts with the same amount of points.

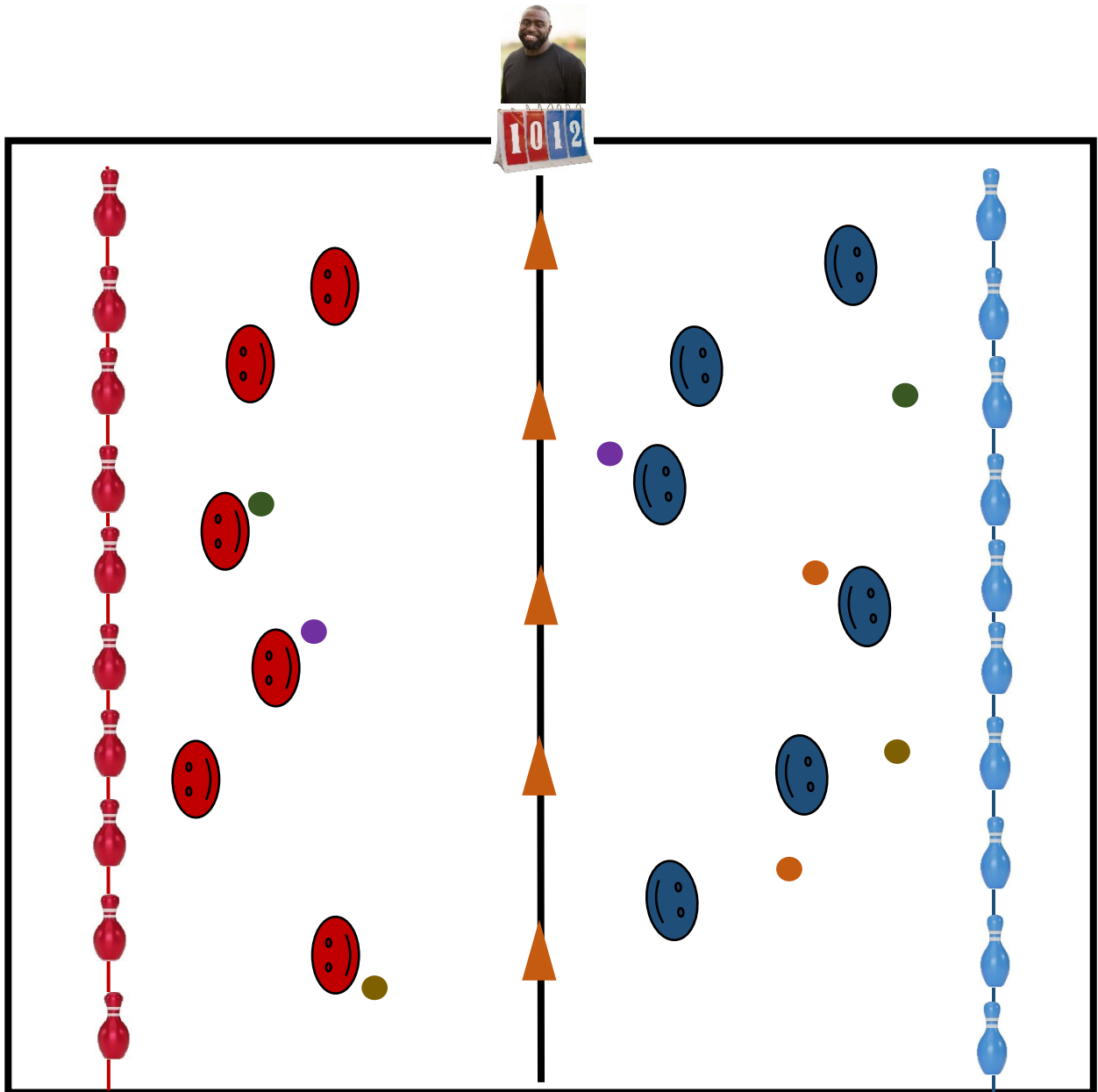
Also, the players progress to a new job of resetting the pins during the game, not at the end game, like in the Learning Game.

DG *Tester* stresses the student's ability to follow very simple game rules. It has proven a game changer in the learning *quest*, by having a *test*!

Play lots of frequent **GD *Tester*** games. Use frequent stops and refinement/reteaching. With GD *Tester*, even very young players will demonstrate astonishing rule following and safe game play ability.

Once the students are playing rock solid, basic rule following, they quickly progress to the next game-***Guard Dog 1.***

Guard Dog *Tester*



Guard Dog *Tester*

Guard Dog *Tester*



The test game!

1 Zone and 1 Position

Court Player

Grades K - 2



What kind of Guard Dog player are you?

Court Player: offense and defense

Same rules as the *Learning Game*, now...

- Each team starts with the same points on the score board.
- For any rule or dishonesty, a point is taken away by the teacher.
- No scoring points by players, points taken away by the teacher; focus on rules and honesty.
- Reset pins on X marks, during the game.
- Sharing is caring rule; only one or two balls in hands at a time. Share extra balls with teammates.

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 1

The fun game!

1 Zone and 1 Position

Court Player

Grades K-5

GD 1 is a big step in young players development. For the older students (grades 3-5) it is the initial and simplest game, but it has value and it is truly super fun and exciting.

For the younger grades, this is the first game when they learn how to score points and flip the scoreboard, *self-score*, they love it! Math time!

Players have several simultaneous roles:

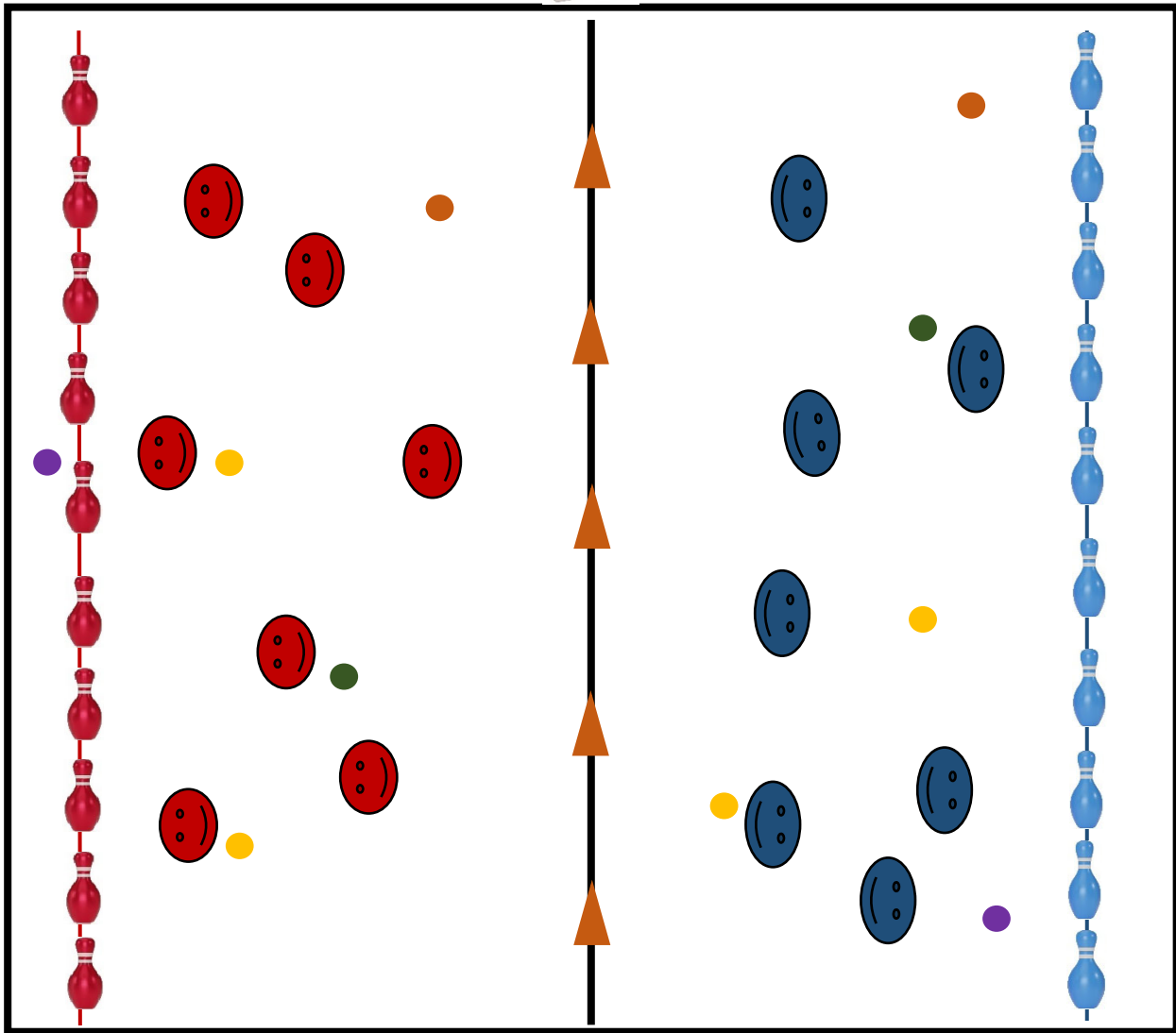
- Offense shooting at pins/targets
- Defending pins
- Resetting pins
- Sharing the balls
- Scoring the point on the scoreboard, flipping the point

Throwing on the move (forward approach) is one of the excellent benefits of Guard Dog 1.

Thinking skills of throwing on the move:

- Students should not just quickly react and aimlessly throw from where they first gain possession of the ball, like in the back of the court, but choose to move up closer up to the center dividing line.
- Fire the ball at a specific *StrikerPin*. What exact pin are you aiming towards? Do you see it? Now fire at it!
- They may choose to throw at angles, not just at the pin directly in front of them. Angle shots work effectively.
- And, may need to move side to side for an open shot.

Guard Dog 1



Guard Dog 1

Guard Dog 1

The fun game!



1 Zone and 1 Position

Court Player

Grades K-5



What kind of Guard Dog player are you?

Court Player: offense and defense

Same rules as the ***GD Tester***, now...

- Shoot on *StrikerPin* to score points (offense)
- Record score, on scoreboard
- Block and catch shots. (defense)
- Reset *StrikerPins* during the game
- Pass to teammate
- For any rule or dishonesty, a point is taken away by the teacher.

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 1 *Trainer**

The Trainer Game

2 Zones and 1 Position

Court Player

Grades K-2

GD Trainer is a way motivate younger players to develop court awareness-gamesense. It's a game changer, assisting players learning offense and defensive play position/zones. "*Where is the attack zone? Where is the goalie zone?*" Therefore, for younger students, an incentive plan is need for several players still throwing wildly from the back court.

Set up in each court a dividing line with a few smaller cones on each court separating the attack and goalie/defensive zones. (See diagram)

New rule: Players are now *required* to throw from the front (attack zone) zone of the court. If a student is seen throwing from the back court, goalie zone, like in **GD Tester**, a penalty point is earned for the team. One point gone...Needless to say, very motivating!

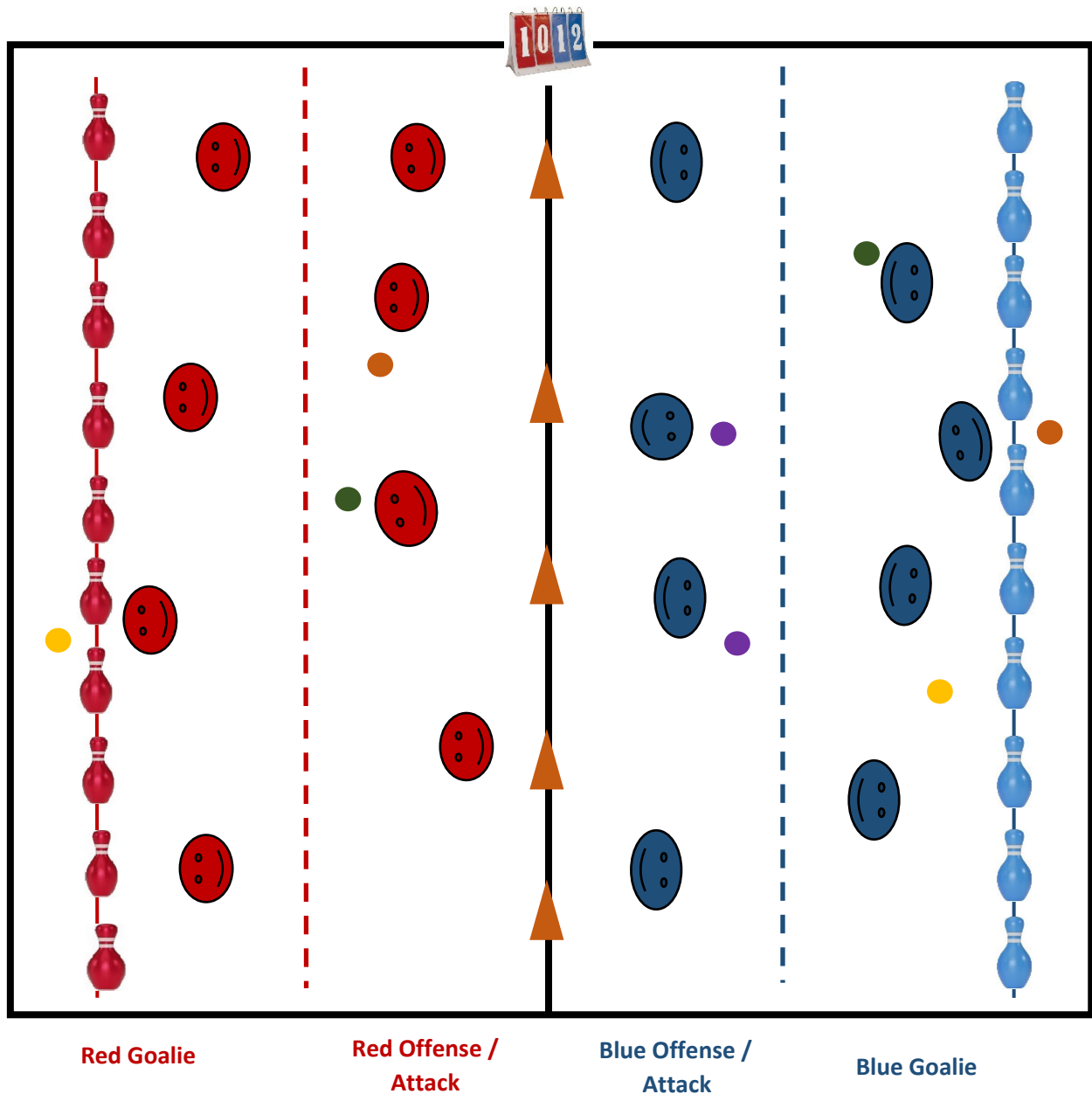
With **GD Trainer** game, there is clear tactical awareness/gamesense to the different court positions/zones player make. With this knowledge and with practice, they can now focus better OH throwing skills.

Five progressive skills to moving forward towards center line and throwing:

- Level 0:** Novices pick up the ball from anywhere, often in the goalies zone and wildly and aimlessly throw to the towards opponents court. No pin in mind. No oppositional step. Sometimes the wrong throwing hand. Wild throw.
- Level 1:** Beginners walk up, stop, turn sideways, close legs, point, oppositional step and throw. Showing they are not just throwing wildly the instant they get the ball and certainly with the incorrect step. Walk up, stop, turn sideways, point step and throw.
- Level 2:** Advanced beginners gallop up toward the dividing line with the ball in a cocked firing position (like a quarterback moving up in the pocket) gallop step and fire. Pointing at a pin, galloping forwards. Gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, point step and throw.
- Level 3:** Intermediate throwers run up, gallop steps and throw with a more continuous fluid seamless motion. Run up, turn sideways, gallop, gallop, point step and fire!
- Level 4:** Advanced players with mature skills run-up while performing an aggressive hop and gallop step and power throw that aids in accuracy and pace. (Like an outfielder throwing to home plate) Run, power hop, big step and fire!

*Adapted game: **Battle-Ball/Bombardment**, *Games*, J. Bancroft, 1937, pgs. 466-471

Guard Dog 1 *Trainer*



Guard Dog 1 *Trainer*

Guard Dog 1 *Trainer**

The Trainer Game



1 Zones and 2 Positions

Court Player

Grades K-2



What kind of Guard Dog player are you?

Court Player: offense and defense

Same rules as the GD 1, now...

- Transition from goalie/defensive zone to attack zone/offensive zone.
- Shoot from the attack zone
 - Walk up, turn sideways, point, step and shoot
 - Gallop, gallop, gallop, point step and shoot
- For any rule or dishonesty, a point is taken away by the teacher.

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 2

The first passing game!

2 Zones and 2 Positions

Grades 1 & 2

GD 2 is the first two position/zone game and introduces offensive/attack and defensive/goalie positions. Young students are unaware of it. Not anymore.

The positions/zones require Goalies to pass the ball to their Attack teammates and not wildly fire the ball from the Goalie position to the opponents *StrikerPins*.

Also Attackers need to remember to turn around and catch these passes.

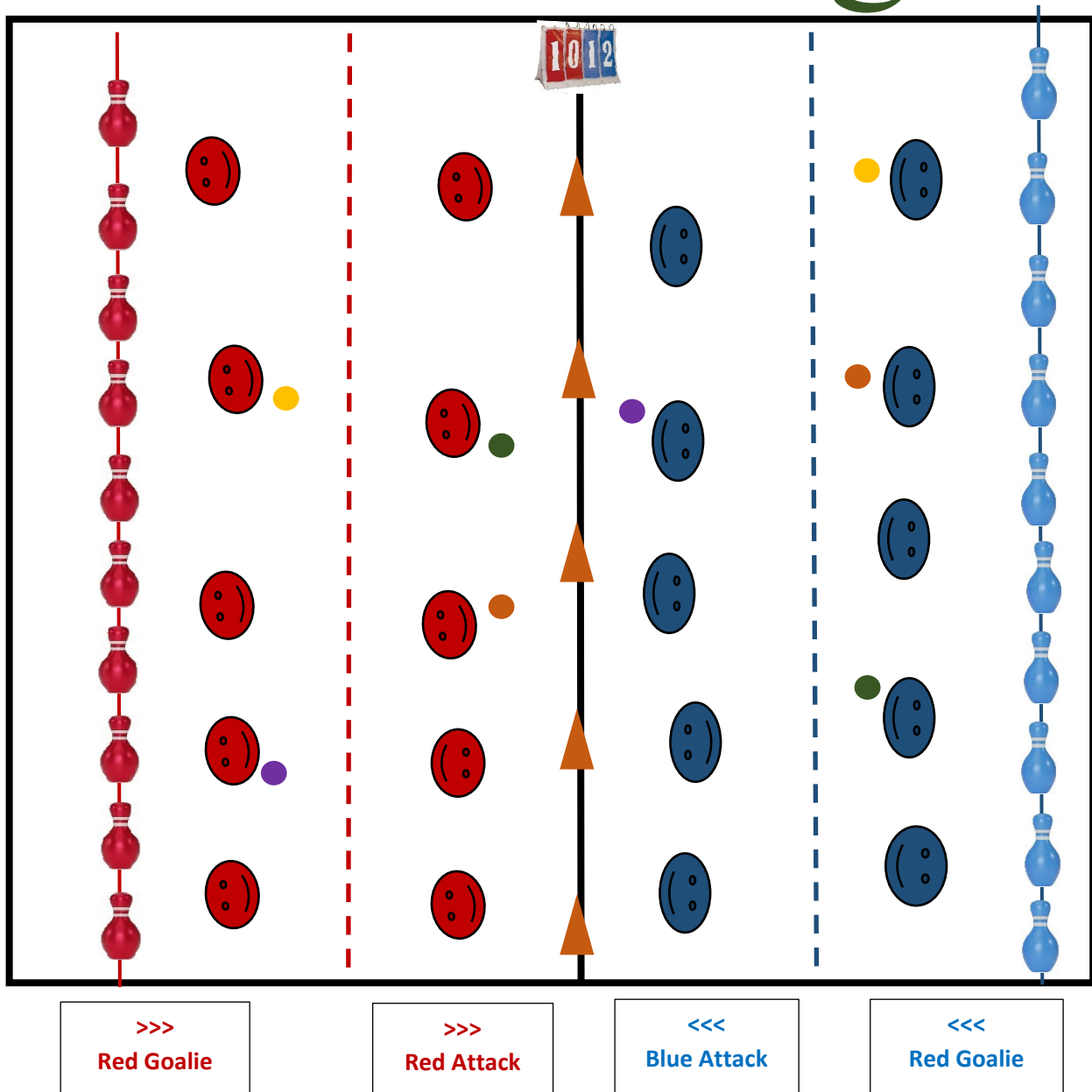
Clear teammate verbal communications greatly helps.

Rotation or switching position, from Attack to Goalie is obviously easy even for younger grades.

However with two positions, good structure and systems in place, all players show patience with scoring. **GD 2** becomes more tactical and defensive than **GD 1**.

Frequent rules refinement and re-teaching is needed. For example, Goalies must remain in their Goalie box and not step out to pick up a ball.

Guard Dog 2



Guard Dog 2

Guard Dog 2

The first passing game!



2 Zones and 2 Positions

Grades 1 & 2



What kind of Guard Dog player are you?

Same rules as the GD 1 *Trainer*, now...

Goalie Player:

- Block and catch shots
- Reset *StrikerPins*
- Pass to Attacker teammates (Do not shoot)

Attack Player:

- Shoot on *StrikerPins*
- Record score on the scoreboard
- Block shots
- Pass/hand-off balls to teammate Attacker

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 3*

Adding interceptions!

2 Zones and 2 Positions

Grades 2-5

With 2 positions and zones, and being separated by an opponent, Goalies are now required to make quality high arching passes to their Attackers or the ball will be intercepted. (This is why partner passing is such an important drill.)

Attackers are closer to than in GD 1 & 2 but being able catch the ball and shoot to score is a challenge. Attackers flip the scoreboard on each score.

Goalies do not shoot or score points.

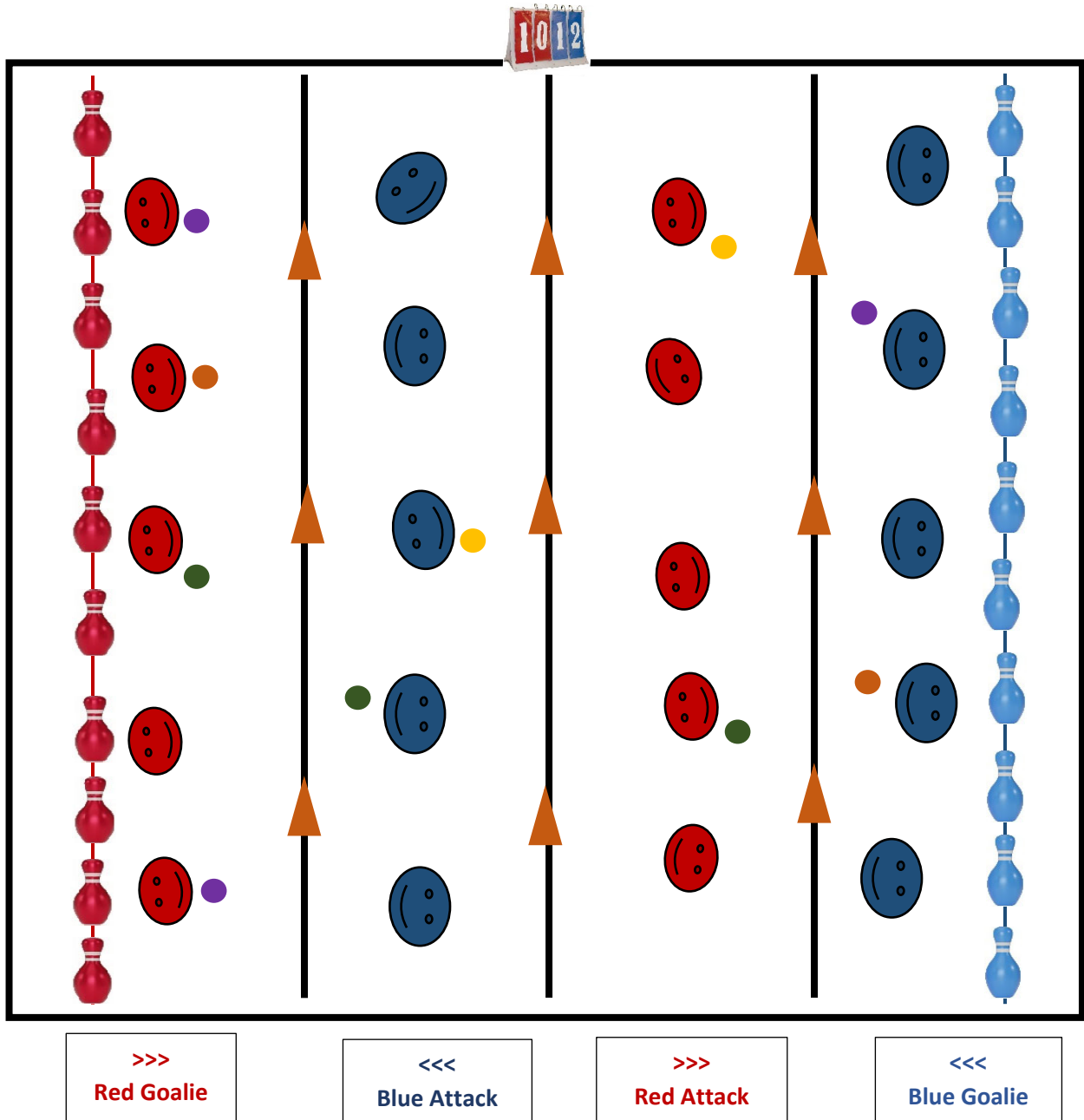
Rotate/switch player positions every couple minutes.

If younger players are playing GD 3 make sure the game is not played too long. Sideways in the gym is appropriate. Grades 4 & 5 are recommended playing it lengthwise in the gym.

*Adapted game: **EndBall**, *Games*, J. Bancroft, 1937, pgs. 522-524

*Adapted game: **End Zone/End Ball**, *Lead-up Games to Team Sports*, 1964, Blake/Volp, pgs. 13 & 144

Guard Dog 3*



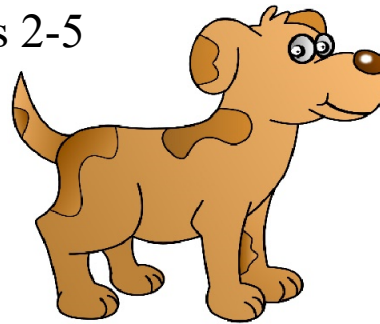
Guard Dog 3

Guard Dog 3*

Adding interceptions!

2 Zones and 2 Positions

Grades 2-5



Same rules as the GD 2, now...

Goalie Player:

- Block and catch shots
- Reset *StrikerPins*
- Pass to Attacker teammates (Do not shoot)

Attack Player:

- Shoot on *StrikerPins*
- Record score on the scoreboard
- Block shots and intercept passes
- Pass/hand-off balls to teammate Attacker

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 4

The clearing game!

3 Zones and Positions

Grades 3-5

From GD 3, we progress to GD 4 that teaches the concept clearing and advancing the ball down a court/field in an organized manner.

It is a popular GD game, due to the fact so many different students, grades 3-5, can play it.

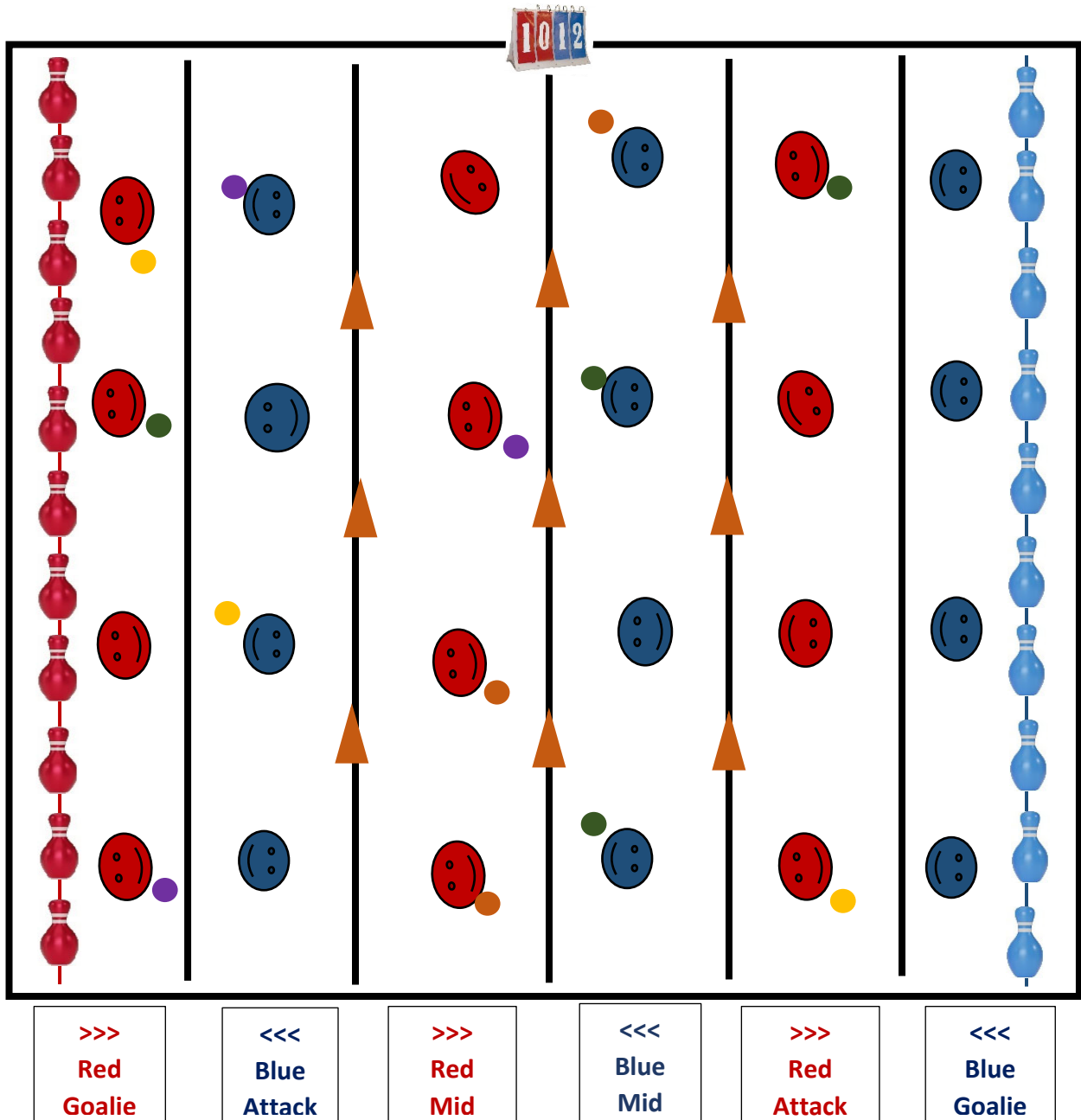
Kids get to play all three positions/zones and they find it fun and interesting. For students in 3rd grade it necessary to assist them through the first several rotations. Assist one team at a time until they all get the rotation down cold.

Goalies make accurate throws to the Midfielders. Mids make accurate throws to the Attackers. Attackers need to have quicker movement to get open for passes and to set up for clear shots. The zones are a little smaller.

Remind the Attackers to run fast to the scoreboard and hustle back into the game.

The teacher/TA can assist the Attacker in flipping the scoreboard.

Guard Dog 4



Guard Dog 4

Guard Dog 4

The clearing game!

3 Zones and 3 Positions

Grades 3-5

What kind of Guard Dog player are you?

Same rules as the GD 3, now...

Goalie Player:

- Block and catch shots
- Reset *StrikerPins*
- Pass to Attacker teammates (Do not shoot)

Midfield Player

- Catch passes from Goalie
- Pass to Attack (Do not shoot)
- Block or intercept passes
- Pass to hand-off to other mids

Attack Player:

- Shoot on *StrikerPins*
- Record score on the scoreboard
- Block shots and intercept passes
- Pass/hand-off balls to teammate Attacker

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 5

Off the ball movement!

3 Zones, 1 Shared, 3 Positions

Grades 4 & 5

GD 5 is the first game to have students from both teams share a zone, but only one shared zone in the game.

Only the single center, Midfield zone, has opponents from both teams, sharing the Midfield zone.

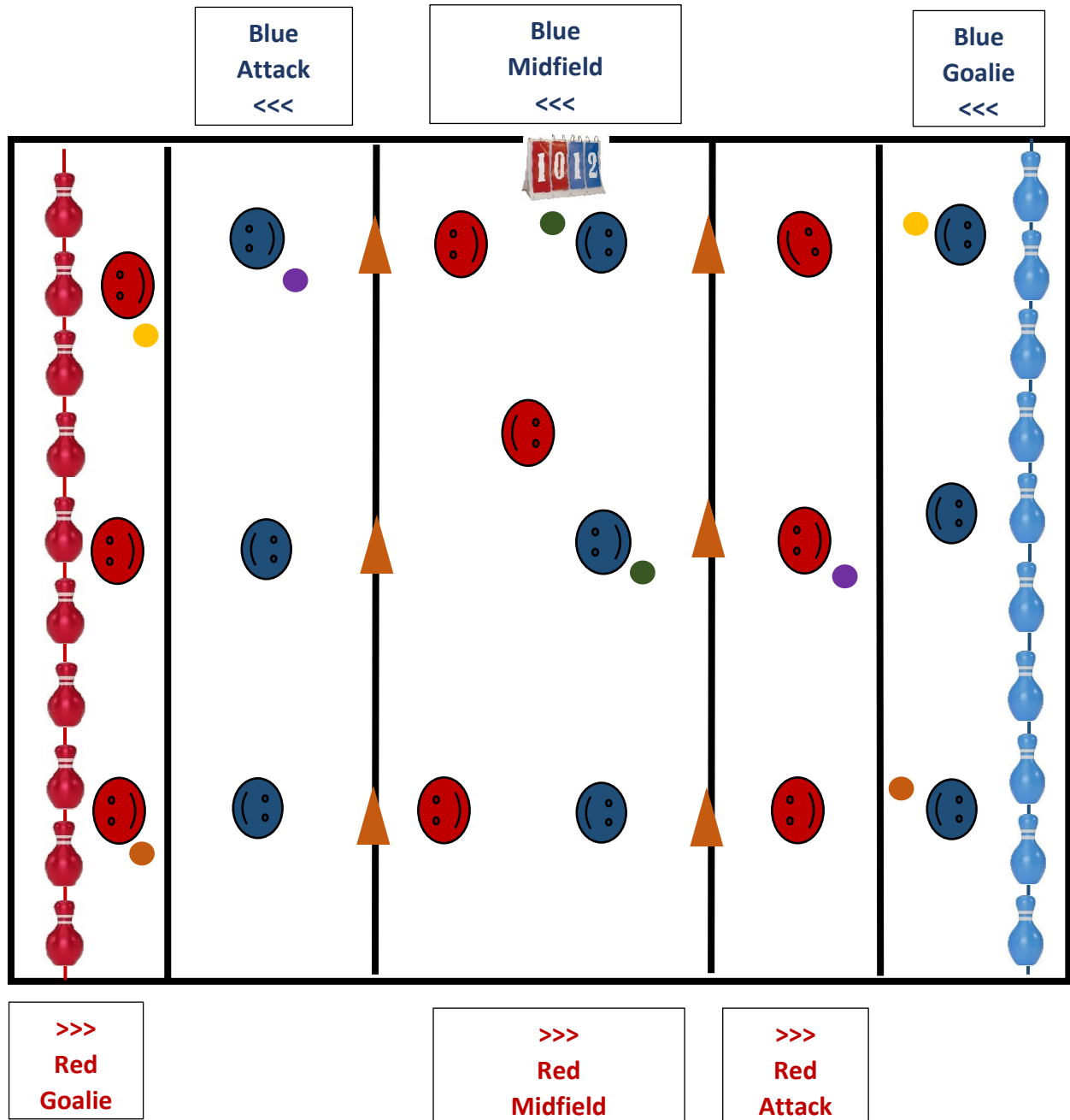
It naturally produces more competition for quality passing and catching to teammates. Reteaching / reintroducing the personal **cold defense**, policy of one-step space rule and hands to the sides learned in ***Keep Away*** is critical for safety.

Goalies find it is more difficult to complete a pass to the Mids, and for Mids to pass to Attacks. Once Attacks gains ball possession, a shot is often made. Consequently, allowing more scoring opportunities for the Attackers. Teammates must communicate and cooperate clearing and advancing the ball to the Attack Zone!

Goalies throw to Mids, Mids throw to Attack, Attack shoot and score!

The teacher/TA can assist the Attackers on flipping the scoreboard.

Guard Dog 5



Guard Dog 5

Guard Dog 5

Off the ball movement!



3 Zones, 1 Shared, 3 Positions

Grades 4 & 5



Same rules as the GD 4, now...

Goalie Player:

- Block and catch shots
- Reset *StrikerPins*
- Pass to Mids (Do not shoot)

Midfield Player:

- Catch passes from Goalies
- Pass to Attacks (Do not shoot)
- Guard passes, block or intercept passes
- Pass or hand-off to other Mids

Attack Player:

- Shoot on *StrikerPins*
- Record score on the scoreboard
- Block shots and intercept passes
- Pass/hand-off balls to teammate Attackers

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 6

*On and off the ball movement,
clearing the ball!*

3 Shared Zones and 4 Positions

Grades 4 & 5

We transition, from GD 5 with only one shared Midfield Zone to GD 6 that now has three *shared* zones/positions, except the Goalie zone/position.

Players concentrate to systematically pass, clearing and advancing the balls up the court, zone to zone while simultaneously defending passes and their *StrikerPins*.

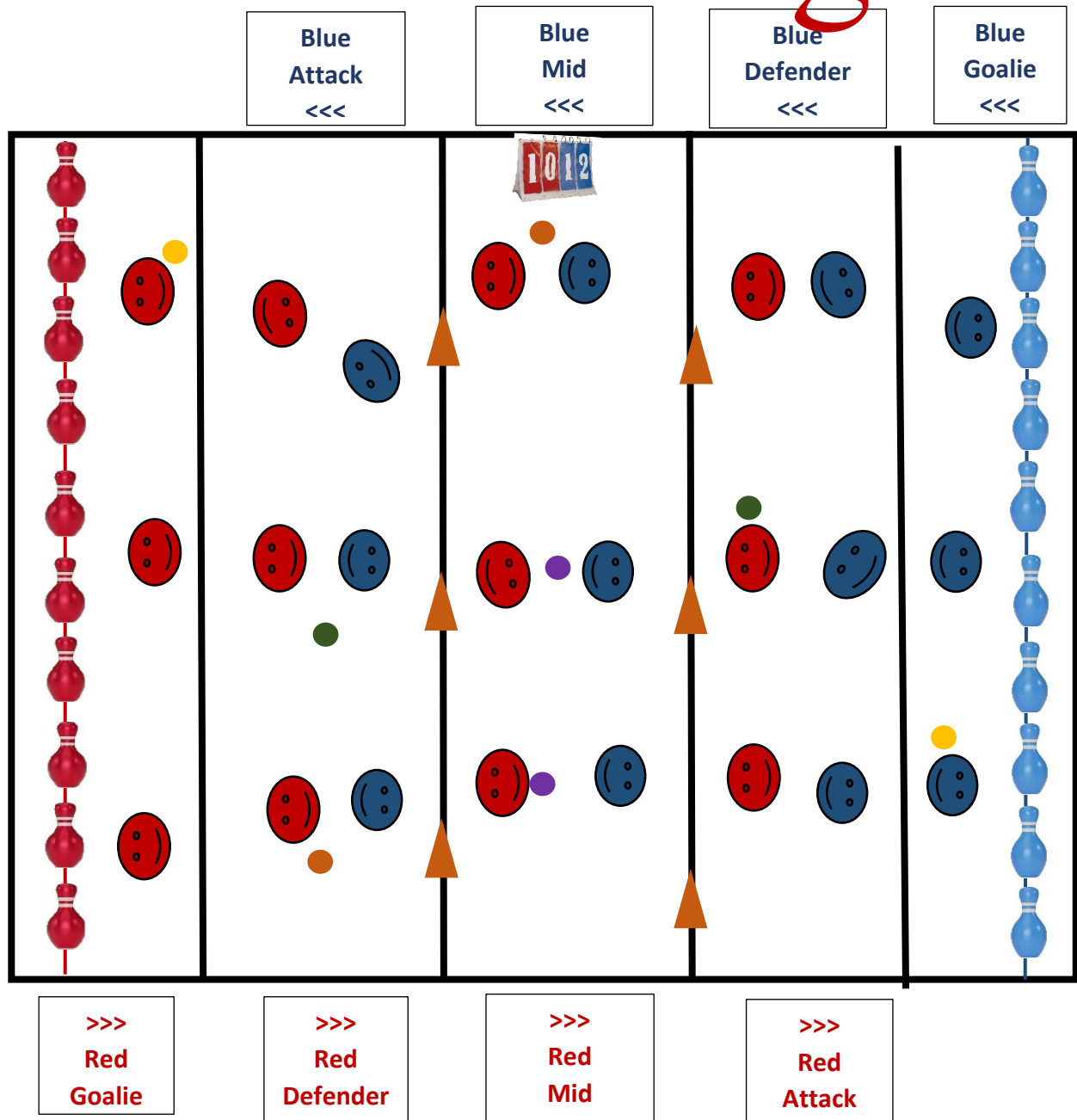
Goalies pass to Defender, Defender pass to Mids, Mids pass to Attack, Attack shoot and score! Things are heating up.

We continue with the rule that only the Attackers may score to proactively ensure good quick precise passing and catching and prevent the Midfielders, Defenders and Goalies from wasting optimal ball possession and firing wild shots.

There's one potential problem, now with four zones, there's less players in each position and after an Attacker scores and runs to the scoreboard, this leaves the team down one critical Attacker. Kids just call out, "*Got one Mr. / Ms. Gym,*" and the teacher/TA flips the score for them.

Experiment with GD 6 & 7 to assist the Attacker to remain in the game after a score.

Guard Dog 6



Guard Dog 6

Guard Dog 6

*On and off the ball movement,
clearing the ball!*



3 Shared Zones and 4 Positions

Grades 4 & 5



Same rules as the GD 5, now...

Goalie Player:

- Block and catch shots
- Reset *StrikerPins*
- Pass to Defender (Do not shoot)

Defender Player:

- Catch passes from goalie
- Pass to Midfielder (Do not shoot)
- Guard passes, block and intercept passes

Midfield Player:

- Catch passes from Defender
- Pass to Attacks (Do not shoot)
- Guard passes, block or intercept passes

Attack Player:

- Shoot on *StrikerPins*
- Record score on the scoreboard
- Guard, block shots and intercept passes (from Goalie)

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog 7

The big gym/field game!

5 Shared Zones and 6 Positions

Grades 4 & 5

If you are fortunate enough to have a large gym, blacktop or sports field then your 4th and 5th graders are in for a treat and lucky to be able to progress to GD 7. I was one of few lucky ones when my school was renovated and we got a huge new gym. We got to play GD 7 a few times!

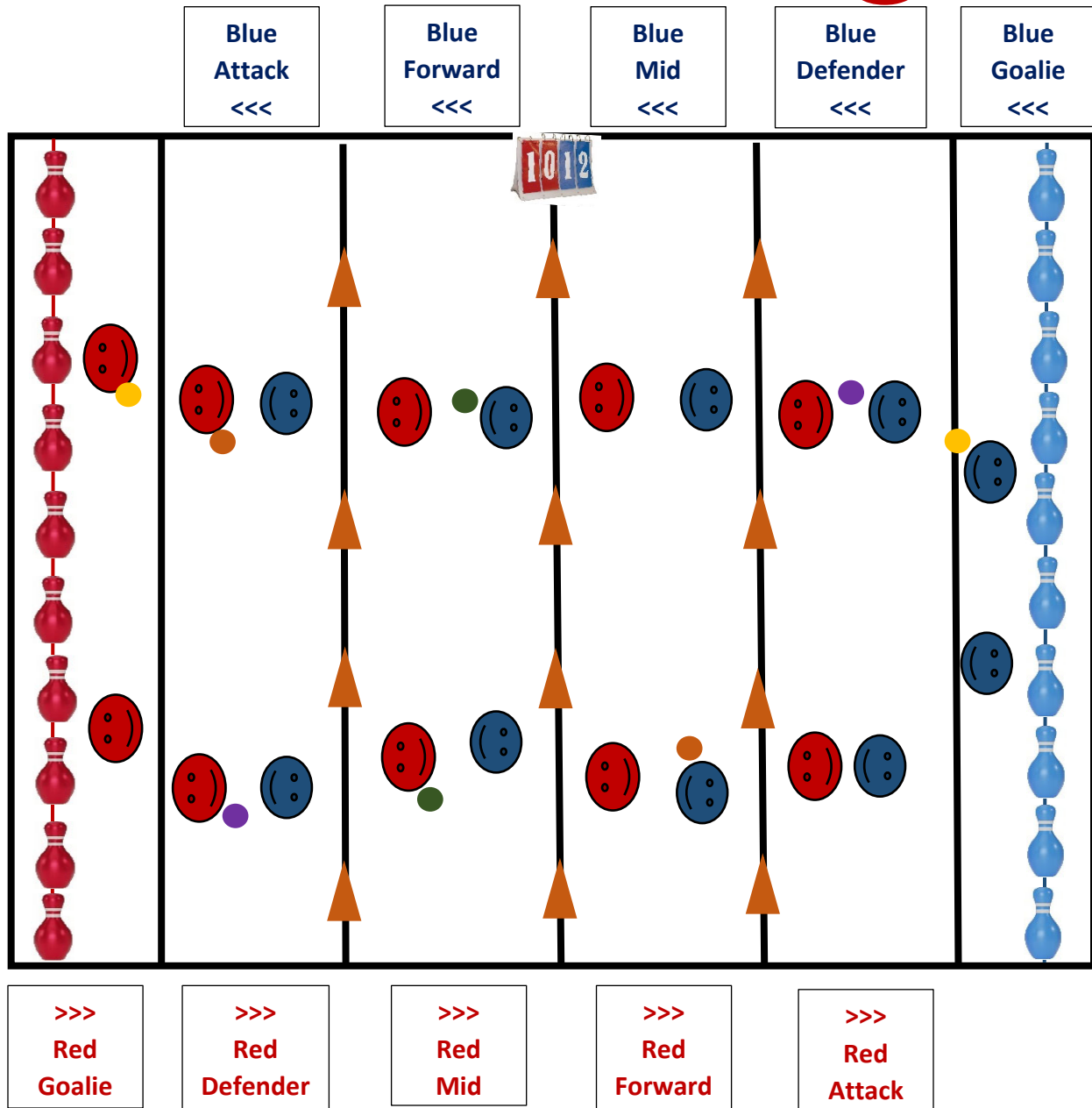
With 5 zones, 4 of them shared, the passing and catching execution must be precise, because the zones are getting narrower, and blocked shots and interceptions occur more easily. Also, on and off the ball sideways moving and angled passes and shots are truly tested.

Continue with the rule that only the Attackers may shoot to score, proactively ensuring good teamwork with quick precise passing and catching, from zone to zone, and prevent the Forwards, Midfielders and Defenders from trying fire long wild shots past multiple defenders.

It may be a good idea to slightly reduce the amount of balls in play as we approach GD 6 & 7.

Teacher/TA can assist the Attack with scoring.

Guard Dog 7



Guard Dog 7

Guard Dog 7

The big gym/field game!

5 Shared Zones and 6 Positions

Grades 4 & 5



Same rules as the GD 6, now...

Goalie Player:

- Block and catch shots
- Reset *StrikerPins*
- Pass to Defender (Do not shoot)

Defender Player:

- Catch passes from goalie
- Pass to Midfielder (Do not shoot)
- Guard passes, block and intercept passes

Midfield Player:

- Catch passes from defenders
- Pass to Forwards (Do not shoot)
- Guard passes, block or intercept passes

Forward Player:

- Catch passes from Mids
- Pass to Attacks (Do not shoot)
- Guard passes, block or intercept passes

Attack Player:

- Shoot on *StrikerPins*
- Record score on the scoreboard (Teacher/TA can assist)
- Guard, block shots and intercept passes (from Goalie)

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog Rules

Basic Games



What kind of Guard Dog player are you?

1. Protect yourself and face/head at all times.
2. Play on feet, no dropping to knees, falling down or diving for ground balls.
3. Ground ball, first to touch the ball gets it.
4. Play only in your zone.
5. You may move with the ball in your zone.
6. Players reset **StrikerPins** during the game.
7. When you score, record your point on the scoreboard. You earned it!

Which team can play the most honest?

Guard Dog Rules



Advanced Games



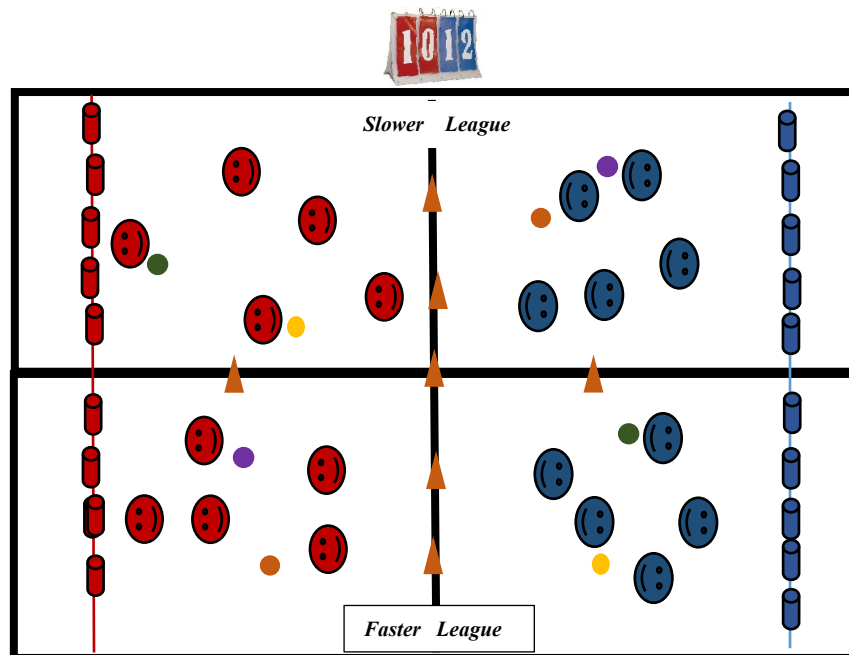
1. Protect yourself and face/head at all times.
2. Play on feet, no dropping to knees, falling down or diving for ground balls.
3. Ground ball, first to touch the ball gets it.
4. **Cold Defense:**
 - One step & arm rule = No touching another player.
 - No reaching in, but you may reach to sides and up to defend passes.
5. No bumping into or over backs of others to catch or intercept passes.
6. Play only in your zone.
7. You may move with the ball in your zone.
8. Only the Goalie is allowed in the Goalie Zone.
9. Balls are rolled to Goalies after rotation.
10. Goalies must reset StrikerPin.
11. When you score, record your point on the scoreboard.
You earned it!
12. Do not run over to the scoreboard carrying a ball. Drop it on the floor or toss it to teammate.
13. Players may only score one point at a time on the scoreboard. (Even if one shot knocks down two *StrikerPins* on one throw.)

Which team can play the most honest?

Variations/Modifications:

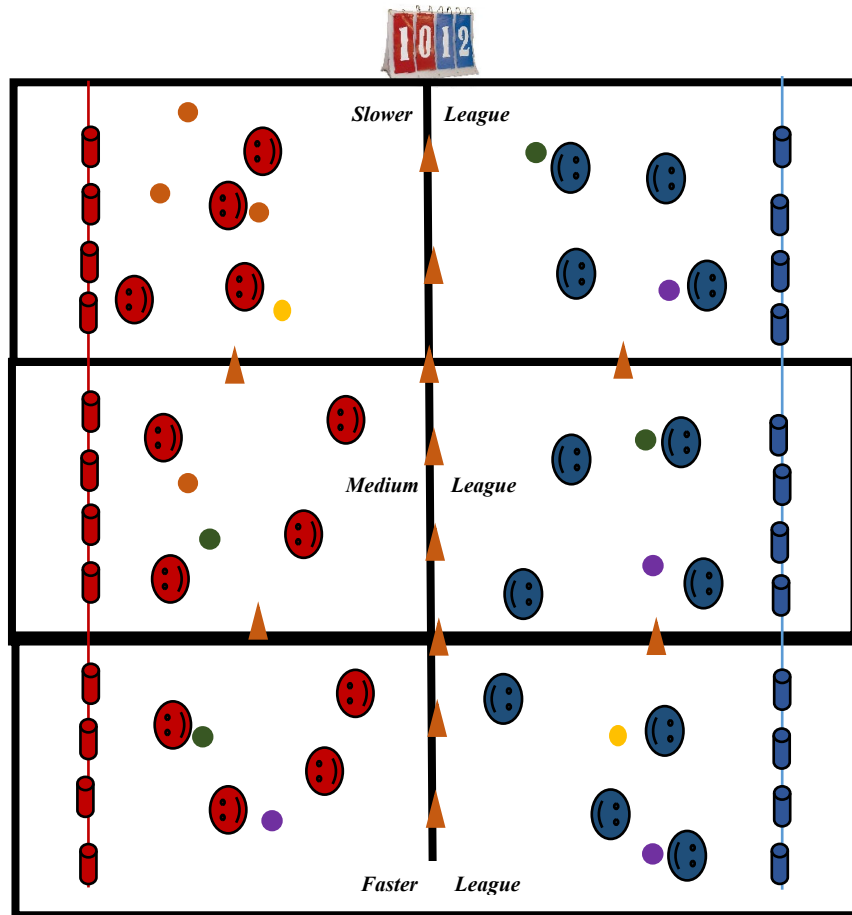
- We use, what I call **structural differentiation** (SD) to modify game play in GD 1. There are several way it is accomplished and it's by having the students play in 2-3 **Learning Leagues** (LL).
- The instructor has options on what to call/or defines the LL: Game experience, throwing speed and even athletic ability are possibilities. For example, the bigger, faster throwing speed, stronger, more skilled and experienced kids will play in one half or third of the game(s). (See LL diagrams below) And the slower throwing, less experienced kids on the other half. If using 3 LL, the average pupils play in the middle. Slower, medium and faster LL function by separating more timid players from aggressive kids. Children now feel **"at home,"** comfortable in their appropriate league.
- In the first example, there is one game played with 2-3 speed/ability zones and limited modifications. This works well when space and equipment is limited. One scoreboard. It's a faster, simpler set-up.
- The second example (see below), there are 2-3 individual games being played simultaneously. Each with a score boards/per game. There are more modifications options, and set-up and instruction is more complex.

One Game Two Structurally Differentiated Learning Leagues



One Game

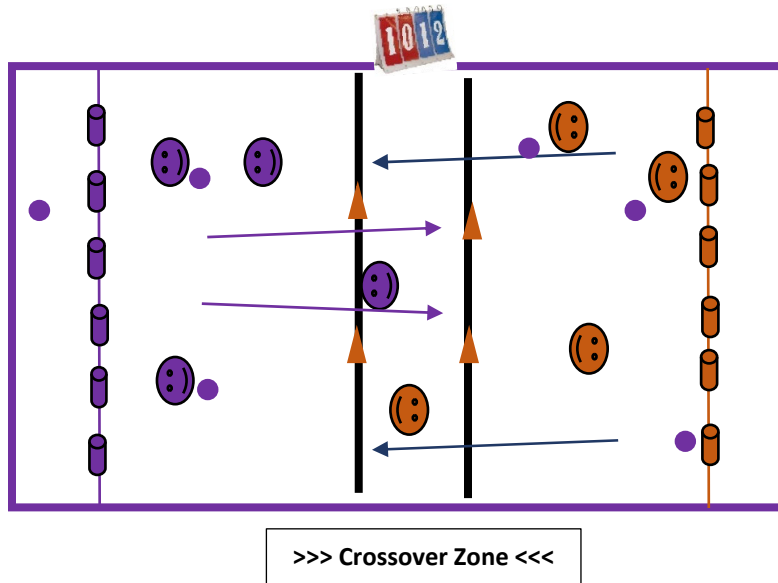
Three Structurally Differentiated Learning Leagues



Separate Games Approach:

Another SD LL approach is separated games. All students are playing the basic GD 1 game, learning and having a blast, various modifications are implemented.

Separate Game Learning League 1



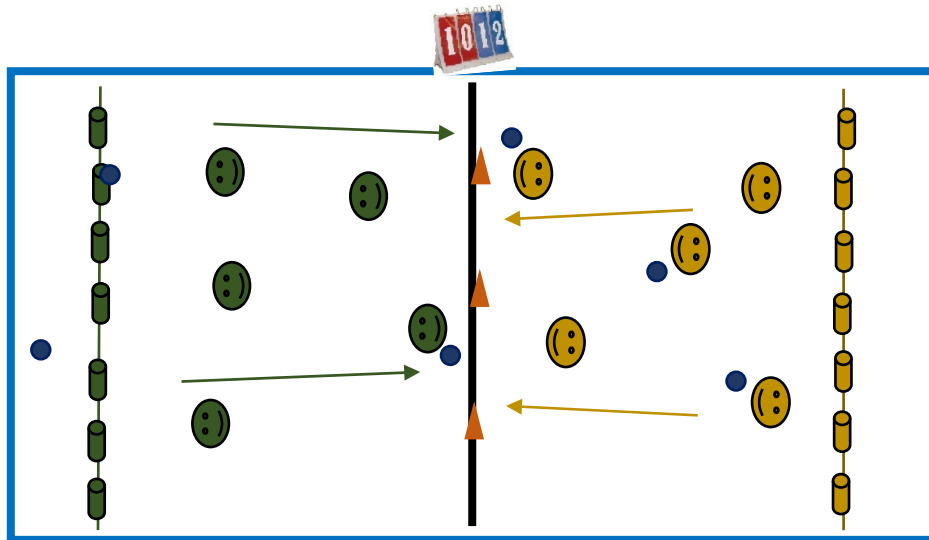
Learning League 1: modifications

- **Crossover zone:** players can move up past first line, closer to the pins
- Smaller court/play areas
- Pin closer
- Slightly faster ball (different type/color from the other team balls)
- Slightly less players



Separate Game

Learning League 2



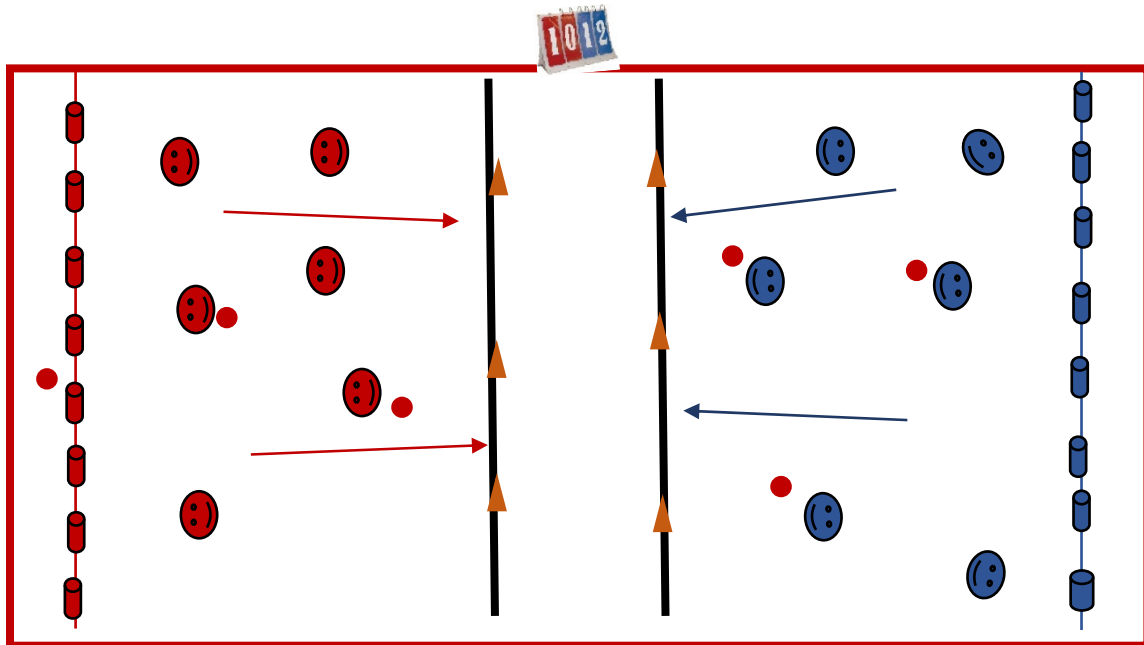
Learning League 2: modifications

- No cross over zone: players can move up to the dividing line
- Normal court/play areas
- Pins a tad further back
- Normal speed ball (different type/color from the other team balls)
- Normal size players/per team



Separate Game

Learning League 3



<<< Separation Zone >>>

Learning League 3: modifications

- **Separation zone:** players move up, stop at the first dividing line; do not enter SZ.
- Larger court/play areas
- Pin further back
- Slightly softer/slower/safer speed ball
- Larger ball: 7 inch (different type/color/size from the other team balls)
- A few more players/per team



Teaching Tips:

- **Bonus point:** For additional assistance on rule following, during a GD game, announce at the end of the game, the team that plays the most _____ earns a bonus point(s)! Whatever you need/desire as a teacher, (honesty, safety, responsibility, sharing, etc.) this policy positively encourages it. Give it a try and see how it works.

Who is going to be the most honest person?

- On your team?
- In this class?

Who is going to be the most honest person?

- On your team?
- In this class?

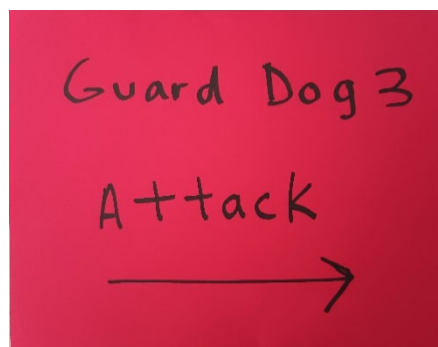
- If using one scoreboard, placing the scoreboard on the slower league side works best for three reasons. (See diagram above)
 - ✓ Instructor is closer to the students who may need the most skill assistance.
 - ✓ The quicker, fitter kids from the faster league are better able to race across the gym to flip the score.
 - ✓ The scoreboard and teacher are clear of the more assertive player's way, giving them more room to play.



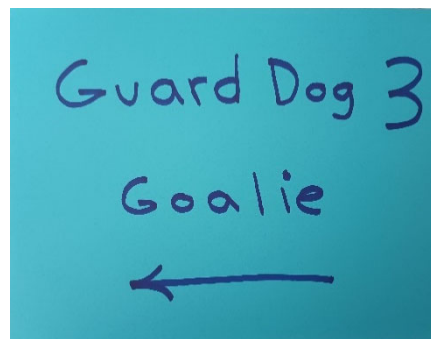
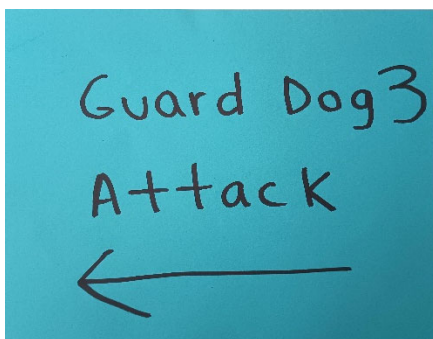
- **Mini wall posters:** for zones, it is helpful/organize the teaching learning process. Tape them on the walls prior game play.

- For example **GD 3**

- **Red Team:** Goalie & Attack

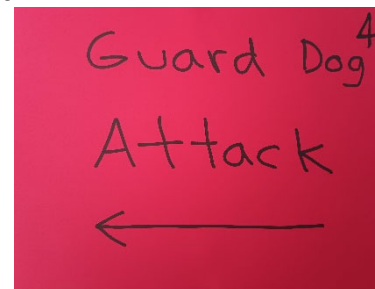
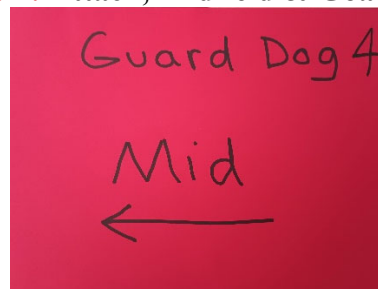


- **Blue Team:** Attack & Goalie

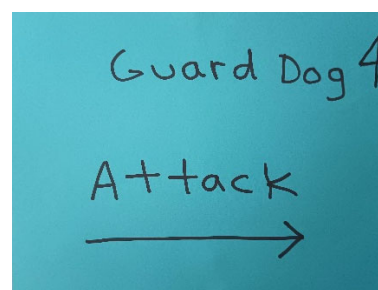
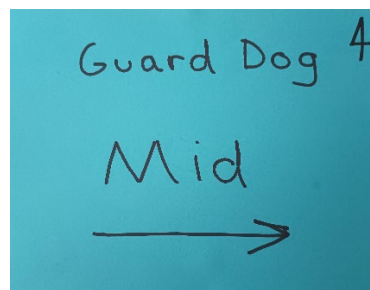
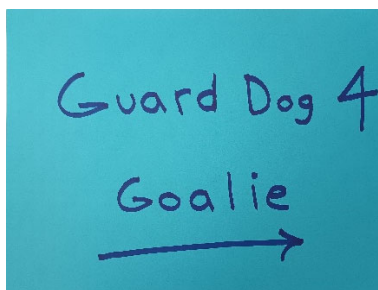


- For example **GD 4**

- **Red Team:** Attack, Midfield & Goalie



- **Blue Team:** Attack, Midfield & Goalie



Closure:

My hope is that you find **Guard Dog** fun and beneficial for your PE program.
If you'd like, please reach out and share your thoughts about the game.

All the best,

Dale H. Sarratt

GuardDogPE.com