



To: Western Region Divisional Leadership

From: Regional Staff

Date: May 28, 2009

Re: Physical Assessment testing tips a reporting format

Here are some testing suggestions to assist the divisions with the completion of their physical assessment testing this fall.

1. Introduction to the test:
 - a. Many athletes are a little on edge when they first hit the testing session, realize that they have heard horror stories about past testing sessions and expect to have a similar experience with this new battery of tests. Overall, this is not the case.
 - b. Athletes should be encouraged to “give-it their all” at each station of the test to accurately assess their fitness level in order to:
 - i. Find out what worked in their conditioning program and what didn’t work so relative strengths and weaknesses can be identified and conditioning programs adjusted as needed.
 - ii. Give accurate results and feedback to the athletes and the athletes’ coach, so performance can be improved.
 - iii. Test to test performance will be documented and reviewed by Western Region. It should be communicated to all athletes, parents, and coaches that the completion of two, spring and fall, physical assessments are now part of the Regional Team selection criteria for selection. This ruling went into effect Spring 2009.
2. The testing order and procedures are explained in detail on the USSA Physical Assessment CD that is part of the Elite Performance series produced by the USSA Education Department. The test will take about 3 hours per athlete to complete. For mass testing, athletes should be grouped into groups of 6-8 athletes maximum and the starting times staggered in waves of 15-20 minutes for each group.
 - a. During mass testing coaches should be placed into stations in pairs if possible and a minimum of three coaches should be stationed with the shuttle run. Accuracy in testing and recording is of utmost importance and this requires adequate staffing at all stations.



- b. Measurements should be recorded using the metric system (kg/cm/m) metric conversion charts/calculators can be found online. The data from the testing session should then be entered into the excel spreadsheet template that is provided on the WR website. Please fill in all data exactly as indicated on the example line in the spreadsheet. This allows the ability to directly cut and paste the information into the main database and quicker report generation. Please submit all physical assessment data using the provided spreadsheet to Jenn Stielow at jstielow@ussa.org.
3. Test specific items:
- a. The sit and reach flexibility testing should be conducted when the athlete is “cold”, warming-up/stretching prior to the testing is not allowed. The sit and reach station should be the first station. Make sure that the back of the athletes is at 90 degrees prior to beginning the testing. A quick way to accomplish this is to have the athlete sit with their back against the wall straight up, double check to make sure back of hips is also square against the wall or flat surface. Athletes should remove their shoes and socks for the sit and reach test along with the body measurements.
 - b. While taking height measurements use something flat to ensure that the athletes head is level with the measuring tape prior to recording a measurement. This is demonstrated on the USSA Physical Assessment CD.
 - c. The warm-up protocols should be followed as listed in the USSA Physical Assessment CD, it is important to take the time for a proper warm-up. If you need suggestions or a list of exercises involved in the dynamic warm-up/stretch please contact Jenn Stielow at jstielow@ussa.org.
 - d. 7-level core testing should take place on a hard surface using a thin yoga style mat. Testing the core in the grass or on softer flooring skews the results; the key is to be consistent across the region in our testing. Athletes should test without their shoes.
 - e. 20m shuttle run can quickly be measured out using a SL tape. Be sure to mark both ends and have an extra 1.5 – 2 meters on both ends so athletes have some room at each end. As mentioned earlier, there should be a coach at each end watching the lines for faults and instructing the athletes to make-up a line when necessary. A coach should be in the middle listening to the beep levels and recording the levels attained by the athletes. The maximum group size for this testing session should be about 6-8 athletes. A group larger than 8 athletes requires a larger space and another coach to assist in tracking the athlete completion level to ensure accurate score reporting.

