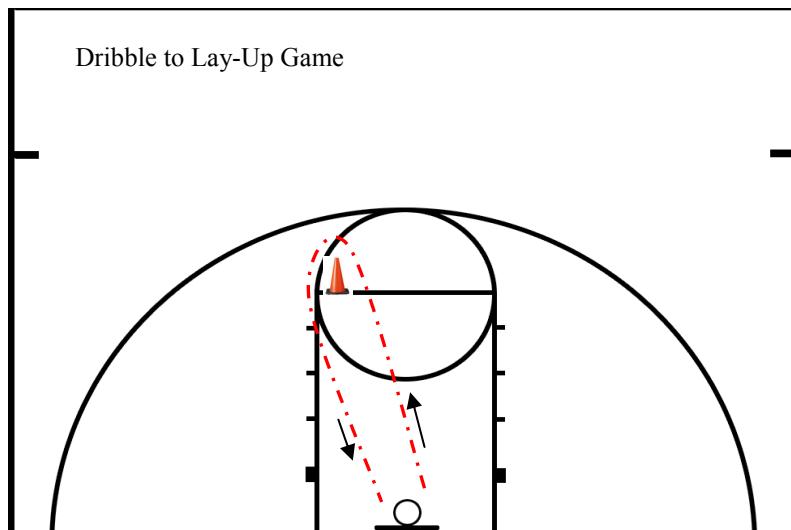


## IN A ROW AND IN A HURRY SPORTS SKILL GAMES

**In A Row** and **In A Hurry** Sports Skill Games is a concept presented by NC Baptist Men's Sports and Recreation Committee as a tool for local churches to use to promote fellowship within the church and outreach to the community (missions). The idea is to focus on a fundamental skill or combination of skills and create a "lead-up" game for a particular sport. In both types of "lead-up" games, individuals do not compete directly against another individual. There is, however, a competitive element involved as scores are kept, and individuals are recognized for their achievement. Organizers may wish to encourage "competing with oneself" by recognizing those who improve their scores over time. And with children, acknowledging everyone in some positive way would be important. This would especially be true in a missions setting.

The objective for each contestant during **In A Row** games is to "score" as many times in a row as possible. In basketball *free throw shooting*, for example, the contestant gets to keep going only if he is successful on the previous attempt. The one exception to this rule is the first attempt. If it is missed, a second chance to get started is given. When the player "misses the shot," he goes to the back of the line to await his next turn. His score for the day is his most consecutive shots made in any of his turns, thus the designation as an **In A Row** game. Depending on the amount of time designated for this contest and the number of players, each person may get several, even many, turns to shoot.

The objective for contestants during **In A Hurry** games is to successfully perform the task as many times as possible within a set amount of time. In basketball *dribble to lay-up*, for example, the player starts with the ball under the basket, facing the free throw line. On a signal to start, he is to dribble toward and around a cone placed at the right elbow of the free throw line and back down right side of the lane for a lay-up. He retrieves the ball and repeats the action as many times as possible in one minute. His score is the number of lay-ups made in sixty seconds.



Another basketball lead-up game which combines **In A Row** and **In A Hurry** is *Step Back Shooting*. The contest requires partners, a shooter and a rebounder. The angle from which all players will shoot has been selected ahead of time and the shooting spots marked at equal increments from the backboard square. For children, 2 foot increments starting 5 feet from the goal and ending 15 feet away (the free throw line when shooting straightaway) might be appropriate. For older players, 3 foot increments starting at 6 feet from the goal and ending 21 feet away from the backboard (the 3 point line) might work. The shooter gets two chances (if needed) at each distance. With a make, he steps back to the next marker while the rebounder is retrieving the ball. The shooter must have both feet behind the marker before the pass is made. If the ball caroms off the rim and back to the shooter, he must pass it to the rebounder before he can shoot again. When the shooter misses twice from the same spot, the turn is over. If he makes a shot from all six spots, he continues to shoot from the most distant spot until he misses (no second chances at this point). His score is the total number of shots made. Ties are broken by using a stopwatch to keep each shooter's time. For example, the shooter who makes 7 shots in 40 seconds (because he missed only once) wins over a shooter who makes 7 shots in 55 seconds (because he missed four times).

The number of lead-up games possible using this concept is limited only by a lack of imagination. A church could sponsor a sports camp featuring one sport only or an "all-sports" camp with a challenge or two from a variety of sports. One important element of the sports camp would be to make it a sports clinic as well by providing "coaches" to work with willing subjects to improve their skills before, during, or after the contests.

An idea for a fund raiser in support of missions or to buy equipment needed for the sports ministry, etc. would be to hold a church-wide free throw contest. Everyone, including senior members of the church and community would be encouraged to come out and pay a small entry fee to participate. Age groups would be assigned a 30 minute period to shoot free throws as described in the **In A Row** challenge above. Two age groups could shoot each half hour, requiring three hours for the event. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snacks could be sold, providing additional fund raising potential. At the end of the day, the top free throw shooters in each age group would be recognized.

Suggested age groups: 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-19, 20-29  
30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70 and above