

PRELIMINARY TESTING

The whole idea about having a preliminary test before we start are programme is so that we have a good idea on what are capabilities are and to also highlight areas of fitness in which I am weak in. I can then take those weaknesses and try to incorporate them into my programme and hopefully improve them.

I will carry out a range of preliminary tests that will focus on all aspects of fitness. I will be recording my results and be comparing them to national averages. Below is a list and explanation of each test.

MULTI-STAGE FITNESS (BLEEP) TEST:

The multi-stage fitness test is used to predict maximum oxygen uptake (V_{O_2} max). Devised by the National coaching foundation, it is a progressive shuttle run test that starts off easily and becomes progressively more difficult. Performers are required to run as many shuttles of 20 metres as possible, keeping in time to the bleeps which are emitted out by the pre-recorded tape. The starting speed of this is 8.5km per hour this increases by 0.5km per hour each level. This becomes more difficult as the bleeps start getting quicker by the level. The performer continues to run as long as possible until such time when they can no longer keep up with the bleeps. You record the level reached by listening to where the tape has got to when you drop out, you can then translate your score into a predicted V_{O_2} max value. This exercise is used to improve the cardiovascular system and also works the hamstrings.

MULTI STAGE SIT-UP (BLEEP) TEST

The sit up bleep test is carried out very similar to the one mentioned above. For this exercise you once again need a pre-recorded tape designed to progressively work the body harder at each level. The performer begins the test in the sit-up position, lying on the floor knees bent the trunk is then raised towards the knees (flexion) and then lowered again (extension) in time with the tape. This once again is a maximal test meaning the performer continues to do sit-ups for as long as possible until they can no longer keep up with the bleeps. This exercise works the abdominal muscles.

STANDING LONG (BROAD) JUMP TEST

This test is very easy to carry out. You start with your feet slightly apart on a mark, using a two-footed take off, see how far you can jump forward. The jump is marked from the take off to the closest mark left after the jump. The exercise is all about leg power the gastrocnemius in particular.

VERTICAL JUMP TEST

This exercise is set up by the performer standing against a wall and reaches up as far as possible, that measurement is then recorded. After that the performer takes a step back from the wall and then propels himself upward and with a piece of blue-tack in between his/her fingers sticks it as far up the wall as they can get it. The distance between the two marks is then measured. This exercise is usually carried out three times and the average is taken. This exercise is also about leg power.

SIT AND REACH TEST

The test can be easily set up and requires a bench. The performer sits on the floor with their legs out straight, feet flat against the bench and without bending the knees the performer reaches forward with arms outstretched and then measures how far along the bench holding your arms stretched right out for 2 seconds. This test is used to assess flexibility the hamstrings in particular.

ILLINOIS AGILITY RUN TEST

This test is designed to measure speed and agility. A ten-metre square is marked out with four cones at each of the corners. Four cones are placed 3.3 metres apart, bisecting the square. The subject lies face down at one corner and on the command of 'go' runs the course as fast as possible weaving in and out of the cones. The time taken is recorded.

HAND GRIP DYNAMETRE TEST

A test of strength. The handle of a small device that is used is squeezed as tight as possible by the performer, and the reading taken from the gage is recorded. The test is carried out for both the dominant, and less dominant hand.

BODY FAT MEASUREMENTS

The only equipment needed for this test is a pair of skin fold callipers. Fat is tested in four different sites of the body. The performer squeezes all of his/her fat at the particular site, and the tester clamps it in the callipers, and reads the measurements given in millimetres.

The sites that are tested are the triceps, with the arm resting comfortably at the side, mid way between the elbow and the shoulder. The sub scapula, which is the diagonal fold across the back, just below the shoulder blades. The biceps which is at the same site as the triceps, only on the front of the arm. Finally, the suprailac, which is the natural line of iliac crest, just above the hipbone.

30 METRE SPRINT TEST

This test is simple. The performer sprints over a distance of 30 metres, after a rolling start. A tester times the performer, from the time that he/she crosses the start line, until the time he/she crosses the finish line.