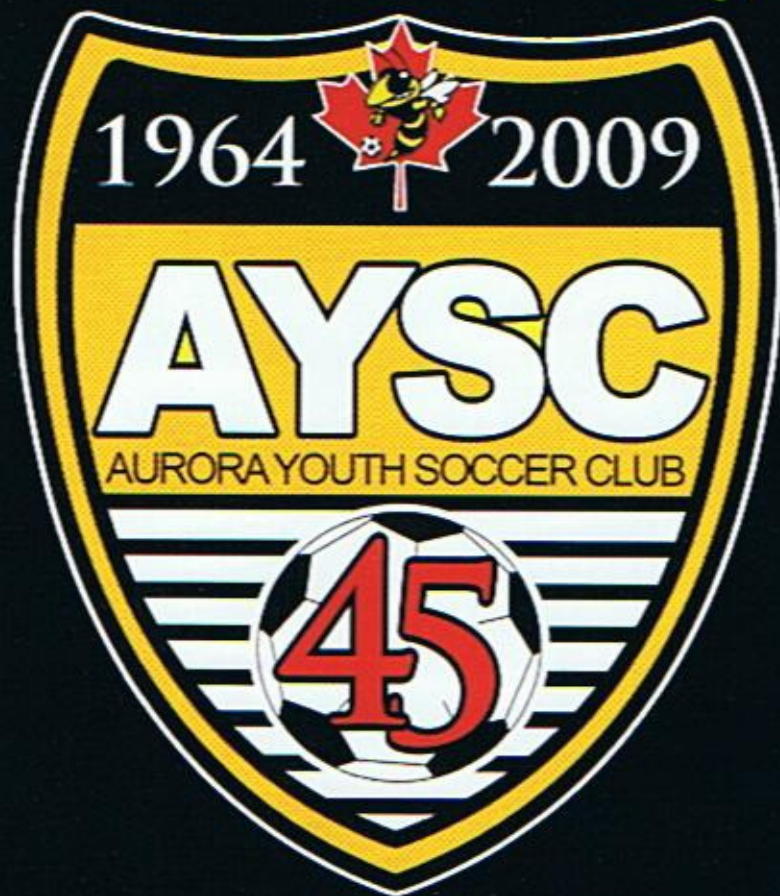


# GetStung

Aurora Youth Soccer Club  
*Magazine*



**U-18 GIRLS TEAM WINS BACK-TO-BACK  
REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR OUTDOOR 2009  
MEET OUR NEW TECHNICAL DIRECTOR!  
RIGHT-TO-PLAY COMES TO THE AYSC!**



# THE IMPORTANCE OF FITNESS TESTING

by Richard Bucciarelli



\$100 - \$1000 per pound of extra weight gained in the off-season. Elite players also stand to lose something even more valuable than money - playing time - if they show decreased performance on endurance testing measures when training camp begins. When taken together, these facts serve to highlight the importance of physical and physiological testing for elite level soccer players.

## Evaluating Fitness Levels

While testing for weight and body fat is important for elite level professionals, amateur youth players in Canada require a different focus for their testing protocol. Anyone who has ever played a game of soccer knows that the sport places great demands on the physical capacity of the players. At the highest levels of amateur competition, soccer players require extremely high levels of all aspects of physical fitness, including strength, endurance, agility, speed, and power. Furthermore, the intermittent nature of physical activities in soccer means that players must be able to apply the various aspects of their fitness - speed, for example - into a constantly changing game environment.

Tests of physical fitness for soccer players must be matched as closely as possible to the actual physical demands of the sport. In addition, the age and physical maturity level of the players must be taken into consideration when choosing which fitness tests to use. If administered correctly, fitness tests should give soccer coaches a clear picture of the physical strengths and weaknesses of their players, as well as a good indication of their ability to perform optimally in competition.

The following are some step-by-step guidelines for youth coaches in Canada, regarding determining which tests they should use and why:

- Before deciding which tests to use, think of the age and ability level of your players; are they too young / too inexperienced for physical fitness testing? A good age to start measuring speed, strength and endurance is 12 years old
- Do some research on which aspects of physical fitness apply specifically to soccer, and which do not. Try to find tests that evaluate the areas of physical fitness needed for soccer
- Once you have determined which areas of fitness you want to test, get more specific by finding tests in which players must perform tasks that closely resemble what they will do in a game (eg: soccer players never run 100 metres in a game, so why test for speed by running 100 metres)
- As we all know, soccer is played with a ball - don't forget this fact! Find tests or develop your own variations of tests that evaluate players' ability to move both with and without the ball

The AYSC will continue our fitness testing project and will report the results on our Rep. players in the next issue of Get Stung.

*Richard Bucciarelli is the owner of RJ1 Sport, a company that provides soccer-specific strength and conditioning training, as well as physiotherapy, massage therapy and other rehabilitative services. RJ1's Rehabilitation and Fitness Centre is located at 2065 Finch ave. west in Toronto.*

For more information, visit [www.rj1sport.com](http://www.rj1sport.com)

Last spring, the AYSC began a pilot project to determine the fitness of our young athletes. We asked a professional in fitness testing, Richard Bucciarelli of RJ1 Sport for some advice for our Coaches.

## The Importance of Fitness

At Manchester United, coming into training camp 5lbs overweight can cost you \$5000. In fact, in most professional first and even second division teams, players are fined between

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