



MVP & FAIR PLAY PLAYER OF THE GAME

Pilot Program Report - 2025-2026 Season

INTRODUCTION

Orange Ball United Athletes is a basketball brand created by people involved in the game and dedicated to the basketball community. We believe that business development and supporting the growth of basketball do not have to be mutually exclusive. On the contrary, well-designed initiatives can support both goals at the same time. From the very beginning, we wanted to build brand awareness through projects that could also provide real value to players, coaches, and clubs.

"The MVP & Fair Play Player of the Game program was created with exactly that idea in mind."

We wanted to find out whether a relatively simple tool - post-game medals awarded in a slightly different format - could have a positive impact on young players' experiences and on the overall atmosphere surrounding youth basketball competitions. Our goal was not to create yet another award for scoring points or winning games. Instead, we wanted to see whether it was possible to place greater emphasis on qualities such as effort, commitment, sportsmanship, respect for opponents, and the positive impact a player can have on their team and environment. At the same time, we wanted to create a project that would be easy for clubs to implement, would not require extensive organisation, and would actively involve both players and coaches. This report summarises the pilot program, presents the results of the evaluation process, and outlines the changes that will be introduced before the next edition of the program.



PROGRAM CONCEPT

The MVP & FairPlay Player of the Game program was designed as a project for U10 and U12 basketball teams participating in competitions in the Netherlands. The primary objective of the program was to create a simple tool that supports the development of young players not only as athletes, but also as members of a team and a sports community. Each participating team received sets of medals to be awarded after home games. Following each game, three medals were awarded:



MVP for a player from the home team



MVP for a player from the visiting team



Fair Play Player for one player selected from all participants in the game

A key element of the program was the method used to select the recipients. MVP medals were awarded by the opposing team's coaches. During the pilot phase, some clubs also began involving their players in the process, allowing the team and coach to make the decision together. The Fair Play medal was awarded by the game officials. The program was designed to encourage greater commitment, promote fair play values, and strengthen positive relationships between teams participating in youth competitions.

PILOT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The program was launched during the second half of the 2025-26 season. Responses to the evaluation survey were received from representatives of 13 participating clubs, including coaches, parents, referees, club representatives, and individuals involved in organising youth basketball competitions.

15

**BASKETBALL CLUBS
JOINED**

U10 & U12

AGE CATEGORIES

400+

MEDALS DISTRIBUTED

EVALUATION RESULTS

The survey results indicate a very positive reception of the program. The vast majority of respondents rated the project positively or very positively. Most also expressed interest in participating in future editions and stated that they would recommend the program to other clubs. The most frequently mentioned benefits were:

- ✓ Promoting sportsmanship
- ✓ Increasing motivation among young players
- ✓ Encouraging greater attention to player attitude and behaviour during games
- ✓ Creating a more positive atmosphere around youth competitions
- ✓ Strengthening relationships between teams after games

Participants referred far more often to the educational and social value of the program than to the medals themselves.

IMPACT ON YOUNG PLAYERS

Many participants stated that the medals motivated young players, increased their engagement, and helped them feel recognised and appreciated. At the same time, some respondents highlighted that the MVP award was sometimes interpreted primarily as recognition for sporting achievements, points scored, or the player's role within the team. As a result, awards went repeatedly to the same players, while others who demonstrated significant effort and commitment remained unnoticed. The pilot phase therefore proved extremely valuable in identifying areas that required improvement.

IMPACT ON GAME ATMOSPHERE AND RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TEAMS

"The medal presentation became more than just a short ceremony. It served as a symbolic expression of appreciation for the shared competition."

One of the most interesting outcomes of the program was its influence on relationships between teams after games. Many participants identified this aspect as one of the most valuable elements of the entire program because it encouraged players and coaches to recognise effort, attitude, and sportsmanship in opposing teams.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE PILOT PROGRAM

The evaluation confirmed that the project was very well received by participants. The most common observation was that some participants interpreted MVP according to its traditional meaning - Most Valuable Player. This was not fully aligned with the original philosophy of the program, which aimed to recognise a wider range of positive behaviours and values.

CHANGES INTRODUCED AFTER THE PILOT PHASE

Starting with the 2026-27 season, MVP will stand for **Most Valuable Presence** rather than Most Valuable Player. The award may be given to a player who:

- ☆ Gave their best effort
- ☆ Demonstrated exceptional commitment
- ☆ Supported teammates
- ☆ Showed respect towards opponents and
- ☆ referees Represented positive sporting values

Points scored, statistics, and playing time may still provide context, but they should not be the primary criteria for selection. Every player on the court can therefore be recognised, regardless of skill level, role within the team, or number of minutes played.

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

To ensure greater consistency across participating clubs, an official program handbook will be prepared for the 2026-27 season. The document will include:

- ✓ Program objectives
- ✓ Definitions of the awards
- ✓ Organisational guidelines for clubs and coaches

Its purpose will be to ensure a shared understanding of the program's philosophy among all participating clubs.

PROGRAM AVAILABILITY FOR THE 2026–2027 SEASON

Orange Ball United Athletes plans to increase the number of free medals available through the program to 999. This will allow participating clubs to conduct a total of 333 medal ceremonies during the season.

999

**FREE MEDALS
AVAILABLE**

333

MEDAL CEREMONIES

In the event of higher demand, clubs will have the option to order additional medals. Any fees charged will cover only the costs of production and distribution.

Information regarding participation in the program for the 2026–27 season will be communicated directly to clubs via email and published through Orange Ball United Athletes' social media channels.

We hope the program will continue to grow in popularity and that the values it promotes will have a positive impact on the development of young athletes, sportsmanship, and the basketball community as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The overall response to the program was clearly positive. The evaluation results and feedback collected from coaches, parents, referees, and club representatives confirmed the value of continuing to develop the project. As a result, the MVP & Fair Play Player of the Game program will continue during the 2026-27 season, incorporating the changes and lessons learned during the pilot phase. This report has been prepared for the internal purposes of Orange Ball United Athletes and as a presentation of the program evaluation results to the Dutch basketball community.

Dariusz Lewandowski

Founder of Orange Ball United Athletes



**BASKETBALL
BRAND.
FOR PLAYERS.
BY PLAYERS.**