Run The Gauntlet

A thrilling physical education game that requires courage, agility, speed and yet more courage! Did I mention courage?!

Game Type: Physical Education
Recommended Ages: 8+
Number Of Players: Whole class
Equipment Required: Soft balls (12 balls is a good number to play with)
Where To Play: Playground or gymnasium (Ideally a basketball court)
Duration: 20 minutes

Historical Note

Run The Gauntlet is believed to have originated in the Roman Empire. It was used as a form of execution for soldiers using cudgels. Let it known however that Mr Funology does not condone the use of cudgels or executions during school lessons.

Objective

The objective of Run The Gauntlet is to run the length of a basketball court and back again without being hit by a ball.

How To Play

Step One: Sort your students into two groups. One group lines up at one end of the basketball court. This group are the 'runners'. The other group stands on either side of the court with the soft balls. This group are the ‘throwers’. Step Two: When you say 'go', the first runner tries to get to the other end of the court and back again without
being hit by the balls thrown by the throwers. A runner cannot be hit while inside the 'D' of the basketball court. For safety reasons, a runner may only be hit from the waist down. *Hint: If you are not playing on a basketball court, use cones to indicate an area at each end of the game space in which a runner is safe.*

Step Three: If a runner makes it back, the next runner goes. If a runner is hit, they must sit down where they are and become a 'barricade'. Barricades may use their arms or bodies to protect runners from balls as they pass by however a barricade must remain sitting or kneeling.

Step Four: Team gains one point for each runner who makes it back from running the gauntlet.

Step Five: Once each runner has had a turn, teams swap.

**Variation**

Ultimate Run The Gauntlet: In Ultimate Run The Gauntlet, runners who make it back keep trying to run the gauntlet until they are hit. Each time they make it back, they gain another point for their team.

**Credit**

Thank you to the excellent teachers at North Fitzroy Primary School for teaching me Run The Gauntlet when I was but a mere pup of a teacher!