Many reasons exist for testing soccer players, among them:

- Studying the effect of a training program.
- Planning short- and long-term training programs.
- Motivating the players to additional training.
- Giving the players objective feedback.
- Identifying weaknesses and strengths of the players.
- Making the players more aware of the aims of the training.
- Evaluating whether a player is ready to compete.

To provide useful information, a test must be relevant to and resemble soccer. Cooper's 12 min running test is frequently used in soccer. It is easily performed, if a track is available. However, the continuous intensive running in the test is not relevant to soccer.

New tests which evaluate performance in various sports, including soccer have recently been developed (Bangsbo, 1994). They are called the Yo-Yo tests. These tests include movement patterns, such as turning and accelerations, which occur in soccer. By using the Yo-Yo tests the fitness level of soccer players can be determined quickly and easily. Two markers are positioned at a distance of 20 meters. A cassette tape in a player controls the speed at which players run back and forth between the markers. The speed is increased until the player can no longer maintain it, at which time the test ends. The test result is determined by the distance covered during the test.

The test can be used by players of any training status, since each of the tests has two levels. On one side of the tape is a test for less trained players. On the other side is one for well trained players.

There are three Yo-Yo tests: the intermittent endurance test, the intermittent recovery test and the endurance test. Each test focuses on a different aspect of physical performance. The first two of these tests are particularly relevant for soccer as the players exercise intermittently, as in soccer. The tests are used by non-elite and elite soccer clubs in Europe, such as FC Porto, Portugal and PSV Eindhoven, Holland.

**Yo-Yo Intermittent Endurance Test**

The Yo-Yo intermittent endurance test consists of five-20 second intervals of running with a five second rest between intervals. The test evaluates the player's ability to repeatedly perform intervals over a prolonged time, thus measuring endurance performance in soccer. The duration of the test is between 10 and 20 minutes.

**Yo-Yo Intermittent Recovery Test**

The Yo-Yo intermittent recovery test focuses on the ability to recover after intense exercise. Between each exercise period of 5-15 seconds is a 10 second rest period. The test is particularly useful in soccer as the ability to repeatedly perform intense exercise is often critical to the outcome of a match. The test lasts between 3 and 15 minutes.

**Yo-Yo Endurance Test**

The Yo-Yo endurance test evaluates the ability to work continuously for a longer period of time. Based on scientific results it is possible to convert the test result to maximum oxygen uptake. The duration of the test is between 10 and 20 minutes.