

Sportsmanship: Character in Action

Sportsmanship is an often-used word, yet no definitive explanation is readily available. We do know that it refers to some key concepts:

- Citizenship
- Integrity
- Respect for Opponents and Officials
- Fair Play
- Understanding of the Rules
- Appreciation for all Performances
- Personal and Institutional Pride
- Gracious Acceptance of Results
- High Moral Character

All these concepts fall into the definition of sportsmanship. They all represent the standards which athletics, in the proper atmosphere, can teach our students, coaches, and spectators.

Citizenship is a companion of sportsmanship, reaching out beyond the playing field and stadium into the community. Citizenship can be defined as:

“The quality of an individual’s response to membership in the community as evidenced by respect for self and respect for others. Sports provide not only the opportunity to teach and learn respect for self and respect for others, but it also places participants in a unique context – competition – that can further instill and hone values necessary for the development of respect for self and respect for others.”

Good sportsmanship and citizenship are keys to the public’s perception of interscholastic athletics and activities and their role in the educational system. Athletics and activities, which display good sportsmanship and citizenship, show a positive and productive part of the total educational program offered by a school, and exhibit the justification for the financial expenditures necessary to run these programs.

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“SPORTSMAN”

“a person who can take loss or defeat without complaint, or victory without gloating, and who treats his opponents with fairness, generosity, courtesy”

Webster’s Dictionary



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In Pursuit Of

Victory
with
Honor

Sportsmanship
for
Parents,
Spectators and
Participants

Sportsmanship No Excuses

The Expectations Of Good Sports

TOWARDS OPPONENTS

- ĩ Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend. Who better than yourselves can understand all the hard work and team effort that is required of your sport?
- ĩ Refrain from taunting, trashing talking or making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature. Refrain from intimidating behavior.
- ĩ Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner that you would like to be greeted following either victory or defeat.
- ĩ Give encouragement to injured players and recognition to outstanding performances for both teams.

TOWARDS GAME RULES & OFFICIALS

- ĩ Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student-athlete and the sport, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you, your team, your school and your community in the eyes of all people at the event.
- ĩ Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, fellow students and elementary students. This will assist both them and you in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.

OF THE COACH...

- ĩ Exemplify the highest moral character, behavior and leadership, adhering to strong ethical and integrity standards.
- ĩ Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete.
- ĩ Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
- ĩ Describe and define respectful and disrespectful behavior. Stress that disrespectful behavior, especially taunting, trash talking and intimidation, will not be tolerated.
- ĩ Set a good example for players and spectators to follow. Demand the same of your players.

Sportsmanship A Way Of Life

- ĩ Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- ĩ Instruct participants and spectators in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship the No. 1 priority.
- ĩ Be no party to the use of profanity or obscene language, or improper actions.

OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE...

- ĩ Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and community.
- ĩ Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- ĩ Remember thatís thereís a difference between gamesmanship and sportsmanship. Sportsmanship demands that we not try to push the limits of the rules to gain an advantage in competition.
- ĩ Win with humility; lose with grace. Do both with dignity. Avoid excessive celebrating after a play or end of a game.

OF THE CHEERLEADERS & OTHER STUDENT GROUPS...

- ĩ Understand the seriousness and responsibility of your role, and the privilege of representing your school and community.
- ĩ Establish themselves as leaders in their conduct before, during and after contests and events. Always provide positive support for your team, rather than intimidating or ridiculing the other team.
- ĩ Select positive cheers which praise your team without antagonizing the opponents.
- ĩ Encourage a positive crowd alternative when booing or an inappropriate chant begins.
- ĩ Use discretion in selecting the times to cheer. Give the opposing school the same amount of time your squad would want in performing cheers, and treat opposing players like you would treat your own team.
- ĩ Conduct themselves in an exemplary manner. Remember, you represent your school both home and away.
- ĩ Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including content of cheers and signs.

Sportsmanship Begins At Home

OF SPECTATORS IN GENERAL...

- ĩ Remember that you are at a contest to support and yell for your team and to enjoy the skill and competition; not to intimidate or ridicule the other team and its fans.
- ĩ Avoid antics designed to draw attention to you instead of the game.
- ĩ Remember that school athletics are learning experiences for students and that mistakes are sometimes made. Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people as you would praise a student working in the classroom.
- ĩ Remember that a ticket to a school athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious.
- ĩ Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before and during games, and afterwards on or near the site of the event (i.e. tailgating).
- ĩ Use only those cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
- ĩ Recognize and compliment the efforts of school and league administrators for their efforts in emphasizing the benefits of educational athletics and the role of good sportsmanship to that end.
- ĩ Be a positive behavior role model at events through your own actions and by censuring those around you whose behavior is unbecoming.

OF PARENTS IN PARTICULAR...

- ĩ Understand the purpose of educational athletics. School sports are about kids learning and having fun. They're not about attempting to earn college athletic scholarships.
- ĩ Understand that you are possibly the biggest role model in your child's life. Carrying on wildly in the stands at games and challenging the authority of coaches and officials does little to model positive behavior in your child's presence.
- ĩ Make your cheers during games those of support of your child ñ not instructions as to how to play.
- ĩ Recognize that school coaches and administrators are now in charge of your child's athletic activities. Don't undermine their authority ñ openly or behind the scenes.
- ĩ Don't live your life through your child's athletic activities. This is their time. This is their place. Let them play.