Sportsmanship is EVERYONE’S Responsibility!

The Role of Coaches

Coaches must demonstrate and apply leadership, integrity, responsibility, self-control, knowledge of sports rules and regulations, honesty and sportsmanship at all times on and off the playing field/court. It is necessary and important that the coach acts in a responsible and professional manner at all times because he/she represents the school, community, profession, faculty and student body leaders in this area. The coach must set a good example for all participants. While everyone wants to do their best and hopefully win the contest, coaches must remember that interscholastic athletics is an extension of the classroom and that the coach is probably the most influential person at the contest whose actions will be reflected in the behavior of others.

• Exemplify the highest moral character, behavior and leadership, adhering to strong ethical and integrity standards.
• Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete.
• Set a good example for players and fans to follow—refrain from arguments in front of players and fans; do not make inappropriate gestures to officials or opponents, and do not throw objects in disgust. Shake hands with officials and the opposing coaches before and after contests in full view of the public.
• Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote athletics and the student-athlete. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of all people at the event.
• Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat in public and in meeting/talking with the media.
• Teach sportsmanship and reward your players that are good sports.
• Be no party to the use of profanity, obscene language or improper actions.
• Describe and define respectful and disrespectful behavior. Stress that disrespectful behavior, especially taunting, trash talking and intimidation, will not be tolerated.
• Instruct participants and fans in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship the No. 1 priority.
• Treat opposing coaches, administrators, participants and fans with respect.
A Message From  
The OHSAA Commissioner

Dear Coaches:

Good sportsmanship is the attitude and behavior that exemplifies positive support for the interscholastic athletic programs of Ohio High School Athletic Association member schools as well as for the individuals who participate. People involved in all facets of the interscholastic athletic programs are expected to demonstrate respect for others and display good sportsmanship.

It is essential that student-athletes, coaches, parents, student groups and fans in general are constantly reminded that Good Sports Are Winners! People seriously believe sportsmanship to be an important issue of concern in interscholastic athletics. Positive experiences do not occur by chance, rather they are a result of the educational structure, the right perspective, the right leadership and the true understanding of sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship is not merely a campaign — it is the essence of what educational athletics is about. Let all of us who have the opportunity promote the ideals of sportsmanship so that today's students and tomorrow's citizens may build a better society.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association and the Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity Committee trust that you will do your part in promoting good sportsmanship within your school and community. Remember, Sportsmanship is EVERYONE’s responsibility!

Sincerely,

Daniel B. Ross, Commissioner
Ohio High School Athletic Association

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behavior

1. I will be reasonable when scheduling games and practices, remembering that young people have other interests and obligations.

2. I will teach my athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials and opponents.

3. I will ensure that all athletes get equal instruction, support and opportunities.

4. I will not ridicule my athletes for making mistakes or performing poorly. I will remember that young people play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.

5. I will remember that young people need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.

6. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the athletes’ ages and abilities.

7. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.

Sportsmanship Pledge

Young people need to know that integrity, fairness and respect are lifetime values taught through athletics, and these are the principles of good sportsmanship.

We need good sportsmanship
• To prevent violent action towards officials, opponents and other spectators which are becoming commonplace in today’s society and sports.
• To decrease the emphasis on just winning and losing an athletic event.
• To promote ethics, respect and integrity in all walks of life.
• To promote the ideal of intrinsic rewards of athletics.
• To learn the attitudes necessary for responsible behavior.

You can make proper behavioral choices while coaching your school's athletic team. Those who pledge agree
• To be a proper role model for our student-athletes.
• To inform our student-athletes that we have taken the pledge and why.
• To be clear and firm about rules concerning our conduct and behavior while serving as a coach for our athletic team.

The Coaches’ Pledge

As a school coach, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I know that the principles of good sportsmanship are integrity, fairness and respect. While teaching the skills of the game, I must also teach student-athletes how to win and how to lose graciously, and that sports are meant to be educational and fun. I know the behavior expectations of me by this school, this conference and the OHSAA, and I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of ethic behavior, integrity and good citizenship.

__________________________
Name(s) __________________________
Address _______________________________________
__________________________________________________
Telephone _______________________________________
Date _____________________________________________
Sport ____________________________________________
( ) New Pledge     ( ) Renewal Pledge

You may publish my name along with other coaches who support “The Coaches’ Pledge.”

( ) Yes               ( ) No