

NORTHLAND BASKETBALL COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Basketball is intended to be a recreational activity for enjoyment and health.

This code of conduct has been developed to give participants some guide to the expectations it has on those participants. It is intended to assist everyone to obtain the maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in basketball. As a result, the quality of participation will be improved so people are more likely to start and continue their involvement in basketball. Enjoy!!

1. Remember that basketball is for enjoyment.

Remember that basketballers play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of their motivation. Always make sure that participants are made to feel welcome whenever they attend for training or a match.

Ensure that activities are carefully planned, well structured and varied to provide opportunities for individual and team development. Be willing to depart from the plan to take advantage of an unexpectedly high interest in a particular activity.

Never ridicule players for making mistakes or losing a competition. See errors or losses as an opportunity to learn in a constructive way. Comment in a way that is positive and designed to create interest, involvement and development.

2. Be reasonable in your demands

In scheduling training and playing times and days, be reasonable in your demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm, taking into account their age, level of play and other commitments such as school and employment.

Young children are likely to have more time but short attention spans. They may have plenty of energy but are likely to need more guidance on how best to look after their bodies. The differences in physical and mental maturity can be quite marked in younger children of the same age group. All these factors need to be considered in coaching young children.

Older children have greater demands from their studies and many of them need to work to assist their schooling. They also have many social demands. Try to assist them in achieving a good balance between the various demands on

Adults should in most cases be capable of making their own decisions on priority between basketball and other demands such as work, family and social engagements. Respect those decisions.

3. Teach understanding and respect for the rules.

Teach your players that understanding and playing by the rules is their own responsibility and that the rules exist for the safety, proper order and enjoyment of all people involved in basketball. The lessons to be learned in this respect in basketball are lessons that can and should be carried over into all aspects of their lives. Do not encourage players to ignore or deliberately break any rules.

4. Give all players a reasonable amount of court time.

All players need and deserve reasonable court time. Avoid over-playing the talented players. It is unfair to both them and those who are not so talented. Players cannot improve without the opportunity of a reasonable amount of match practice. Talented players can burn out. Having no or little time in court can cause players to suffer from morale problems and they can lose interest in the sport altogether.

5. Develop team respect for the ability of opponents including their coaches.

Part of participation in sport is respect for all participants in the game. Encourage your players to accept that their opponents are entitled to proper courtesy. This means introducing themselves to their opponents on court, congratulating them whether they win or lose and accepting loss gracefully. Teach them that the opposition coach is there trying to do the best for their team and is also entitled to respect.

6. Instil in your players respect for officials and an acceptance of their judgement.

Players should be taught to understand that officials have a very difficult task to perform and that without them games could not be played. They are there to enforce the rules of play but they cannot always be right. Teach your players to accept bad calls graciously. Abuse of referees is unacceptable behaviour that should not be tolerated. Players who consistently dispute decisions or do not accept bad decisions should be singled out for counselling and guidance.

7. Guide your players in their interaction with the media, parents and spectators.

It is sometimes very difficult for players to concentrate on the game when there is the distraction of the presence of friends and relatives as spectators. Coaches have a difficult role to play in teaching players respect for their parents and other spectators but also teaching them to maintain concentration on the team plan if spectators become over-enthusiastic. Parents sometimes make demands on their children's time which interferes in their basketball activities.

Respect this and try to structure your coaching and their training and playing times and obligations to take those demands into account. There are many other factors which need to be balanced, including venue availability and requirements of administrators. The coach's task is not easy. The presence of media at a basketball game can lead to a temptation by some players to "show off" or otherwise act differently from how they would act normally. Encourage your players to not be awed by the presence of the media. Also teach them that if they are approached for an interview after a game they are representing the whole sport and should behave accordingly.

8. Group players according to age, height, skills and physical maturity, whenever possible.


Uneven competition can lead to a loss of enthusiasm. Coaches should always try and group players of reasonably equal ability. In coaching children it is important to remember the different maturity rates for children of the same age. A player in their early teenage years may be the tallest in their team and yet because they have matured early, be one of the shorter players in only a brief time. Coaches must be ever vigilant to ensure that changes in height and other physical characteristics are noticed and acted upon.

9. Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of the players.

In our increasingly litigious and accountable society, all those involved in sport have a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well being of participants. Coaches are in a unique position to control many of the factors which can have an effect on this welfare. Coaches should be aware of the dangers factors such as heat and dehydration, wet floors and other potentially hazardous environmental situations can cause. A coach has a responsibility to avoid putting players into dangerous conditions.

10. Be prepared to lose sometimes.

Everyone wins and losses at some time. Be a fair winner and a good loser. Disappointment at losing is natural, but it should not be obvious to the point of being unpleasant for others. Just as unpleasant can be the boastful winner. Recognise that even in defeat, the loser has achieved something, just by playing. Not everything in life can be a winning situation. Losing can be an important learning experience for your wider life goals. Guide your players to accept a loss in this spirit.

A large, faint, light grey graphic of a basketball player in a dynamic pose, appearing to be in the middle of a jump or a shot, positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.