

# **SPORTSMANSHIP AND CROWD CONTROL**

The nature of competitive athletics has a tendency to bring out extreme behavior in participants and spectators. We recognize that some extremely positive behavior is very visible and yet some poor behavior and poor sportsmanship sometimes accompany athletics. In an attempt to put into the forefront the values and ideals of Catholic Education we offer the following points to assist athletic personnel and school administrators. All parties involved in sportsmanship (on and off the field) must set clear expectations.

1. Coaches should not assume that their athletes will be good sports. They must foster the attitude that winning by the rules and losing with pride are part of being an athlete. If we ignore poor sportsmanship we accept it! Insist that the athletes in your care represent the ideals and values that you and your school stand for.
2. Imagine an athletic official in his mid thirties taking verbal abuse from a 15 year old in front of hundreds of fans. As a coach you won't allow your players to act this way towards you or another adult. Set up an atmosphere where your athletes accept the decisions of the officials. Many a crowd has been turned against an official by an athlete or a coach. The Catholic League as a group of coaches and athletic directors is in pursuit of quality officiating. Let's not lower the league by degrading any one, let alone men and women who are, for very little compensation, giving something back to athletics.
3. Understand that prevention is the key to crowd management and good sportsmanship. Adult presence is one of the main ingredients that prevent crowd misbehavior. Preferably key adults in the school community are in highly visible spots. These key adults charged with crowd control (Administrators) have management responsibility. Very rarely is it advised to "sit in the stands and take names." Sometimes a simple look at a student can alter behavior. Much like classroom discipline, we don't stand in the hallway and expect our students to behave. We set up the proper climate and carefully react to the situation.
4. It is recommended that adults be stationed throughout the crowd during contests. Dad's Clubs, highly visible, paying attention to the crowd located throughout the gym or stadium often prevents spectator misbehavior. A chart of your gym or stadium indicating the "stations" you want adults at for each home contest should be provided. At important times during the event all adults should be in the visible areas, for example: half time at the concession stands, rest rooms, post game in the parking lot. To solve a potential problem, get in the middle of it! Don't be afraid to be seen--adult presence prevents problems. Administrators must consider the crowd (whatever their make-ups) as "theirs" much like you consider your team "yours."
5. Communication with the opposing school's administrators is very important. Some big rivalries require assistance from the visiting school. Knowing what a large responsibility crowd management is, the visitors should be willing to assist. Administrators, faculty, and parents should be conscious of their crowd on the road as well as at home. For example: visiting school personnel should be visible at half time and in parking lots. Derogatory or inappropriate cheers should be discouraged in advance during school and if possible when they occur

**OVER**

6. Administrators and coaches in schools know when a potentially disruptive or unsportsmanlike event is upcoming. Appropriate personnel are encouraged to communicate with their student body. P.A. announcements appealing to the positive side of your student body can help. For example: "our fans have always been great, showed class and sportsmanship, this is a game when we need you to continue your positive support" or "our goal is to highlight the strength of our team, not knock down the other side from the stands". Communicating with student leaders or athletes (who many be off season) about your concerns and expectations can also help. Let your fans know that the "people from your school are known for their class and sportsmanship as both fans and athletes" Compliment the student body after games on their positive behavior, win or lose."
7. Overreacting adults can cause problems. Our focus here is on presence as prevention. Avoid unruly involvement, physical or verbal harassment when trying to check behavior.
8. Athletic staff members play a key role in instilling the proper attitude on sportsmanship. Clue your staff in to your expectations. Athletic personnel are charged with controlling the conduct of their athletes and their own conduct as coaches. The word will spread through the school, that your coaches do not tolerate poor sportsmanship, and therefore, our fans should follow the lead of the team.
9. The following statement should be signed by all parents/guardians in the Catholic League prior to each season and kept on file at each school. Parents should be made aware of the contents in pre season team-parent meetings.

### **EXPECTATIONS IN EDUCATIONAL ATHLETICS**

The administration and staff of our school, all Catholic League schools and the Catholic League Office wish to make it clear that high school sports are an educational activity. Athletes, parents and friends must be aware of our school's expectations with regard to sportsmanship. Catholic School values should be present at our events.

Unlike professional sports, as a spectator at an interscholastic event, you are a part of the activity, much like the athletes, coaches and officials. **As a participant, (spectator or team member) we expect that you will maintain good sportsmanship or refrain from attending school athletic events.**

- It is expected that as participants and spectators, we will support in a positive way our own team remembering that the athletes, coaches and officials are not perfect and will make mistakes. Negative, derogatory cheers or actions aimed at either team are not acceptable in educational athletics.
- It is expected that you will accept the decisions of the officials without vocalizing disagreement. Officials are an important part of this educational activity. We are sending the wrong message when we challenge or abuse the game official sent to the school to administer these educational activities.
- At all times it is expected that we will respect one another; adults and students alike. This especially includes our opponents and officials, without whose involvement, sport contests would not occur.

**Continued:**

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS:**

1. Hold student body meeting regarding sportsmanship and being a good host. ("Tolerating misconduct can jeopardize athletics"). Schools should set up goals of good conduct and develop procedures and techniques to reach them. All parties read MHSAA Handbook for Codes of Ethics in athletics.
2. A three (3) phase action program:
  - a. Education (students, parents, coaches, athletes, administrators)
  - b. Involvement: (If you ignore it...you accept it. Correct on site.
  - c. Enforcement (progressive penalties or exclusion from events)
3. Effective Crowd Control is best achieved when Principal, Athletic Director, Coach, Dad's Club Members, Student Body, Officers and Faculty are involved in planning and supervision.
4. Notify your local police of scheduled **HOME GAMES** and time they will be concluded. In some instances uniformed security is a must.
5. Parking lot enforcement - security should be visible here - trouble spot!
6. Monitoring lavatories, halls and other known problem areas. Crowd monitors should be where the people are!
7. Observing behavior before, during and after, of questionable persons who may be under the influence of drink or drug.
8. We reserve the right to deny or refund admission - especially to those who may be coming in late. Always have the entrance doors monitored.
9. Avoid possible unruly involvement or harassment, verbally or physically, when asking people to leave because of their behavior. It is a good policy to refund admission.
10. It is best, if needed, that a policeman carry out any forceful ejections.
11. The Visiting Team and spectators should be provided for and looked after from time of arrival to leaving school area.
12. Game Officials:
  - a. Provide parking space close to building.
  - b. Clean area to change, refreshments at intermission
  - c. Privacy before, half and after game.
  - d. Do not allow them to be **ABUSED!!**