



# ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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## Athletic Handbook

This handbook is written to provide a standard of excellence in the area of athletics. In every area of athletics, we desire to portray what it is like to compete with Jesus as our standard! This involves the various aspects discussed in this manual.

First, we lay the *biblical foundation and philosophy* for why we compete in athletics at all. This involves the definition and purpose of athletics, competition from a Christian perspective, winning, team play and evangelistic outreach as well as the ultimate purpose for bodily exercise and physical fitness in general and the athletic experience in particular.

Next, we lift up *a standard of excellence for the Christian athlete*. This involves the standard of God's law (the Ten Commandments) as well as the general discipline of the team, and the external manifestation of excellence in practices and games. We close out this section with a description of the standards of eligibility for athletic competition as well as participation in games.

It is our goal to foster an athletic program that *elevates Jesus Christ* and yet remains in its place within the entire scope of biblical discipleship we call Christian education. Often the idolatry of sports seen in America today creeps into the Christian school and its players as well. We do not wish to be taken away from our ultimate purpose as a school. Athletics must remain as one small area that aids us in fulfilling our goal of preparing students to discipline nations and not become such a major emphasis that it swallows up the academic purpose and other aspects of school life.

## CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The athletics program at **Dayspring Christian Academy** is based upon the belief that our physical condition should be a help in fulfilling the call of God upon our life. Moses and Caleb are good examples of this truth. Each maintained their respective "temples" to such a degree that it qualified them for greater responsibility later in life. Moses was as physically fit particularly in his eyesight, at 120 years of age, as he had been during his young life! (Deuteronomy 34:7) Caleb watched an entire generation die who had rejected God's call (as a result of the 10 spies), yet he had kept his body in such a physical condition that he was as strong at eighty as he had been at forty, ready to take on a mountain of giants. (Joshua 14:10-12) This

physical condition gave both of them a greater ability to fulfill God's highest call upon their lives.

While we realize that in certain situations God can give supernatural physical strength (such as Elijah outrunning a chariot in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 18:46), this in no way negates the responsibility of bringing our bodies into subjection or discipline. God's grace in certain situations does not become the rule at the expense of regular consistent discipline. Therefore, a well disciplined program that helps one to take dominion over his physical body is needed and a vital part of a solid biblical education. Without it, we neglect an important part of discipleship: the body or "temple" the Lord has given to us.

In 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4, verse 8, we read: "*...For bodily exercise profiteth little: but Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and have that which is to come.*"

This Scripture does not diminish the role of bodily exercise, but instead compares its lasting value to godly exercise or godliness. The content of this passage is an exhortation by Paul to Timothy regarding what is needed by leaders in the local church. He is warning Timothy not to get sidetracked from the central focus in life: *godliness after the pattern of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The original Greek implies that the word "little" does not refer to little value, but rather limited value or temporal in nature. In other words, bodily exercise will only be profitable in this life, but godliness will profit you in both this life *and* the one to come.

It is certainly implied here that there are two forms of exercise that both profit a believer's Christian life here on earth, but one takes precedence or priority over the other. We could also state that without the context, vision and goal of godliness or godly exercise (also including the academic discipline of the mind in godly truths), bodily exercise becomes of little profit since its focus is only on this life. Without Christ at the center of any athletic game or program, it is only a matter of time before it will degenerate into a temporal, worldly and selfish pattern. **When the body and its skills are emphasized at the expense of godliness we enter the realm of idolatry.** That is why it is so important to have a clear Christian philosophy of athletics. When our bodies are incorruptible in the next life, we will not need the discipline of bodily exercise at all.

In effect: Godly exercise is the discipline of submitting our soul (mind, will, and emotions) to our spirits (where the Holy Spirit dwells). It is a discipline of forming Godly

character within our lives by allowing Christ to manifest his life in and through us. This takes precedence over bodily exercise, and should always direct its focus as well as limiting its scope and influence in our lives. Godly exercise without bodily exercise allows us little outlets. Bodily exercise is actually submitting of our body (coordination of muscles, etc.,) to our soul. This is important. Without this, all the godliness we exhibit in our soul has little expression here on earth. Little impact is made as well, especially through our appearance and ability to endure physically in service to God and man.

Both Godly and bodily exercise, in their proper balance is needed in order for one to be an obedient disciple of Christ with spirit, soul, and body in good working order. It is precisely this understanding: that bodily exercise is a servant to the godliness formed by Christ in the life of the individual that sets our philosophy apart from the world. The world makes an idol of the physical man, idolizes physical skill and success while the Christian makes a servant of the physical man: seeking to glorify God and his purpose.

### ***Why Play Athletics?***

In laying the above foundation regarding our bodily exercise program, we now focus on athletics in particular. Why should a Christian school or a believer become involved in athletic competition? **Many Christians, with great caution, warn that once involved in the realm of athletic games and competition students, teachers, coaches, and parents will focus more on temporal goals and selfish rewards at the expense of Christian principles and godly character.** A “win at all costs” attitude that is more interested in vainglory and pride might result. This will end up involving the downing of other teams and players, mockery at the authority of officials or simply glorifying rivalries that the Scriptures seems to warn us against, causing division in the church rather than the proper edification in the Lord. This will result, some say, when we move from the realm of simple exercise for the service to competitive games those involve the pressure to win.

We must examine the Scripture as to whether God intends to use this area of pressure and competition or whether he categorically forbids it. *“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:14*

The word press above means, “to scrape” and involves a great deal of pressure. The Christian life is filled with pressure, and though this verse in its context deals with godly exercise

and its pressure, this in principle is also true for the discipline if the body. It is a pressure to fulfill the high calling of God. In other words, it is a pressure to win; it is competition against everything that presses against you. One cannot escape competition and pressure in life, for it is a part of God's plan. In perusing Scriptures, we notice that athletic analogies, specifically competitive athletic analogies, are often used to illustrate the Christian life. Notice some of the following:

*Running:*

*"... Let us run with patience the race that is set before us..." –Hebrews 12:1*

*Wrestling:*

*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood..." -Ephesians 6:12*

*Boxing:*

*Fight the good fight of faith..." -1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:12*

The realm of athletics does indeed differ from general bodily exercise for it adds the distinct element of competitive pressure. Though one is the foundation for the other and one can certainly be in excellent physical condition without ever playing a particular competitive game, there is a certain stamina, courage and character that is only mastered under the intense pressure of athletic competition. The question may still arise, do we need athletic competition as few can get in shape physically with all-around exercises and conditioning that directly relates to our calling? We need a distinctly Biblical philosophy of athletic Competition in order to answer that question.

### ***The Purpose of Athletics***

The word athlete comes from “strife”, or “contest”, and means a “*contender for victory.*” This is its first ingredient as we have noted already. It is pressurized environment where we must contend for victory. Throughout the Scriptures we are exhorted to “win.” We are never exhorted to give up, quit, or to be content to be alive and “survive” in the contest. We are called to win, and though all of us will ultimately win the victory due to Christ, we are also called to win each of the skirmishes in our experiences along the way. The attitudes we bring into the battles we face will determine the kind of life we live here on earth. In order to win, however, it will take Christian character (or temperance and great self-control). The athletic world is a great school that can magnify these battles, teaching us what is necessary in order to handle temporary

defeat on our way to ultimate victory. Note the following passage in these regards:

*“Know ye not that they which run in a race earn all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly: so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it unto subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be castaway.”*-*1st Corinthians 9:24-27*

Other related words help to clarify more ingredients about the distinction of athletics from mere physical fitness. The word sport comes from a word meaning “that which diverts and makes merry; play; game; division; Sports generally refers to a game itself. Recreation, a word meaning “refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil,” refers to the physical and mental benefit of exercise. Without this outlet, we often get too intense spiritually and endeavor to live our lives with no diversion from the main element of our calling. Since we are not God, this often causes “burn-out” in individuals, no matter how dedicated they are in serving the Lord. Athletics gives one recreation and refreshment both mentally and physically within the context of a game with rules and the competitive pressure to win.

That which sets the believer apart from the unbeliever is the fact that our ultimate victory is over sin, self and the devil, which is an eternal prize that far exceeds any material trophy. However, in the contest of life, we can “rest” because of the fact that our forerunner, Christ, has already won. This is why we can balance our lives with diversion in athletics and exercise, and do not have to be always “working” our way toward victory. “Christians fight in victory, not for victory! In athletics we learn to discern the real score within, and we realize that it is possible to lose a game when we win one, or lose one when we win one, depending upon how we handle our own attitudes. **Athletics helps us handle defeat as well as pointing us to the discipline of humility in a victory.** The way this happens is by focusing on the eternal rather than the temporal, and learning to do this in a disciplined way under pressure.

One of the best summaries of Biblical athletics would be 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:5. Paul is writing to Timothy: giving him several analogies of the Christian life. His first analogy is of a soldier in verses 1-4 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, and then in this particular verse he used the analogy of an athlete. The New American Standard Bible is clearer to the original language when it translates this verse as the following:

*“... If anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.”*

Clearly an athlete, like a Christian, is involved in intense competition, and is contending for victory over his flesh and sin nature, the world, and the devil. That which makes the conflict all the more demanding is the absolute obedience required to “play by the rules” a (or biblical principles) rather than blow up or lose self-control under pressure. This is true in life as well as the athletic contest. Therefore; Christian athletics will teach young people how to be intense contenders, never giving up; and yet doing this under self-control and obedience. These lessons will have far reaching consequences when that same young person is faced with the tests and pressures of life in a world that is set on drawing and tempting one away from the Lord.

### ***Competition***

The Christian, though competing against other individuals in a athletic contest, is primarily focusing on the competition within, striving to overcome the old nature and its ways. It is a magnification of Romans 7 or the struggle one has with sin, learning to allow Christ and the Holy Spirit to control one’s nature in the hottest of circumstances. An athletic contest (and any intense trial or fight for victory) has a way of bringing out the “beast” in us if it is not under control.

In a more positive sense it also has the potential of training us to lay aside the weights which easily beset us so that the race can be run more effectively and so we can stay in the race and endure unto victory, (see Hebrews 12:1-2). This contention for victory, no matter what the circumstances (or score of a game), is what Paul called "pressing toward the mark" for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ, (Philippines 3:14 again).

Let us remember then, that the world’s view of competition and God’s are different. The Lord’s focus is on internal competition, realizing that the external one will help give him the pressure and conflict necessary to build the kind of Christian character that is intended in all kinds of circumstances. The world’s focus of competition is on beating the other team, and is quickly reduced to “winning at all costs” rather than seeing the ultimate goal. The world’s focus is always on the temporal while God’s is on the eternal. **A distinctively Christian attitude will make all the pressures of the game a blessing rather than a curse.**

## ***Winning***

The biblical view of winning, stated in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:5 (above), is related to faithfulness and obedience, and only secondarily to the outcome of an individual event or game. Not everyone wins every battle in life, but in Christ we will win the ultimate war. Our faithfulness to the Lord (and His word) will be what keeps us winners even when we lose a particular game or battle. As we have seen already, the Bible says in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 9:24-27 that all run in a race, but only one receives the prize, so run that you might obtain it. However, it goes on to say that the real prize is the incorruptible one, and so there is a deeper victory than the actual game itself. The unbeliever, once again, often focuses on the secondary purpose of winning the actual game. By ignoring the real victory, winning the game becomes an idol and a selfish way to bring recognition to yourself, your team, or your school. It causes great temptations to cheat, lose control, or put on a show rather than build discipline regardless of the circumstances or situation.

## ***Physical Fitness***

One of the real contentions in an athletic contest is bringing “your body into subjection”, as the passage in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 9 states it. This is also referred to in Hebrews 12:1-2, and in verse 12. The greatest hindrance to any individual athlete or an athletic team is the individual and team’s ability to self-destruct when under pressure. The individual or team that learns to keep their bodies in submission, as well as help each other’s weaknesses with the strength and coordination of other players, will learn great lessons and also play consistently well.

Once again, however, the world has a different purpose. The goal of fitness is often for self and vain glory, especially in one’s appearance. The Christian however is physically fit for service to God and man. For the world, the body is the idol and the goal, for the Christian it is a servant: to be used for the glory of God. Once again, the focus is completely different.

## ***Team Play***

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12, that great passage concerning the body of Christ and how each one has their place, is a beautiful picture of an athletic team. Everyone realizes the contributions of the other and works for the overall edification and of the entire team. Some of the lessons from this passage in relation to athletics are the following:

- Learning to respect the fact that each athlete has talent (verse 4-7);
- Learning to play your position without dominating another (verse11);
- Learning to sacrifice selfish goals for those of the team (verses 12-14)
- Learning not to envy another talent or position (versed 15-15);
- Learning that the team needs each player and what they can contribute (verses 17-21)
- Learning that the players who are not starters or regulars are also needed so that we learn to bestow honor on one another rather than pride (verses 22-24)
- Learning that the goal is that there would be no divisions on the team, and we would rejoice and suffer with one another's successes and failures (verses 25-47).

The glory of the Lord has been seen more than once through teams who laid down their lives one for another, who "thought "of passing more than shooting'; and preferred one another before themselves. Only the Christian can really experience what it is like to "think more highly of others' after the example of Christ, (see Philippians 2:1-5). This type of team play will bring glory to God, and be a testimony in a world of cutthroat lust for glory and where team play at best is simply another way to get individual recognition.

### ***Evangelism***

Through proper attitudes in athletics, a public witness can be made for Christ that many otherwise would not see. As an athlete, players are "on display" before others who watch their every move, facial expression and reaction to situations of intense pressure. Players on both teams can be inspired in Christ as they hustle, have intensity and desire for victory.

In Hebrews 12:1-2, we read that there is a cloud of witnesses watching the race of this life. This undoubtedly refers to the saints who have gone on before (Hebrews 11). However, the analogy can be made in reference to athletic events. Many times it is parents, and older athletes, who lead younger ones to a higher standard through what they have learned in self-denial and restraint. Many referees, fans, and parents can be lead closer to the Lord through the inspiration of those on the playing field or court. Through it all, the winning of souls can be a greater reward than simply winning games.

### ***Summary***

In summarizing a Christian philosophy of athletics, note some of the following

distinctions between those and a humanistic or non-Christian view of athletics. It is important to see the distinctions, recognizing the attitudes that must be embraced in order to realize and experience the rewards.

<b>Christianity</b>	<b>Humanism</b>
Godly exercise takes priority over bodily exercise and gives it true meaning.	Bodily exercise takes priority over Godly exercise for it emphasizes this life, pleasure and temporal goals.
Athletics train an individual to contend for victory; giving God the glory in the midst of pressure.	Athletic competition emphasizes rivalries and self recognition
Competition is primarily with one's own sinful nature, bringing it under control.	Competition focuses on beating one's opponent.
Winning is primarily contending for victory over ones carnal nature, and secondarily with the game.	Winning is the only thing, it doesn't really matter how you do it.
Physical fitness is for the purpose of bringing the body into submission as a servant to Christ.	Physical fitness is for appearance sake so I am noticed, serving myself to the fullest.
Team play emphasizes personal productivity and sacrifice for the good of all.	The success of the team helps each individual to succeed, which is the goal.
Evangelism is one of the main goals of athletic competition, so that one's Christian life can be magnified under pressure.	Athletics has no higher goal than pleasure and self-gratification.

## THE CHRISTIAN ATHLETE

### *Embracing God's Law as One's Standard*

God's Law, particularly the Ten Commandments, is the standard by which we all should endeavor to live the Christian life. This standard is increased in weight due to the coming of Christ and not diminished. Now that Christ lives in our hearts, and we have the ability through Him to fulfill the Law, we ought to desire that our attitudes be pure and we desire to keep God's requirements. Only in this way will we always have a guide for our attitude and actions.

The following is a brief articulation of the Ten Commandments as they relate to athletic competition. Ponder their application and make it your prayer as a Christian athlete to have these worked in your heart through the power and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. See Exodus 20 or Deuteronomy 5 for the Scriptural base of these commandments. Note also Matthew 22:37-40 for Jesus summary of these ten as loving God (first four) and man (last six).

#### *1. "Thou shalt not have no gods before me."*

Thou shalt not play for trophies, awards of self-recognition and fame, but only for the glory of God and advancement of his Kingdom.

#### *2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image..."*

Thou shalt not sulk over losing or gloat over winning, making excuses or alibis that remove your personal responsibility.

#### *3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord they God in vain."*

Thou shalt not utter any perverse language or in any other way bring dishonor to the name of Christ by your style or conduct of play.

#### *4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.'*

Remember the Sabbath day, and that all athletic actions must bow its knee to the priority of worship to God and a day of rest each week.

#### *5. "Honor thy father and mother..."*

Honor your parents and your home as a priority over athletics, also giving due respect and obedience to those in authority such as coaches and referees.

#### *6. "Thou shalt not kill."*

Thou shalt not cultivate rivalries or an attitude of "killing" one's opponent that stirs up unnecessary anger in competition.

*7. “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”*

Thou shalt dress modestly, separating and honoring the opposite sex in play, comments and athletic competition through appearance and ethical behavior.

*8. “Thou shalt not steal.”*

Thou shalt not cheat or take unfair advantage, asking odds that thou are unwilling to give.

*9. “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”*

Thou shalt not lie, but always admit one’s error and give one’s opponent the benefit of the doubt.

*10. “Thou shalt not covet..”*

Thou shalt not covet another player’s talent or position, but always work to improve your own productivity, never giving up.

### ***Obedience and Discipline***

In addition to the general philosophy that could describe both the coach and athlete in section one, and the standards we voluntarily unite to uphold in relation to God’s Law, there is a Christian discipline that will unify our witness as athletes and clarify what we stand for and against. The most important standard is obedience and a submissive and respectful attitude towards all coaches, opposing players, and the rules of the game as officiated by referees. It is expected that each player will raise this kind of a standard before themselves as an ideal tool for self-discipline and a good witness. The same basic discipline policies of the school are always in effect in the athletic program. Any disrespect in any other moral type of problem will be handled the same way it is dwelt with in a school setting.

### ***Eligibility for Participation in the Athletic Program***

**1. Athletic Department Paperwork**

Before an athlete is cleared for practice, he/she must have completed all paperwork and paid all fees. This is strictly enforced! Student-athletes will not be allowed to attend practice until these obligations are met. Financial arrangements can be made in the athletic office.

## **2. Academic Qualifications**

It must be remembered that the Christian school is primarily an extension of the formal training of the mind, delegated from the home; therefore, academic standards are of higher importance than athletic competition. Our athletic program exists in order to help balance and extend academics, never in place of or in competition with the curriculum. Since attitude (effort), and conduct relate to character development, and are the standards of the word of God regardless of one's individual talents and abilities; these are the areas in which we place the greatest emphasis for eligibility. All students who desire to participate in extracurricular activities must maintain acceptable effort and exhibit a positive attitude in their regular classroom obligations. Such effort and attitude will be evaluated on a weekly basis by the regular classroom teachers. If any classroom teacher indicates that a student has not met his/her obligations, that student may not be eligible for participation in any extracurricular activities for the following week. For athletics, student participation is further governed by the constitution and by-laws of the PIAA. If, at the end of a week of ineligibility such obligations are evaluated positively, the student may resume participation. Negative evaluations of effort or attitude will result in continued ineligibility for participation. The following qualifications have been set down:

- a) In order to participate in athletics, a student must demonstrate good conduct and effort in each of his classes. Also, a student must not have any academic grade below a D.
- b) The student's eligibility is reviewed weekly and also at trimester report cards and progress reports. The grading period before the first game will determine eligibility, and at other times during the season where a marking period occurs.
- c) Students are expected to attend and participate in each class throughout the entire school day before attending and participating in an athletic practice or game. A student must arrive at school by 11:10 to be considered present for the day.
- d) Legitimate reasons for missing classes during the day will be evaluated by administration.

## **3. Participation qualifications**

Academic eligibility gives the student the potential of playing, but does not insure that student's participation during games. It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team Dayspring Christian Academy is a privilege and not a right. Being on and

maintaining one's membership on the team means accepting all the responsibilities of a student-athlete. However, unlike recreation or intramural teams, equal or guaranteed playing time does not exist. In an effort to win, a coach will use players best suited to the conditions or demands of the contest at that time. A coach must discern which players to play the most for the sake of the testimony of the team and integrity of play. Therefore, there may be a need to make decisions regarding who plays the most games. Productivity is the key to regular play in order to express a Christian philosophy of life rather than one that is based on socialism (whose philosophy would play all athletes the same amount of time regardless of productivity).

a) Effort and Desire- A consistent and willing desire to fulfill your potential as an athlete must be demonstrated. Good character shown on and off the court, as well as “hustle” and 100% intensity is the standard here.

b) Talent and Skill- How well an athlete has mastered the game is very important. You will either help or hinder the team. Those that play “on the front line” in the Kingdom of God work hard to improve their area of gifting, and it is the same in athletics.

c) Conduct and Behavior – How serious are you about your witness as an athlete? Respect for teammates, referees, and those in authority will reveal your obedience to basic rules, which is fundamental for a good athlete.

### ***Physical Education Class Participation***

It is important to also understand that all student-athletes are expected to actively participate in all required Physical Education classes even when “in season” during their particular sport. Physical Education is an important and required course for graduation. Students who participate in interscholastic athletes should not expect “special” treatment from teachers to be excused from Physical Education classes even on the day of competition. Physical Education teachers will use prudent judgment with student-athletes on determining their participation level in class on the day of competition.

### ***Dress Standards***

Boys:

Shorts, T-shirts, sweat pants, sneakers; no cut-off shirts, T-shirts with objectionable logos, no jewelry (safety purposes); regular school uniform dress before practices.

Girls:

Shorts, ( minimum 4 inch inseam), full shirts (short-sleeve, but no sleeve-less), sweat pants, sneakers; no cut-off shirts, or shirts with objectionable logos, no jewelry (safety purposes); regular school uniform dress before practices. No clothing should be tight fitting.

Game Standards

Boys:

Regular school athletic uniform (worn to home games)

High school boys wear dress pants, dress shirt and tie when traveling to other schools for evening games.

Girls;

Regular school athletic uniform. (worn to home games)

High school girls will wear dress slacks and a modest blouse to all away games. Jeans and short skirts are not allowed.

Note: Athletic uniforms adopted by the school will endeavor to be chosen based upon the following criteria:

1. Modesty
2. Styles appropriate for men and women
3. Color and logo co-ordination consistent with DCA Warriors

### ***Electronic Devices Policy***

With the fast pace of technological advancement, the school must balance challenges regarding issues of privacy and bullying, with the need to prepare students to understand and use the technology in preparation for the world that they will enter. Technology such as cell phones, MP3 players, I-Pods, cameras, video recorders and Internet access can all be contained in one device. Many of these capabilities are not needed in the athletic setting and can be, at the very least, distracting to the goals of the athletic department. While technology can be and is used for many good things, we should not be naive to believe it is not also used for many things that do not honor God. The school's general recommendation is to leave cell phones, I-Pods, MP3 players and other electronic devices in the backpack during athletic practices and games. In order for each individual student and family to have the greatest liberty to take advantage of the available technology while maintaining the integrity of the educational process, the principle of Christian Self-Government must be embraced by all. Thus, the following guidelines and

procedures govern the area of electronic/technological devices in the athletic department and are in line with school policies:

1. Cell phones must remain turned off and in the student's backpack during athletic games and practices, including transportation to and from events. Coaches will issue permission to call home at designated times during trips. Parents should instruct their children to abide by school policy.

2. Students must obtain prior permission from their coach to use their cell phone to call home. Once permission is granted, athletes may retrieve their cell phone from their backpack, use it in the coach's presence, and then return it immediately to their backpack.

3. I-Pods, MP3 players and any such devices are not to be used at practices, games or while being transported to or from athletic events unless directly allowed by a coach for an approved purpose, and then must be directly monitored by an adult.

4. Cameras and other recording devices can only be used in at practices and games with the express permission of the coach. Audio and video recording and picture taking in the school without specific permission is an issue of privacy and is prohibited. Video and audio that show up on the Internet without knowledge or permission of the individuals on the video will be seen as a violation of privacy and will result in appropriate disciplinary action and the confiscation of the item in question. Confiscated items will be returned directly to the parent only. Continued lack of Christian self-government in relation to electronics device in the athletic setting will result in further disciplinary action. The school accepts no responsibility or liability for lost or stolen items.

### ***Transportation Policy***

Transportation for all athletic contests, scrimmages and when necessary, practices will be arranged by the Athletic Director. Departure times will be scheduled and published for coaches, players, custodians, faculty and administration.

Student-athletes **MUST** use school-provided transportation to all athletic contests and scrimmages unless prior arrangements have been made with the administration. In addition, student-athletes who are transported by school-provided transportation to events **MUST** return by school-provided transportation unless the head coach receives parental permission personally.

Only a legal parent or guardian may transport student-athletes. This however, should only occur in emergency circumstances. In addition:

1. When teams are traveling to athletic events parents and/or relatives may ride on a first come first served basis as long as seats are available. **Students who are not athletes will not be dismissed early from a class in order to ride a team bus to an athletic event.** **Parents must make other arrangements.**
2. **Students may not ride a bus without their parent or other adult chaperone. The coach or bus driver may not also be the chaperone.**
3. **When a game is scheduled for later than 4 p.m., parents must make arrangements for the supervision of their athletes until game time or bus departure.**

### ***The Player-Coach Relationship***

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics.

Parents can have a pronounced effect on this very important and delicate relationship. While you may not agree with all decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a decided effect upon your child.

If you express a negative opinion in front of your child, you need to remember that he or she will return to practice the next day and may carry with him or her your convictions. Your son or daughter will then have to interact with this coach. You, as the parent, can greatly affect this delicate relationship.

Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instructional process at practice sessions and games. This may ultimately impede your son or daughter's progress and affect their playing time or whether they win a starting position.

In your role as a sport-parent, you obviously love and are concerned about your child's welfare. You want the best for him or her. But a student-athlete can have only one coach. Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the team is crucial in many respects.

Should you have any questions or concerns, do not approach the coach immediately at the conclusion of a contest. At this time, coaches have other responsibilities and it may be an emotional time. Call and make an appointment for a later time and approach this meeting in a calm, courteous and logical manner.

One of the responsibilities which a coach has at the conclusion of a contest, is to have a brief meeting with his or her players. Student-athletes should not pause to talk to parents or friends immediately after games. These brief meetings are essential to the learning process involved in athletics.

Some parents may try to live through their child's athletic efforts. Being positive and supportive is important, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations can be extremely harmful. Allow your son or daughter to enjoy and grow from this valuable experience. In numerous national studies, it has been determined that most student-athletes participate for enjoyment or fun. Excessive pressure or expectations can alter this most fundamental reason for playing.

When you do speak with your child after a contest don't dwell on his or her play, how many points they scored or if they started. Instead, first ask how the team did? Did your son or daughter play hard, give 100% and have a good experience?

### ***Relationship With Officials***

The home school does not get the officials. All officials are assigned by an assigner of the particular sport and neither team has control of which officials are assigned.

Officials agree to and follow a code of ethics. They do not have a vested interest in which team emerges as the victor. It is also important to understand that they are a very necessary part of a game. A contest cannot be played without them.

So while you may not agree with all of their calls, please do not harass or taunt them. It is also important to remember that they are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. In many sports, a team will see the same official several times during a season. Coaches, athletic administrators and schools often work hard to establish a rapport and good working relationship, which can easily be damaged by spectators.

### ***Athletic Chain of Command***

At Dayspring Christian Academy, the following chain of command is in effect.

Principal

Athletic Director

Head Coach

Assistant Coach

Athletes

If there are any questions or concerns involving some aspect of our athletic program, the student-athlete should first contact the appropriate coach. If there were no resolution, he or she would then go to the head coach, etc. It is always better to express a concern than to internalize it. A valid concern that is not addressed can lead to other problems for the student-athlete, the coach, or the team. Following the principles of Matthew 18, a player-coach or a parent-coach conference is initially the most appropriate way to express a concern.

### ***Sportsmanship***

Since athletics should be educational in nature, it is important that all parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our athletes and students. Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules of sport and for all others – players, coaches, officials and fans (*National Federation News*, March 1995, p. 10). It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. This means:

1. There can be no inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.
2. Taunting or trash talking of our opponents cannot be tolerated.
3. Spectators cannot leave the bleachers or enter onto the court or field during a contest.
4. Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team and not against our opponent.
5. In some specific sports such as basketball, we should not yell while an opponent takes a foul shot.

### ***Sportsmanship Expectations***

#### **Acceptable Behavior**

- Applause during introduction of players, coaches and officials.
- Players shaking hands with opponents who foul out while both sets of fans recognize player's performance with applause.
- Accept all decisions of officials.

- Handshakes between participants and coaches at end of contest, regardless of outcome.
- Treat competition as a game, not a war.
- Coaches/players search out and congratulate opposing participant or coach.
- Applause at end of contest for performances of all participants.
- Everyone showing concern for injured player, regardless of team.
- Encourage only sportsmanlike conduct.

### **Unacceptable Behavior**

- Yelling or waving arms during opponent's free-throw attempt.
- Disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs, or gestures.
- Boiling or heckling an official's decision.
- Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official's call.
- Yells that antagonize opponents.
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming loss of game on official, coaches, or participants.
- Taunting or name-calling to distract an opponent.
- Displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.

If you see or hear something that is inappropriate, please help by saying something to the offending individual.

**Remember, admission to a game provides you with the opportunity and privilege to be a positive role model to student-athletes and a witness for Christ!**