



***"The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship"***

***This book represents the finalists and honorable mention entries for the 2005 MIAA Sportsmanship Essay Contest.***

***Contest Winners:***

***First Place***

***Casey Silver, Bromfield School***

***Second Place***

***Joshua Stein, Maimonides School***

***Third Place***

***Lauren Blodgett, Peabody Veterans' Memorial High School***

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**\*\*\* FIRST PLACE \*\*\*****Dear Coach***By Casey Silver**The Bromfield School*

Dear Coach,

I had to write an essay about sportsmanship for English class. So, the first thing I did was look the word up and find that it is defined as, "conduct and attitude considered as benefiting participants in sports, especially fair play, courtesy, striving spirit, and grace in losing." As I was thinking about this definition, I realized that you push our team every day, every game, to demonstrate this. You have high expectations for our behavior and you also set an example for us to follow.

From the beginning, you told us explicitly that you expected us to compete fairly. There was to be no cheating, fighting with players on other teams, or arguing with the refs. We were to play clean and always represent our school in the highest manner possible. We heard this on the first day of practice, with implications that there would be consequences if we did not comply. We really got the idea, though, when we saw you talking with the opposing coach before every game. You were nothing but courteous to them, no matter how important the game or how that team had acted in the past. Also, you shook hands with the opposition firmly with a strong, "Good game," after every match, regardless of the outcome. Your actions showed us exactly how we were supposed to behave.

In many cases dealing with winning or losing can define a team; they can be forever known as the bad losers or the ones you celebrated in our faces. Well, Coach, I think that you have always demanded that we show ourselves in a sportsmanlike way. First of all, part of sportsmanship is the striving spirit, and all you ever ask of us is that we do our best and try our hardest to win. You instill within us a burning passion to do so, and we come out fired up with intensity in every game. When we do win, you tell us, "Congratulate the other team, because they played as hard as you did." When we lose, you tell us to hold our heads high and to be proud of our effort. We never blame the losses on anything else, like the weather or the officials, because you never do. Not a word is ever uttered about the other team. "Congratulate them," you say, "because they played a great game." We do not hang our heads, either, because you do not blame us. We just resolve to do better next time.

I want to thank you, Coach, for promoting sportsmanship on our team. You are an excellent role model, and although your expectations for us are high, they are praiseworthy, and you never allow us to stray from them. I am proud to say that I am on your team because I know that, following your lead, we will never cause another team to think poorly of us. Playing for you, I know that I strive to do my best every time because you push me to do so, although I have the power to accept a loss with a determination to play better the next game. Because of you, Coach, we do have the conduct and attitude that defines sportsmanship, and that is what makes our team really great.

Thank you,

Casey Silver

**\*\*\* SECOND PLACE \*\*\*****The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship***By Joshua Stein**Maimonides School*

My team is only one win away from clinching a spot in the state tournament. We are leading 3-2 in an intense soccer match against North Cambridge Catholic. Both of my parents, my two siblings, my grandfather, and two of my cousins are there in the pouring rain to cheer us on. This is, by far, the biggest game of the season. The game has been a battle so far, with the teams evenly matched, and the tension escalating between the two teams is palpable in the humid air. With each footstep pounding into the muddy turf, the emotions are intensified a bit more on each side. Suddenly, one of the opposing players steals the ball from a midfielder on my team, and charges downfield towards the goal. As the team's sweeper (the last line of defense) I rush to meet him. After he fails on several attempts to get past me and score, I emerge with the ball. Relieved, I clear the ball out of our defensive zone, and think to myself, "Yes, another fifteen seconds closer to the playoffs." A whistle shrieks. The referee signals a direct kick penalty shot. I am dumbfounded – who committed the foul? Before I even realize that the foul was called on me, the opposing player sets the ball, and kicks it just past my goalie's diving hand and the game is tied. I am livid! Foul? Impossible! The whole play was clean! I look towards my coach, expecting her to share in my outrage, but instead she just gives me a look. In one look she tells me *do your job, the referee will do his. Games are not lost because of calls, they are lost because people get caught up in them and don't focus on the game.* The game ends up a tie, and afterward I see my coach go up to the referee to thank him. Not once in the game did my coach lose her temper, not once did she yell at the officials. Likewise, because of her example not a single player from my team has ever argued a call during our soccer matches. I walk over to my family after thanking the referee myself, and they all rush to congratulate me on the game, even though we didn't win. Suddenly it is clear to me. Nobody at the stadium will remember the score of the game in years to come, but they will all remember the players' conduct. We acquitted ourselves as gentlemen, and it all started with my coach.

In my third year playing varsity high school sports, I have learned many invaluable lessons from sports about attitude, teamwork, and leadership. However, I would not have learned half as much without the tutelage of my coaches. They have taught me not only the athletic skills to play basketball and soccer, but also about how to play, win and when necessary, lose with grace.

A good coach is one who helps his players advance in their sport, and leads his team to victory. A great coach, however, is one who not only focuses on the game, but how it is played, and how it affects the lives of his players. In my school, the athletic director and baseball coach, Coach Genuardo, has set the tone for the entire sports program. He not only serves as a role model for the players on the baseball team, he also leads the other coaches in the school. Before every season, he addresses the teams and shares his insights. He tells us that "Every time you (the athletes) make a good play and do not gloat, or don't get a call yet keep your composure, you reflect positively on everything you represent. Every time you go up to the referee and thank him at the end of the game, or shake the opposing coach's hand, you send the message that respect comes before winning. When you compete against other schools, you are given the privilege of having the opportunity to represent your team, your school, your family, and most importantly yourselves." These words ring true to me everyday, both on the field and off.

\*\*\* THIRD PLACE \*\*\*

**The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Lauren Blodgett*

*Peabody Veterans' Memorial High School*

A coach is a role model to players young and old.  
Every coach has a lesson to teach, and a story to be told.

They show you the correct manners on the field or on the court,  
And whatever the outcome of the game, you must always remain a good sport.

Coaches make you play like a team and always display your unity.  
They know that your attitude in the game represents your school and your community.

They help you to “keep you cool” and always control your anger,  
Because they know that high tensions can only lead to danger.

A good coach shows you that it's okay to lose a hard game.  
They show you how to express the loss without expressing any shame.

Coaches let you know it is important to always try to succeed.  
You can still be a key factor in the game without showing any greed.

They will help you understand that when on the bench, you should not pout.  
How many minutes people play is not what the game is all about.

Every coach shows their players that they have a specific role.  
They help you understand what to do to reach your personal goal.

Because you are a team you must always show support.  
Coaches help you keep a positive outlook on and off the court.

Even though you may not like a team, you must always show respect.  
Even just one friendly gesture may have a snowball effect.

When an official makes a call with which you don't quite agree,  
Keep your thoughts to yourself, no one benefits from a “T”.

A coach also brings laughter to the locker room with a funny joke or two.  
You must show a sense of humor yourself, even when the joke is on you!

No matter what happens, they show you how to keep your dignity and pride.  
It helps to know that through thick and then they will always be right by your side.

Sportsmanship taught by a coach cannot be written in books.  
It may even change your view on how the whole world looks.

These qualities will be with you through happiness and strife.  
Sportsmanship truly is a game plan for life.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Ben Silton*

*Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School*

My soccer coach has always said that the Lincoln-Sudbury soccer program is all about sportsmanship, no matter how well we play. I can not argue against him, because I know we have won the sportsmanship award in our league for many seasons in a row. Personally, I find a tremendous amount of pride in the fact that even though our games are so competitive; our opponents still respect us enough to award us the sportsmanship award each year. I think that we can attribute this honor to our coach. Although each team as a whole is expected to exemplify proper behavior and good etiquette, the coach is responsible for teaching his/her players good sportsmanship.

A coach is equivalent to a teacher. They are the source of information, as well as the mentor in skills improvement. However, the most important aspect of a coach's job is guidance. Anyone can teach something they know, but it takes a good coach to properly discipline a team and to show their team the right way to win or lose. A team cannot simply do drills to learn sportsmanship. They must be directed towards good behavior and away from bad behavior. The person to do this is a coach. A coach has the position with the greatest power on a team or in a program. Yet, with great power comes great responsibility. They cannot be held responsible for the abilities of players; this the players must improve for themselves. However, the coach must use his power to make sure that his team follows rules, respects referees as well as opposing players and coaches, and is polite to spectators.

As a captain of my team I also have responsibility for the conduct of my teammates. I can connect with players in a way that the coach cannot. After all, they are my peers. Many times this year I have had to motivate, teach, and act as a precedent for my teammates. I also must guide them away from bad sportsmanship; but, then again, my coach guides me. Therefore, my coach is liable for the conduct of my team.

I have also served as a coach for two local youth basketball teams. I coached kids only a few years younger than myself. However, most of them had just begun playing organized sports. For players in their developmental stages, sportsmanship is just as crucial to teach for success as skills are. I have read magazine articles about the increasingly competitive nature of youth sports and how many coaches (and thus players) disregard sportsmanship. For my fellow coaches and me, it was our duty to make sure our players know that sportsmanship always comes first. We always told our players that although a championship is what we get if we beat every other team, nothing beats a sportsmanship award.

## **The Role of a Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Ashlee Abbarno  
Marlborough High School*

For as long as there have been players, there have been coaches to guide them. The coach is to a team as the teacher is to his students. Like teachers who have the ability to enable students to excel to higher levels, coaches too hold the same ability. The presence of a coach is one that can make a world of difference within a player. While what they do on the field is important, it holds little in comparison to what they do off of it.

The term sportsmanship as defined as the “conduct and attitude considered as befitting participants in sports, especially fair play, courtesy, striving spirit, and grace in losing.” The dictionary will limit sportsmanship, but it extends so much further. Sportsmanship demonstrates character, respect for others, morals, etc. These are the same qualities that often guide how one acts when they are off the field.

While a coach cannot literally create the model player or model citizen, their influence can guide how “players’ conduct themselves. Players often times look to their coach as their out of the home parent, and it is the coach that should show his players right from wrong, give them tools to succeed and lead them to victory. It is the coach that teaches his players that a victory is not always a reflection of winning, but how you played the game. Were you humble in success? Were you gracious in defeat? The same rules apply in the game of life, people are not remembered by hit records, movie credits, points scored, they are remembered by the marks they leave on other people.

It is of little value if the coach does not believe in what they teach, they only do so because they are supposed to. There must be a level of importance within a coach, and a level of effectiveness within what they pass down or teach to the players. The coach must approach every season and every game and every practice, as more than a chance to come out on winning side of a score. They must approach each season, game and practice as an opportunity to better the players they coach. Better them as athletes and better them as human beings. Every individual has the power to likely make a difference. It is the coach who must assume responsibility within them to guide that potential to make a difference in a positive direction.

Sports have been a past time of our country for many of years. At times in our history, one can trace periods in which sports meant so much more than the game itself being played. It was a way to bring people together, give them something to cheer about, be proud of, in times of world war and problems within societies. Sports were a way to escape the reality that often times were too harsh to face. Too often today, we see the taunting, excessive celebration and lack of respect those players and even coaches alike demonstrate. More than a lack of sportsmanship, such behavior is ignorant to what sports represent and mean to this country. It is the coach that can continue to teach such a meaning in his players, and in himself.

**Living the Words**  
*By Matthew Tirrell*  
*Burlington High School*

It is all too common for someone to say “it’s not whether you win or lose; it’s how you play the game,” in reference to something as simple as a game of Monopoly. And it is equally trite to be told to “give one hundred and ten percent” to an economics test. These, and similar sayings have been grossly overused in all areas of life. To most people they are shrugged off as unimportant, but every sports coach knows that these clichés are not just words; they are ways of life and rules to live by. A coach spends his time trying to live by these sayings in the hopes that his athletes will do the same. When it comes to sportsmanship, the situation does not change.

A coach’s job is to make his own words into a reality through the young men and women he teaches. For example, it is not uncommon for a coach to say “there is no ‘I’ in team.” But for him to stop there would fall far short of his responsibility to his athletes. The coach must then make sure that the message sticks. In drills and practice, athletes are taught to think of the team as a whole instead of themselves. They learn to pass or block or pace off each other until they realize that only by thinking of the team unselfishly, can there be victory. In other words, the coach must first tell his athletes what to do, then show that it is right by teaching them to do it by themselves.

A coach, however, does not just idly watch as his team forms itself. He is involved in every aspect of his players’ interaction. He molds the team week after week starting on the first day of practice, teaching them new techniques and aspects of their sport, but all the while whispering, just loud enough to be heard over the inspirational speeches and constant strategizing, “it’s not whether you win or lose...” The coach’s sayings become an undertone to daily practice, they are something that is heard but not heard. It is not until the season and the games begin that anything the coach has said makes sense.

After the first outing, the team finally sees a living example of sportsmanship. In victory, a coach is gracious, telling the team not only how great of a job they did, but also how good of a fight the other team put up. In defeat, a coach is sympathetic but not soft, he makes sure to commend a good effort but to tell those who need improvement what they must do.

By the time the season gets going, the football players are hearty, the runners trim and the gymnast fit and strong, but more importantly they have all begun to understand what their coach was telling them from the very beginning. They have heard their coach’s sayings and they have seen them come to reality during game time. And all they must do to be reminded is to look to their coach, because in him is where the ideals of sportsmanship lie.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Nicole McCormack  
East Boston High School*

When one thinks of their coaches, they are often reminded of the many lessons they are taught on and off the field. Coaches are very often looked up to as role models. Not only do they affect the player's athletic performance but they also affect the players' attitudes towards their fellow teammates and opponents. The definition of a good coach from a player's perspective is a person who not only teaches the fundamentals of a sport but the state of mind the player should be in on the field. Opposing teams should not be looked at as enemies but as friends who help us get better at whatever sport is being played. Coaches are relevant to helping their players develop as a kind, cool-headed, skilled athlete.

Before a team even steps on the field, court or track, they should be informed on the importance of sportsmanship. They learn this importance from the one person they rely on most, the coach. When a decision needs to be made to lead a team to victory, the coach is who they turn to. The way a coach conducts him/herself has a huge affect on the player's conduct. If the coach looks mad, there is a good chance the player's attitude will deteriorate. If the leader is leading by example, the example should be a positive one.

If a coach is seen on the sidelines yelling and swearing at the opposing coach or the game official, the players tend to realize that these sort of actions are acceptable when they are not. The way a coach treats other coaches demonstrates how players should treat other players – monkey see, monkey do. If a coach shakes the hand of his opposing coach and thanks him for a great game, the players will do the same. The best coaches lead by example. Sportsmanship is contagious and should be recognized if being displayed. Coaches are greatly followed whether they know it or not, but they should always watch their actions in front of the team.

In the classroom, many teachers use many different strategies to get their lessons across. Most likely when it is time to be tested, the student will use the teacher's method to solve the problem. The same applies on the field of play. If a coach shows their players they are greatly anguished by a defeat, the player will then conduct themselves in a derogatory manner which as a consequence, makes them look bad.

If good sportsmanship is taught at a young age it will stay with the athlete and hopefully become a steadfast characteristic. In many cases the sportsmanship of a player highlights the player's athletic performance. One coach always said to me, "You win some, you lose some, some get rained out, you play another one tomorrow." Accepting this is what sportsmanship means to me.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Kim Pomerleau*

*Reading Memorial High School*

The leaders of sports and extracurricular activities play a major role in our society. Many children are more attentive to their coaches than to their teachers. This gives coaches part of the responsibility of enriching young minds by teaching the ideals of good sportsmanship; sportsmanship is traditionally defined as conduct and attitude appropriate for participants in sports, especially courtesy and grace in losing. To eight-year-old outfielder, Kevin, the word means, “being nice to the other team if you lose, but it’s really fun if you win!” Sportsmanship can take on many different faces in various events, but it all condenses to one point; maintaining chivalrous behavior in a sporting arena.

A leader must guide a group striving for a mutual goal. It is his/her responsibility to foster a healthy environment for the members and, most importantly, to impart the virtues of sportsmanship on the field. The best way for a coach to imbue these ideals into his/her team is through practice and positive role modeling. Leaders are human; sometimes they struggle to maintain their composure when the desire to win conflicts with emotional restraint. As a preacher leads his congregation, he strives to educate and inspire his members to lead respectable lives through coaching and modeling good behavior. At times it is no easy task for the human spirit, as news reports demonstrate a constant flow of violence and scandal.

Children often look up to their coach as a role model for behavior, often replicating it on the field. A child’s development is dependent upon various role models; they have much to learn about the world and how to treat others respectfully. There are many positive role models who teach the kids to love their game beyond the mere aspect of winning, and who help the kids reflect good sportsmanship and love for the game. Yet there are some leaders who understand the importance of sportsmanship but their actions speak to the contrary. Insulting players and arguing with officials or other leaders in the heat of the game is unacceptable. This behavior undermines the definition of sportsmanship that they strive to instill.

The principles of sportsmanship can be applied to all youth activities. For a band leader directing a group of young musicians in a competition, he should not yell at a tubist who makes a mistake or incite arguments with fellow band leaders over whose band performed better. That also sets a bad example to be mirrored by his band students. A theatrical director must help make the actors respect not only their fellow actors but also the technical members. It is the director’s job to combine these two “players” to institute a sportsmanlike production. Not only does setting a good example make for better working conditions and respect but also a better game, concert, or show. If good sportsmanship is demonstrated by the coach or leader, the ideals will be replicated by the players on the field and in their daily lives.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Ana Lisa Potishnak  
Belchertown High School*

“It’s not whether you win or lose, it’s how you play the game,” is the cliché that has been instilled in all of our minds for as long as we can remember. This idea no doubt applies to the prospect of sportsmanship. When a coach is heard reciting this line to his team, what he is really telling them is to take pride in their integrity and put good sportsmanship above dire attempts at winning. On the flip side, winning must be taken with graciousness, so it seems to be implied. However, how much of a role do most sports coaches actually play in ensuring that sportsmanship is upheld? One would like to say it is entirely the responsibility of the coach, when in fact it is really a shared duty between coach and players.

It is true that the coach sets the number one example for his team. In order for his players to learn to value sportsmanship, the coach must sincerely exhibit sportsmanship himself. He should praise good attitudes and proper interactions with the opposing players, and scorn ill treatment of opponents. He should let the team know often that he does not condone cheating in any manner or inappropriate aggression. Punishment should follow violations. He needs to ensure that the members maintain a positive and constructive relationship with one another. He must exhibit that each team player is valued and never show favoritism. Respect for each individual must be maintained. He himself should show the team how to lose with pride and win with grace. His actions influence those of the team’s individuals in a large way.

However, assuming that an ideal coach works to ensure sportsmanship in the perfect way, the responsibility to follow the example falls to the team. No matter how great the coach’s regiment for ensuring sportsmanship might be, team players must truly think it right to exemplify this practice. They themselves must want it and feel good about it. If the players, as in some cases, feel indifferent or impartial to the prospect of sportsmanship, their actions will reflect accordingly. In spite of an excellent, encouraging coach, they will find a way to act as they see fit and will disregard sportsmanship. Though the coach is set up to positively influence attitudes, it is the individuals’ responsibility to take on that positive influence. It is true that the coach has the power to give a punishment to those who don’t abide by the desired behavior in hopes that it will force good sportsmanship upon them. Essentially, such an idea cannot be forced upon anyone. The team members will be inspired to follow good sportsmanship, or they will ignore it (and effectively elude punishment when possible).

In conclusion, although the coach must be a paragon of sportsmanship for his team, the larger responsibility falls to the team players to sincerely put sportsmanship into practice. While the demonstrative role of the coach is significant and mandatory, sportsmanship is ultimately upheld by the team players. The decision is in their hands. Either they will follow the coach’s example, or they won’t.

**Where the Heart Is**  
*By Stephanie Crisp*  
*Whitman-Hanson Regional High School*

I stood on the starting line with my heart pumping, the butterflies in my stomach feeling like they had taken off running without me. I felt like it was my first cross-county meet all over again, as if I was the same apprehensive freshman who had no idea what was going to happen once the gun went off. Yet this time I was a senior, and a captain, no less. I had given my team a pep talk, wished everyone good luck, and advised the freshman on racing strategies, giving off every appearance of being calm and confident. Standing on the line though, all I could think of was last season.

As a freshman and sophomore, I had been young and talented, working my way up to placing third on our team and earning a league all-star award as a sophomore. However, injury has a way of striking when you least expect it, and after being forced to take five months off of running, I was not in top form during the spring track season. By summer, my heart was not into training. Therefore, when cross-country season rolled around junior year, I suddenly was struggling. My times were much slower than the previous two years and I was losing to girls that I had never lost to before. My coach, however, was always positive. When after a string of lackluster races I came to him upset with my performances and doubting myself, he reassured me that with hard work my times would improve and not to dwell on individual accomplishments. Instead, he stressed the importance of developing leadership and unity within the team and on progression as a whole. This encouragement spurred me to be positive too. It was much easier to be gracious to my teammates and others when they beat me because I knew that Coach believed that I was still an important member of the team, regardless of how well I placed. I found myself encouraging my younger teammates and congratulating both them and competitors from opposing teams after a race, no matter which way the results fell. This attitude took the pressure off of my performances by emphasizing the importance of leadership and setting a good example for my younger teammates. Without the pressure, I was able to rediscover my love for the sports itself, not just the temporary high of success. Once my heart was back into running, my body followed, and though the last race of the season was the toughest, it was also my best of that year.

Now, standing on the starting line, I took deep breath. There was no reason to be nervous. What Coach has helped me to learn the previous season was that though placing well was important, having the right attitude was essential. Remembering his guidance, suddenly the pressure turned into anticipation. No matter what, I loved running, and even if I did not do as well as I had hoped, I would have fun trying. "On your mark..." The gun went off, and cross-country season had officially started!

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Geoff Bergeron  
Leominster High School*

Beep! Beep! Beep! The whistle blew to end the game. The two teams had played a grueling ninety-minute game. The sweat and heavy breathing the players released showed how intense and hard fought the game truly was. After the routine of shaking one another's hands the teams headed to their benches. While one team packed up and headed home for a warm meal and finish the dreaded homework they had been putting off until tonight. The other team stayed for a meeting. The players were shocked they were still there considering they had won. As they chatted about the win the coach walked over to them.

"Quiet down", he exclaimed. As the team lowered their voices a cool breeze blew by them suddenly turning their sweat drenched uniforms into icicles. "Well, that's another win under the belt. The reason why we are still here is not because of the way we played on the field tonight, but by the manner which we played," the coach said. The players looked at one another trying to fathom the phrase. The coach continued, "We cannot keep playing the way we play. The athletic director spoke with me today and he said if we do not get our act together he will cancel our season and I totally agree with him."

"But coach we have won all our games," one of the players announced.

"It's not about the winning or the losing, it's how you play the game," the coach replied. "The referees are tired of arguing with you and hearing the language you have been using and it's a miracle we have not gotten a card yet. Maybe for once you could help the opponent up from the ground after you have slide tackled him, disregarding whether the call was good or bad. Arguing with the referee will just make things worse for you and your teammate that might happen to be playing a fair game. If sitting a few players on the bench to get some sense into you is all it takes, then I am willing to do it. In a few years you will look back and you may say, 'Remember the year we went undefeated. That was a great year.' and you may be happy with that, but is more than that. It's what you take with you like good character, kindness, and being fair because in the real world that is how people will remember you, not as leading goal scorer, but as a good person, a good leader. I hate to say it, but we are under a microscope. One more complaint from a ref and that may be the last end of the season. So whoever thinks they can mouth off to the ref, be prepared to sit the bench. Am I clear with that?" the coach questioned.

"Yes coach," some players replied as others nodded their head yes.

"Good. Now let's get on the bus and head home. I am famished." And as the team gave a little chuckle and boarded the bus they knew their coach meant what he said. He was a proud man and he loved the game. It was always about the love of the game. There will be a few that will sit the bench but most of the players were a little bit wiser than when they had gotten off the bus.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Arielle Bluestein  
Mansfield High School*

Today's society is shaped through the actions of many people. We look up to the CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, celebrities, government officials, and of course athletes. This group of select people is by far a minority in our country, so why is it that we look up to them? These people are able to create a public persona for the entire world to see, they are given the spotlight. They can, and do, influence both individuals and society as a whole. Their speeches, their clothes, their actions are for all to see, hear and act on. You may think the girl in your math class has the most original style, but just pick up any *Cosmo Magazine*, and you'll see her clothes on Cameron Diaz. You may think the kid in your English class that always speaks of political happenings is ridiculously smart, but just pick up any newspaper; or you may think the superstar quarterback has the best way of handling pressure on those third and longs, but just watch Tom Brady. The head honchos of today's society are those making millions doing what they love, but it is different on the high school level. In a smaller town we don't have the fame to interact with, we don't have the opportunity to be directly influenced by them, so athletes look for guidance from our coaches.

As a high school athlete, I have the opportunity to work with many different coaches, in and outside of school. I have the opportunity to also see many different kinds of athletes as I travel from town to town, state to state competing. In my travels I have seen people come in last place with a huge smile, first place with a huge smile, last place with tears and even first place with tears. These tears aren't the happy ones- but I have seen them. Every athlete has a different way of handling themselves whether they are winning or losing. However, losing tends to bring out the true personality of the athlete. Everyone hates to lose; our society tells us that losing is bad; therefore we become distraught with any loss. By distraught, I mean distraught- running away, crying, throwing themselves on the ground, throwing things, screaming at the other players, blaming the other players. It's a wide range. This is where sportsmanship comes into play. As an athlete, I don't want to see or have to deal with sore losers, sore sports or just in general, uncivilized people.

Our society defines a true sportsman as one who graciously accepts a win or a defeat, usually with a shake of the hand. They put the game behind them, and look ahead to the next one. Because we aren't directly influenced by professional athletes, we learn how to be good sports through the actions and advice of our coaches. Our coaches guide the team to both victory, and defeat, but must they always find a way tell you what you did well. They congratulate victories, and honor losses. They offer constructive criticism after every game, not just the bad. They congratulate the other teams, even if they lost. Our coaches lead by example. If you have a coach that doesn't do anything that I mentioned above, they are not a good role model and should not be in such an influential position. Coaches have a lot of pressure put on them. They must turn rugged teenagers into civilized athletes in a matter of months; they must deal with the schools', the parents' and athletes' pressures and desires to win. They take on this responsibility and should be rewarded when they create sportsmen, win or lose. Our society expects sportsmen. The ethics our coaches teach us as athletes are what shape our society, because we are the future head honchos, the ones expecting sportsmanship out of every athlete. Sportsmanship furthers our society, and our coaches play a crucial part in promoting it.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Emily Levoy*

*Newton North High School*

Sportsmanship is the guideline that every athlete and coach must follow to ensure that everyone participating in the sporting event walks away with the most positive experience possible. Everyone involved must play a role in this, but it is especially up to the coaches to make sure that no one gets emotionally or physically hurt. The coach is a key factor in sportsmanship because the coach has a lot of control over the emotions of the players.

I had the same basketball coach for six years. The first five seasons were amazing. My coach was a very positive woman. She yelled occasionally, but only in criticism, never in an insulting manner. My teammates and I followed her lead and were very good sports. We never got technical fouls and did not participate in trash-talking. However, my coach's style changed in the sixth season. Her criticisms became insulting, lowering the team's confidence and enthusiasm. This was reflected in our sportsmanship. I watched as my teammates received more and more technical fouls and got into more and more fights. They took their anger towards our coach out on the other team and the referees. I realized I had to take matters into my own hands. I decided to write my coach a letter, informing her of how her new behavior was affecting all of us.

This is what I wrote: Coach, I've been playing for you since 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and basketball has always been my life. Over the years, I've gotten to know you really well as a coach, and also as a friend. I've loved every season so far and our team chemistry was really amazing because we stayed together for all those years and got the opportunity to bond. However, I think you have changed your coaching style, and I preferred the old one. Our team used to be very positive, with everyone pointing out the good things that people were doing. Our team used to be a team that wasn't very strict, but played with heart at every game. Now it is more about criticism and rules and I don't find it as fun as the old team. Personally, the yelling about every detail really destroys my game. If I make a mistake, I usually know what I did wrong. All of this yelling just makes me feel the need to prove myself, which usually leads to frustration and anger. This is why I have been playing so out of my head this season, and it is why the sportsmanship on our team is really suffering. Look at the other day, when our team received two technical fouls. My teammates were frustrated because of the yelling from the bench, not because they were upset with how they were playing. If they received positive encouragement, perhaps they wouldn't have been upset enough to take their anger out on the referee. Obviously, they are still responsible for their actions, but their actions could have been prevented by positive feedback. Overall, this system of yelling and criticism is more detrimental than helpful. I just want to relax and play basketball. I know I should have talked to you earlier this season, but I kept thinking that it would get better. I hope that it will because I don't know if I could ever bring myself to quit. - Emily

My experience on this team exemplifies both the positive and negative role that a coach can have in promoting sportsmanship. My team treated others the way they were treated by the coach. When a coach treats everyone with respect and criticizes constructively rather than caustically, good sportsmanship follows naturally.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Stacie Southern  
Bishop Fenwick High School*

The coach plays an essential role in promoting sportsmanship to his or her athletes and players. A coach's behavior and attitude both on and off the playing area greatly impact an athlete. It is crucial for coaches to display sportsmanship to their players because often kids learn best by seeing a role model setting a good example.

In sports, the coach very often stands out as the primary teacher of values, character, and sportsmanship. A coach who demonstrates sportsmanship teaches ways to be encouraging to others, to congratulate both teammates and opponents, and to be humble about victory and graceful with defeat. All too often we witness an unsportsmanlike situation involving coaches, officials, parents, teammates, opponents or spectators. Coaches should constantly strive to teach their kids to treat each of these people with respect. Accepting a bad call, shaking hands with opponents and recognizing good plays made by others all represent ways to display respect. Players should clearly understand from their coaches that rude remarks, excessive celebration and unsportsmanlike actions are unacceptable. Coaches should teach that a good athlete may not always win but is always respectful of the people around them.

A coach should never talk negatively to or about his or her players. Though a coach might not mean to be degrading, put downs or negative words often turn out to hurt an athlete. There are many examples of displaying discipline in positive ways. Negative comments should always be replaced with those which build up a player's self-esteem and confidence. An athlete who seems to think negative behavior is acceptable may be thinking that way only because this is the kind of unsportsmanlike behavior that the coach has exhibited.

Coaches who care solely about winning a game, tournament or title has let the true definition of what it means to be a coach escape them, and unfortunately, any family with involvement in sports has experienced a coach like this. Instead of showing players that it is absolutely necessary to win, coaches should be teaching the values of sportsmanship which includes teamwork, fairness, perseverance and having fun. A coach should always open his eyes to the opportunity his players are getting to make new friends and build upon relationships. Finding a balance between competitiveness and having fun is a necessary quality of a coach who displays sportsmanship. When an athlete suddenly no longer finds a sport enjoyable, the coach may want to reevaluate his priorities. The key message from a coach to his players should always tell them that they are winners regardless of what the scoreboard says.

A good coach teaches players how to become better people while helping them to develop their skills. Coaches need to be willing to challenge their players in order to take their skills to the next level. Besides bettering themselves as people, a coach teaches his players how to help each other thrive as athletes, as people and as a team.

Clearly, the coach efficiently illustrates every aspect of sportsmanship while watching his players flourish. Throughout my athletic career, I have been fortunate enough to have many coaches who have displayed the kinds of qualities that I have previously described. These coaches have served as positive role models for my teammates and I. With every experience I've had with sports – my first game and my last, all the wins and many losses, the fun times and the disappointing ones – I have grown as a person. Indeed, all of my coaches have played a vital role in my life and I would like to thank them for helping to strengthen my character and skills which have enabled me to be the person and athlete I am today.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Chuck Gregory*

*Greater New Bedford Reg. Voc/Tech High School*

As a member of a high school sports team, I know first hand that a coach has a great influence in the behavior of his or her athletes. Some athletes just come into the program being good sports, but others need to be taught by the coach. A good coach should not only develop a competitive team, but a team that also is respectful of everyone including other teams, coaches, officials, and fans. Coaches play an important role in developing good sportsmanship among their student athletes.

During the years the years in high school, most students do a lot of growing up and mature into moral young adults. Sports help student athletes grow into these good citizens. One reason sports help mature students is because of the lessons taught by coaches. A good coach not only teaches an athlete how to be successful playing the sport, but also teaches discipline. Coaches also help build character in athletes. Most athletes in high school are not going to grow up to be professional athletes. The lessons taught by coaches will have as much of an impact on the lives of students once they leave the field for the real world as they do while on the field. The traits and morals taught by coaches help athletes become better people on and off the court.

However, students aren't the only ones who need to be taught sportsmanship. Sometimes parents encourage their children to win at all costs. In these situations it is also the coach's responsibility to confront the parents and promote sportsmanship as well as competition. Also, during games or athletic meets, fans sometimes get out of control. I believe in that type of situation, it is also a coach's responsibility to approach the fan and promote sportsmanship. Coaches have a great role in promoting sportsmanship between student athletes as well as parents, family members, and fans.

Coaches that promote sportsmanship can prevent some conflicts between athletes. Sports are much more enjoyable when you develop friendships with athletes on your own team as well as athletes on opposing teams. Being on a sports team is a great way to meet new people and make new friends. Sports are supposed to be fun, but when athletes don't act sportsmanlike, it ruins the fun for everyone. Athletes gain much more from sports when they are taught sportsmanship by their coach.

As a member of the 2003-04 Voc-Tech Track Team that won the league sportsmanship award, I know that athletes can be successful and be good sports. Our team won the South Coast Conference Championship that year. Most teams or athletes that are successful are stereotypically cocky or flashy. However, our coach, Mark Thornhill, taught us to be respectful win or lose. Winning feels much better when being congratulated by your teammates as well as opponents. It is a coach's responsibility to teach this kind of sportsmanship to the athletes in his or her athletic program.

The lessons taught by coaches will make their student athletes better people during their time on the court as well as in their everyday lives. I can tell you from personal experience that coaches play an extremely important role in promoting sportsmanship to their athletes.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Caitlin Flaherty  
Pembroke High School*

“Take a seat on the bench,” our softball coach growled through gritted teeth.

Our pitcher responded by storming off the field, slamming her glove into the ground, and kicking over a row of bats.

“Forget about pitching the next game too,” was his reaction as the rest of the infielders and I stood gaping around the mound.

*How could Coach do this to us? Sitting our ace during the two most important games of the season? Sure, she yelled at an ump and started talking trash to the other team, but we needed her in these games.*

Sullenly, I made my way back behind home plate to warm up our backup pitcher who had probably seen about three innings of work all season. As I caught every pitch, each one a seemingly five hundred times slower than those of our ace, I saw our chances of making the tournament quickly diminish. With each pitch, my anger mounted.

*I can't believe him! Just to make a point he is going to risk our whole season! Who does he think he is? We have worked hard all year for this and now he is going to sit our pitcher! Who cares about sportsmanship? We need to win!*

Despite our best efforts, we ended up losing that game. Our backup pitcher got rocked for nine runs in the last two innings. Without our ace on the mound, we also suffered a crushing defeat to our league rivals the next game, ending our bid for a tournament berth. As we slapped hands with the other team after the game, angry and humiliated, I heard the other coach turn to my coach and say something that would forever change my view on the end to our season.

“You know coach,” he said. “I’ve really got to hand it to your team. They’re a great bunch of kids. They play with a lot of heart. I don’t know if you know this, but you you’ve got one of the most respected teams in the league.”

*Respect? Us? We lost. We lost by a lot. Why would anyone respect us?*

That is when the words Coach had been preaching to us all season finally sunk in. From the beginning he had always emphasized the importance of sportsmanship.

“Anyone who does not show good sportsmanship will not play for me,” he would say as twelve pairs of eyes rolled. “In the real world, no one will care about how many softball games you won. But, they will care about something more important. They will care about your character. That says a lot about who you are as a person, not winning some softball game. That is what you can learn right here on this field.”

He was right. The coach’s job is more than hitting us grounders and teaching us the correct way to throw the ball. The coach’s job is also to teach us about more important things in life. If he had allowed our pitcher to stay in the game, he would have been telling us it was okay to be bad sports as long as we won. He wanted to win just as much as we did. However, he knew it was more important to teach us about sportsmanship, a lesson we could carry with us long after our playing days were over.

**Grounded – Conversations with Wendy**

*By Danielle Kaminski  
Marlborough High School*

9/18/03

Hi Marcy! I'm sorry I can't hang out with you on Sunday. I should also mention my brother can't hang with your brother either. We're both grounded. Mom grounded us because she said we needed to learn better sportsmanship. She says it's "the way I treat players, making fun of them when they mess up or look disheveled". I think she grounded me just because she grounded Brendan. He was angry with her so he swore at her. Well, mom went berserk, wanted to know where Brendan had heard that disgusting word. He said that his coach shouts it at the umpires when he gets frustrated. I think she was ready to pull Brendan off the team right then. Instead of cutting us from sports completely mom invited the family to play soccer over the long vacation. "Maybe we'll learn by example." - Wendy

9/21/03

Hey MK! I totally get what my mom was talking about when she said I had no sportsmanship. We were all playing soccer when my cousin, Mike stormed off. I chased after him. He told me that my behavior on the field was making me look disgusting. I told him I wasn't sure what he meant. He then asked me where I learned to be such a pain while playing sports. I told him- hey people always make fun of other people, my coach hears me make fun of the other team and never says anything, so why was he so upset. He told me "One thing I learned playing professional soccer is the importance of good sportsmanship. You look up to your coach and because he hasn't stopped your comments you assume that they are fine. It is the coach's job to be the example of sportsmanship so that athletes are started, inspired and taught sportsmanship. Sportsmanship teaches you to respect other people and helps you to play up other people's strengths so that they look better and perform better as a team. You will also be more apt to respect people off the field. You'll learn to stay cool headed and that it's just a game. When you keep your temper and don't put down others you enjoy playing more, everyone else enjoys playing more and the fans enjoy watching you more. You will encourage people more, which will up their game. If you or your coach practiced sportsmanship you would see how much of an impact it has on the team's game for the better." I thought about it and realized what Mike said made sense. I'm allowed to play in Tuesday's game and I can't wait to be a real team player. AND, I told mom I wanted my brother's coach's number because I wanted to call the coach and tell him how I didn't appreciate his swearing on the field, that my brother and others took it home with them. He said he hadn't noticed and he'd work on it. - Wendy

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Megan McLaughlin*

*Billerica Memorial High School*

Sportsmanship is the paramount of athletic qualities, distinguishing genuine athletes from those of lesser prestige. Sportsmanship is the foundation of athletic passion, upon which is built talent and skill. As athletes undertake endeavors to improve, and strive to be the pinnacle of athletic ability, the basic principle of sportsmanship can be overpowered. The instructor, and mentor, of the athlete, the coach, is the sole inspiration designated to instill this quality within each and every athlete. It is the undeniable responsibility of the coach to promote an upkeep of the athletic foundation, sportsmanship, such that the institution will not crumble.

Coaches are often viewed as heroes, invincible and admirable. The qualities instilled within each coach often radiate onto the athletes they train. The coach is the example to which each athlete resorts while on, and off, the playing field. Coaches who embody the passion and the integrity of athletics often promote sportsmanship and it follows that the athletes will do likewise. The coach that encourages and enforces sportsmanship also encourages the mindset of each athlete to follow suit, therefore developing a genuine passion for athletics.

The void of sportsmanship in a coach directly results in a nonexistence of sportsmanship in athletes. Each and every coach portrayed as fighting with referees and bashing opponents relays a message that it is acceptable to act in this unprofessional manner. The mannerisms of a hero will be imitated and extended, whether they are positive or negative. Coaches establish guidelines for respectable athletes by being examples of them. A coach who argues and yells obscenities mentally communicates to an athlete suggesting that if there is a disagreement, violence and rash behavior can be resorted to in place of sportsmanship. The coach who lacks sportsmanship lacks a true passion for sport and this falsehood will be conveyed onto athletes in the most negative of ways.

The coach is the guiding light, the star that athletes aspire to become. The behavior of a coach is likely to produce a ripple effect on the athletes he instructs. Therefore, the sportsmanship promoted by the coach is the sportsmanship the team will display on athletic grounds. Sportsmanship must surpass the blindfolds of individual fame and glory. Coaches reveal these truths and are solely responsible for unearthing, or distorting, the genuine athlete in each and every person.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Rachel Feyre*

*Chicopee Comprehensive High School*

It is stated in Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary that sportsmanship is the “conduct and attitude considered as befitting participants in sports, especially fair play, courtesy, striving spirit, and grace in losing.” Sportsmanship is a vital ingredient in becoming a well-rounded athlete, and it is the coach’s responsibility to promote such goodness in his/her team. All of these pieces that comprise sportsmanship form the beautiful structure that is *athletics*, and without this as a foundation, the delicate web would be broken. While running varsity cross country and indoor/outdoor track and field for four years, I have been blessed with terrific role models as coaches. Without them, I would not be the same person I am today. Had I not learned anything else from my coach, I have learned to strive to show flawless sportsmanship.

The value of fair play is so necessary in every tournament. George Herbert once said, “It is a poor sport that is not worth the candle.” To have respect toward all rules and officials shows a maturity that very few schools consistently display. My coach preached to us the importance of *earning* your place, time, or throw. It is worthless had you stolen these recognitions. I realized how much her words impacted me when I noticed how I ran even when I didn’t feel my best; just for the girls.

The coach of my team encourages us to show our tremendous school spirit at every tournament. To show our pride for Chicopee Comprehensive High School, pride in our teammates, and even pride in ourselves boosts our adrenaline and readies us for the race. She also stressed to us the importance of representing one’s school properly and showing visiting teams how dynamic we all are by displaying courtesy before and after the match. Whether through helping the opposing team set up for the meet or even congratulating them afterwards shows the maturity of our young generation. Even after we have finished running, my coach expects that we cheer for our runners as well as the visiting team. To sincerely walk up to one’s opponent after the meet and to shake their hand demonstrates immense maturity. It reflects a lot about a person to cheer for your opponent, she said, and to do that, shows extreme sportsmanship.

My coach encouraged each of us to realize that when we ran our best, we should walk away feeling satisfied, no matter how many times we failed. This technique makes one feel proud of herself for running whatever time; for after all . . . the fact is . . . you ran and did your best.

My track and cross country coach has taught us also to use sportsmanship as a guide through life’s challenges and unexpected curveballs. When handed difficult challenges, you will become a better individual in the process. To go through life’s experiences showing fair play, courtesy, spirit, and grace, one can surmount any obstacle. I am grateful that our coach has bestowed these life lessons upon us.

## **Role of Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Jenna Boyle*

*Archbishop Williams High School*

When I attend my little cousin's baseball game at the local field of my town, there is nothing more disturbing than watching has-been parent-athletes allow and encourage their children to taunt the opposing teammates. Then, to top it all off, the middle-aged hot-headed coach is cheering the obnoxious kids and parents on. This sight makes me wonder if the coach has any idea what monster he is creating.

Now, although it is always the members of the team that either score, or not score the winning goal or basket, it is the coach that gives the famous pep-talk at halftime when the team is down by a few. It's the coach that tells their players they can win the championship trophy without dirty plays. And most importantly, it is the coaches who can either put a stop to the petty unsportsmanlike conduct on the field/court, or allow and encourage it until it escalates into worse behavior.

The MIAA's motto is "Building the Future Through Athletics." Coaches today really need to think about what they're building by allowing intense and unhealthy competitiveness to not only continue, but grow. Coaches must think about what kind of hatred they're fueling when they see young kids spit and cuss at opposing teams, and choose to allow it to continue. It's because of those coaches, that last year, America watched as grown men on the Yankees and Red Sox made fools of themselves early in the season. We all saw the game when Alex Rodriguez and Jason Varitek caused a team brawl on national television. What kind of a future is being built with that kind of behavior?

I am very proud to say that I compete in the sport of cheerleading. Now, I realize this may be considered one of the most catty sports out there. For anyone who may have seen the movie "Bring It On," I'm sure you get the idea. When girls bad-mouth each other in small groups, it's not considered to be so bad. However, in groups of twenty to twenty-five girls, this behavior can be disastrous! It all depends on what the coach allows the team to get away with. Our squad of twenty-three at Archbishop Williams High School know very well that if we show disrespect to other teams or coaches, even when provoked, we're running (and I mean run...a lot!) at practice on Monday. At home games, we bake cookies for our opposing squads. Also, we're always encouraged to go talk to other teams at competitions. It sure makes it nice not having to deal with ugly rivalries.

The role/job of a coach is understood to be winning games, meets, and/or competitions. However, it's the good coaches that inspire the players to rise above it all, and show respect for themselves and other teammates...even when they're from the opposing team. The coach sets the tone for the attitude of the team she/he is representing, and from that a reputation is formed. How the team is perceived by peers and onlookers depends on this reputation. The responsibility of the coach, mentor, guide, teacher, friend, and winner collectively should be completely understood before taking on the task of molding young athletes. Coaches have a great impact on their teams, whether or not they realize it!

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Dominic Colarossi  
Savio Prep High School*

Dear Sir,

In today's society, the concept of teamwork has been replaced by the emergence of the individual. Teams don't seemingly work together as much as they produce strong individuals who are expected to carry the team to a title. By virtue of their strong playing ability, these superstars are a team's major attraction, the reason why fans flock to an arena or stadium, and why their endorsements are valued by many fans. Sadly, what these players lack though, is the ability to play on a team as part of a team. Some coaches had to deal with the players who caused a ruckus in the stands, and displayed such poor sportsmanship that some predicted the demise of the game.

But, what many do not realize is that an individual player cannot, should not, be held responsible for the success or failure of a team. Rather, it is the coach. He is the person responsible and accountable for how a team acts, plays, and conducts itself. Today, however, superstars cast a large shadow over the coach. Fans and the media acknowledge Shaq's team, Nomar's team, or Favre's team. Tom Landry, the long-time winning coach of the Dallas Cowboys football team, used to dress in a suit to stand on the sidelines and coach his team to victory. He looked like a leader and a gentleman. His team knew that.

A coach figures prominently in how a team plays on the field, ice, or court: maintains success, and acts as a good role model in the community for the team's fans. For many players, coaches provide the necessary comfort and advice about how to make the best transition from local high school or college to the professional leagues. The coach, acting as a "father figure," is responsible for his players to maintain a positive attitude, exhibit strong character, and play fiercely. Too, a coach can effect change by modeling the very behavior he expects to instill in his team.

The coaches of today were probably once players themselves and look for ways to model proper behavior and skills around their team. As they go about their daily operations, they are the initial contact with a media should an interview be required, an interface with Cabinet members and representatives, and an eager face to support a player. All of us have had coaches that we believed were great. Sadly, we've also had coaches who could not meet our criteria for success.

A coach cannot guarantee success, good press, or a strong showing at a game. He cannot predict how his team will perform, how his defense will be critiqued, or how his mannerisms will be copied. But a coach can understand his players to help them elevate their enthusiasm and skill for victory, build on their strengths, and model the behaviors he wishes to instill in his players.

Yes, the coach's role has diminished over the years, yet nothing, not a superstar player, a contract deal, a winning season, can diminish his love for the game, ability to lead by example, and respect for the game. Coach Carter, Remember the Titans and Hoosiers are all movies that deal with coaches. Let's not just watch these movies but learn the lesson behind each movie and what is says about a coach.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Devin Gray*

*Tri-County Reg. Voc/Tech High School*

The slam of a palm striking the mat snaps me back into reality as I pace behind my team's bench. My chest burns with the hybrid of aggression and control as the early signs of sweat begin to well at the roots of my hairs, a sign that my warm-up is complete and it is my time to prove myself in the face of my opponent. As I strap my headgear tightly beneath my chin and throw my warm-up next to the rest of my gear without even so much as a glance, I can see my teammate, an inexperienced freshman, returning from shaking the opposing coach's hand with a resigned look of defeat haunting his fatigued face.

In the back of my ears, loud enough to discern itself from the muffled yet still deafening roar of my teammates, various parents and friends, I can hear my coach advising my defeated teammate on his match before telling him to start thinking about his next match with an encouraging tone. I look ahead to the other side of the mat and see the other team's coach slapping his wrestler on the back before shouting to my opponent, "We need this match to win!" As I step onto the mat, I glare at my opponent across from me, his eyes nervous and fumbling to adjust his headgear, before approaching the center of the ring and extending my hand. I squeeze his hand tightly in a handshake, applying enough pressure to be intimidating but still sportsmanlike.

When the referee blows the whistle, I immediately circle to the left, then to the right, before reaching to his head and snapping his head down violently. He jerks his head back up an instant before I take my shot and before he knows what just happened to him, he is lying on his stomach in the few seconds before I immediately drive a crossface and plant my right hand behind his knee in preparation for a cradle. With the speed that accompanies experience I circle quickly to his head, clasp my hands together, jab my knee into his side, and tighten my hold as I roll back into a cradle. A stifled exclamation of pain accompanies my transition as I squeeze tighter and press my chin into his temple. The inevitable slap of the referee's hand on the mat signifies my release as I quickly shuffle away and jump to my feet.

As I shake my defeated opponent's limp hand and begin to walk over to his coach to shake his, I detect the glimmer of disappointment and anger welling inside of the frustrated coach. He slaps my hand and mumbles about how I did well before awaiting his own wrestler with the silent rage of a parent about to discipline a child. I see my own coach respectfully receiving my opponent before sending him back to his own team, a return I expect he dreaded.

Through my multiple seasons wrestling, I have seen and been trained by a wide variety of coaches. It is my fortune that I have never been trained by somebody who cannot demonstrate proper sportsmanship both off and on the mats while also expecting it from their team. A coach cannot simply expect greatness either off or on the mat, or field for that matter, without first demonstrating it himself or herself. It is the role of the coach to stand as a paragon of skill, discipline, and sportsmanship.

## **A Coach's Role in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By George Drouillard*

*Saint John's High School (Shrewsbury)*

Coaches have a vital role in promoting sportsmanship for their players. If it were not for a coach keeping his or her players in line in the duration of a game, there would be many more fights and confrontations between players. They have the role of enforcing the language and the attitude of players in the game so that emotions do not take over the game and turn it into an injury fest. The coach is sort of like a mediator or diplomat in an argument between nations, he or she prevents the confrontation between the two teams from becoming an all out fight.

The coach also makes sure that no matter what the outcome, his or her players act like champions. Even if the result is a loss, the coach is always there to say, "We'll get 'em next time boys" and then makes sure that the team shakes hands with the opponent and says good game. The coach makes sure that the team shows respect to their opponent no matter how good or bad they are.

However, if there is a coach who is not into the whole idea of sportsmanship, there could be trouble for the opponents or even the whole league. If the coach does not promote sportsmanship, then the players on the team will not feel the need to have sportsmanlike conduct. This whole concept of sportsmanship depends on the coach, for most players play the game until an event occurs that causes the game to change drastically, and then ever the most controlled, sportsmanlike player, can become a man on a mission to break bones in an opponent's body.

In conclusion, a coach is a vital part in the concept of sportsmanship. Having a coach that does not believe in the concept of sportsmanship is like having a body without a head, you cannot function and be complete. Therefore, every coach should be very well versed in the concept of sportsmanship and teach his players about it. A coach with good sportsmanship helps the players develop a balance between healthy competition and life experiences.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Michael Pinto  
Milford High School*

Sportsmanship is a very important aspect of any type of organized sport, and a coach should play an important role in creating this idea. A coach is the bridge between the players and the sport, and thus he or she has a great influence on those players. Therefore it is a coach's duty to make sure that sportsmanship is an ideal which is followed by all. While there are many ways in which a coach could promote sportsmanship, I feel that there are three major ways worth mentioning.

First of all, a coach can set a good example by expressing the ideas of sportsmanship on and off the field. He can show this by obeying and respecting officials and other players in general. If a coach should rebel against an official, then that shows the players that it is acceptable to do so. Also, should a coach disrespect another team or coach by use of put-downs, slang, or violence, this would again teach those players to do the same in the future. Another way a coach could express the ideals of sportsmanship is by being honest, and not resorting to cheating in order to win. A final way in which a coach could show sportsmanship is by always being graceful in defeat. This not only includes defeat on the field, but any kind of loss to another person in any type of contest. This way the team will learn to respect the other teams even when they defeat them.

A second way which a coach can help to promote sportsmanship is by expecting his players to adhere to sportsman-like conduct and carry out punishment if they don't regardless of how talented they are. Everyone has seen it happen; a player shows poor conduct and gets away with it because of their skill. Some coaches may see this as an okay reaction, but it is counter-productive to the team as a whole. This shows the player(s) who aren't punished that their behavior is acceptable and thus it will be difficult to get said players to gain sportsman-like ideals.

The final major way in which a coach can help to promote sportsmanship is by spreading the responsibilities of the team evenly throughout the players. We all know that there will be some players that are more talented than others, but that doesn't mean that they alone should be exempt from their duties. All players should attend practices and work with less talented players so that they all may improve. This shows the players the greater objective of a team, working together to accomplish a goal. By letting better players just slide by and attend only the games, you are showing them and other players that winning is the only purpose of an organized sport.

And so, it will always be the job of the coach to influence the attitude of his or her team. They must use the guidelines of sportsmanship: respect, responsibility, and grace in loss, to make their team truly successful and to simply better the people who participate. As said by Grantland Rice, "For when the One Great Scorer comes to mark against your name, He writes not that you won or lost-but how you played the game!"

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Meghan Looney  
Bishop Feehan High School*

In athletics, the most important quality a team can have is good sportsmanship. Teams that are talented and successful may win competitions, but are respected by their opponents only when they show proper sportsmanship towards the opposing teams. In the grand scheme of things, a team's season record is not nearly as important as the life lessons the athletes will have learned throughout their season. The person responsible for promoting sportsmanship in his or her athletes is the coach of the team.

I remember a time when I was in middle school, my soccer team played an incredible team who had so much talent and potential, and went on to win all of the games they played. Throughout the game we were awed by their skills and fluidity, but were taken off guard with their unsportsmanlike remarks toward our team. When we shook hands and congratulated the gifted team on their victory, they were not at all friendly or nice to us. My team immediately changed our view on that team and no longer had respect for them. This made me realize how important it is for a team to be sportsmanlike towards everyone.

I run cross country and track for Bishop Feehan and my coach, Bob L'Homme, always tells us to "respect our opponent, but fear no one". This really sums up what I believe good sportsmanship to be. We must always be aware that everyone is working just as hard as we are and is enduring the same amount of pain, and respect this; however we can never let our opponent discourage or scare us. The coach's role is to train his or her team so that they are successful, but more importantly, to require that his or her athletes are always courteous of their opponents.

I agree with Mr. L'Homme's approach on coaching; he always initiates social events with the opposing team and provides refreshments for both teams at the end of cross country races. When we have home meets, the other team always appreciates our efforts and our good sportsmanship. My teammates and I know that our coaches would never tolerate any disrespectful or distasteful comments or actions towards our opponents, which helps to keep us in line. If our coaches were not as adamant about good sportsmanship, then our team's reputation would not be what it is today.

Twenty years from now, all of the current athletes will be adults, have jobs, and be raising families; a very small percentage of high school athletes will end up having careers as professional athletes. As adults, these former high school competitors won't necessarily remember their team's season record or the number of points they scored; but they will remember the life lessons taught to them by their coaches. Sportsmanship is not only important in high school sports; it is necessary to be sportsmanlike in every aspect of life. It is in high school sports that coaches should establish good sportsmanship in their athletes.

## **The Role of a Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Ashley Robidoux  
Milford High School*

Upon entering some schools, you often see or hear the phrase “welcome to our school where sportsmanship is an expectation so please let the players play, let the coaches coach, let the officials officiate and the let the spectators be positive.” These are all ways in which sportsmanship can be demonstrated by different people in positive ways.

So what is sportsmanship? Sportsmanship is having a positive attitude in a sport regardless of a win or a defeat. It is being fair and respectful to the game and your opponents. One who I think plays his role best as a coach in promoting sportsmanship is my basketball coach. His personality and work ethic demonstrates the values of sportsmanship in every positive way a coach should. Regardless of our team being defeated last season, he always had faith in us. His belief in us carried on throughout the season making us a team with great character and confidence. Most coaches nowadays just throw in the towel and take their anger out in games on officials or players. Not our coach though, he was always thanked after games and complimented on the teams desire to fight until the end. Without his ways of demonstrating sportsmanship, it would have been easy for us girls to quit and consider those games over, but he inspired us to work hard and have faith. This, in my eyes is how sportsmanship is truly taught and any coach can do it.

Sportsmanship is also the skill or devotion to a sport. Not only can our coach teach us and promote sportsmanship but he can play the game too. This helps when he relates sportsmanship to the days he played in high school just like us. His devotion to the team and the game has inspired all of us, especially with his stories of him playing in high school. It is easy to point out the sportsmanship our coach has always had because it now carries on to our team. Every coach should be devoted and faithful to promote true sportsmanship. Sue Wicks, a former WNBA player once said “sportsmanship is knowing that it is just a game, that we are only as good as our opponents, and whether you win or lose to always give one hundred percent.” Coaches should all encourage their teams to give one hundred percent at all times whether you are winning or losing because once you lose the team effort it becomes all about one person and sportsmanship no longer exists.

What some coaches do not realize is that their players really do look up to them and try to do what is best. Most players do not even know what sportsmanship is until they find the right coach. Any coach can find a unique way to teach their players sportsmanship because their players will listen. I have learned from my coach that anyone with the will to persevere and behave with dignity is a true winner, and that is all anybody ever wants; to be considered a good winner.

## **The Role of a Coach in Promoting Good Sportsmanship**

*By Bethany Pennington*

*Martha's Vineyard Regional High School*

Sportsmanship. Team effort. Fair play. Good, hard, fun. Any athlete who has ever participated in a team sport knows the value of good sportsmanship. It is a quality that every team should possess in order to be successful. By definition, a sportsman is a person who is fair and generous; a good loser, and a gracious winner. I think it would be fabulous if everyone played their game in a sportsmanlike manner. Really, the coach is the one who plays an incredibly significant role in promoting a team's value of sportsmanship.

The coach's role in promoting good sportsmanship is to live like a good sport; to be fair, generous, a good loser and a gracious winner. As the head of the team, the coach naturally has a leadership role. This role enables the coach to influence the team's attitude simply by having a good attitude and encouraging one among his/her players.

A coach is also an influential role model, setting the sportsmanlike example for the entire team. The whole team looks up to the coach for many things, but especially for direction in practice and encouragement during a game. If the coach sets a negative example; arguing constantly with the referees, encouraging unfair play, and becoming angry about players' mistakes, the team could easily follow this bad example. An unsportsmanlike coach can negatively influence the team to play rough and have a bad attitude. However, if the coach is positive; setting a sportsmanlike example by treating the other team fairly, discouraging angry comments between opposing teams on the field, and accepting calls, the team follows the example, proudly looking up to their coach. As a result, the team and their coach have a healthy drive for success. They play hard and with abounding enthusiasm and effort. Sometimes the team might lose and get discouraged, but if the coach holds onto that value of sportsmanship, he or she says "Ok, that's just one, but keep trying, we can get the next one."

Finally, a sportsmanlike coach and his/her team set the tone for the game. Will there be swearing and arguing on the field? Will there be complaining when they lose or bragging when they win? Probably not. Everyone has more fun playing a sport when their coach, their team, and their game revolve around fair play, generosity, and all around good sportsmanship. The discouragement of missing that winning goal or anger towards a ref's bad call are lifted to a much lesser degree due to the contagious attitude of good sportsmanship. With a good attitude comes a good result.

A team influenced by their coach's sportsmanlike manner knows that playing a sport can be ever so much more fun when you play it in this way. The team takes pride and confidence in themselves and competes with character, ability, and strength. They work together and cooperate better, they function to win; all because the coach took the initiative to display a sportsmanlike attitude to their team.

## **The Day We Learned Sportsmanship**

*By Mikaela Manning*

*Newton North High School*

It was a late Tuesday night, and the rain clouds were pouring tears of defeat. Dedham had scored five goals in the last fifteen minutes of the game, and we no longer had the will or drive to get our minds into the game. We had slowly and painfully lost the game that would essentially enter us into tournament, and the reality was quickly setting in. We had already begun to saunter over to the goalie when the referees signaled the end of the game. We told her she did her best, and formed a circle in the center of the field. We jabbed our sticks into the middle of our huddle, and we lazily belted, “Good game Dedham, than you officials” and formed a line. We passed each opponent, slapping their hands, careful not to look them straight in the eye. We faced the players that had not only defeated our skills, but had defeated our confidence and pride for one last time.

After a humiliating loss, our team gathered their belongings and covered them from the steady rain. Ms. Mayers, our coach, was still on the sideline, determination and focus lingering in her eyes. She recognized our heads hanging, and murmurs of negative feedback, and signaled for us to gather as a group to have our traditional meeting. We once again formed a sullen circle, and took off our shin guards. Her eyes looked at each of us with concern. She started out by asking how we felt at that moment. We replied that we were frustrated because we didn’t even put up a fight, and we had lost all respect for ourselves as a team because we gave up. She was astounded at our remarks. She looked surprised, disappointed, and almost sad. She told us that the most important part of being a team, of playing a sport, and having a passion for anything at all, is having undistinguishable pride. We remained silent as we listened to our coach preach the importance of integrity, the desire to succeed, that sportsmanship is above all, the most important aspect of a team. Sportsmanship does not mean smiling at an opponent as you confront her at the end of a game, or clapping when a teammate is injured and walks off the field. Sportsmanship is loving the game you play, loving the people you play with, and putting up a fight no matter what the score, the weather, or the color of the jersey you play against. Ms. Mayers continued her motivational speech, as the drops of rain quickly fell upon all of us, drenching our uniforms. For the first time that day, we did not focus on ourselves as individuals, we were only concerned about learning the essence of field hockey, and what it means to be a Newton North tiger.

Although it was cold, and the downpour of rain continued to flood our field, we continued to listen. Ms. Mayers had taught us that in order to be a Tiger we must embrace integrity, fight for every ball, and respect ourselves and other teams. We are expected to show our skills, and make other teams work hard. It was that cold rainy Tuesday that we realized Ms. Mayers is the nucleus of our team. She had led us through every game and practice, and taught us the skills we needed in order to succeed. She was, and continues to be, the core of our learning and triumph, and the backbone of family we have formed since the grueling days of preseason. Without her ability to coach, and teach us the values of sportsmanship, our team would fail to be the group of strong lady-tigers that we are. She has instilled in us a knowledge greater than any skill: the knowledge of sportsmanship. She showed us that sportsmanship means to be dedicated, and demonstrate respect for those who also love the sports we play. She is the reason that we regained our strength and pride, and were able to once again carry on as a team full of pride and compassion for ourselves and others.

## **The Role of a Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Tori O'Doherty-Popp*

*Hingham High School*

The ball was hit downfield. There were two minutes to go in the first half and I crouched down to tie my shoe. Number thirteen backed up into me and turned around to see what she stepped on. Instead of apologizing, she shouted for me to get out of her way. I immediately rose to my feet and yelled back at her. "I was tying my shoe, you psycho!"

"Wait, wait, who's winning?" She asked mockingly.

"Shut up!" I snapped.

As the half trailed to an end, I sprinted over to our huddle. "I hate number thirteen, she's crazy. She just purposely stepped on me!" I was really angry.

"Oh, I hate that girl too," my teammates chimed. "She's been swearing at me all game!"

"Quiet! I don't want to hear any of that out of this team! You guys are seniors, so suck it up and play the game right!" Our coach shouted.

Teenagers are dormant volcanoes. The slightest shift in their mood can lead to total eruption. In sports, the possibility of explosion increases significantly. A kid will sometimes have so much intensity in a game that he or she will lose focus and turn that feeling into anger and frustration. Knowing from experience, this does not help the outcome. Oftentimes, rage makes an athlete play worse because their determination is pointed toward verbally and physically harming another. A sports game should not be played with fury, but with skill and strategy.

As the team leaders, coaches ought to always be aware of their teams' attitudes and actions. In addition, they should also be conscious about how they act and what they say on the field. The way a coach operates has a gigantic influence on his or her team's actions. For instance, if a coach respects those on the field, the team will follow. It is vital for coaches to realize that their players look up to them and respect them more than any other aspect of the game. They are the foundation of a sport. How they act ultimately leads to how their team will act. Promoting good sportsmanship means to set an admirable example for those who are taught to follow. A coach should always teach their team to play clean, respect the officials, and respect the opposing side. A coach who acts out of anger will have a team that acts out of anger. A coach who acts with deference will have a team that acts with deference. Furthermore, it does not hurt to yell at a player when he or she complains about personal fights on the field. Sometimes an athlete needs to be reminded that playing with hate does not make one any more skillful. Winning has nothing to do with the score of the game. Winning is coming out of a contest knowing that the team played the strongest game possible and kept a positive relationship with their opponents. Coaches do not just teach athletes the strategy of the game, but teach them to be winners.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Angela Chisholm*

*Millis High School*

To receive the title of ‘Coach’ is by no means a satisfactory accomplishment. To receive a player or student’s respect to be called ‘Coach’ should be handled with care. A “Coach” is someone who trains and prepares. This training and preparing is not necessarily for a game or test but for actions in life as well. A ‘Coach’ is an extremely influential character in a young person’s life. The way a ‘Coach’ chooses to use this responsibility determines whether or not he/she is a good coach. Thus, a ‘Coach’ has an extremely essential role in promoting sportsmanship to his/her team, players, or students.

In many cases a coach’s actions tell more than his lessons. In other terms, actions speak louder than words. It is a great skill to be able to coach, discipline, nurture, and yet be intense all at the same time. It is the coach that weaves these qualities that will have the greatest impact on his/her players. A coach that is able to elicit only one or two of these qualities will not be able to motivate his/her players to the fullest.

The philosophy, “actions speak louder than words”, is true for all aspects of the coaching. On the sidelines, intensity and frustration can result in unruly behavior. A coach that can maintain professionalism and pride while under pressure and stress is a coach that truly leads by example. A coach has to be as good a teacher as he is a motivator and as good a manager as he is an organizer.

On a field, court, mat, arena, or whatever the playing surface may be, a player is expected by the MIAA and their coaches to obtain to a certain level of sportsmanship. However, there are no guidelines set in the MIAA about behavior in a classroom, since it is primarily associated with athletics. Nevertheless, a coach should always expect the same professionalism he/she expects of his players on the fields as in the classroom. Academic ineligibility is absolutely unacceptable. Moreover, poor behavior in a classroom, towards a teacher or other administrators, parents, and classmates are absolutely intolerable as well.

In conclusion, a ‘Coach’ can only expect as much from his team as he/she demonstrates. Here at Millis High School, our athletic director expects and demands nothing less than quality sportsmanship from everyone in the school whether he/she is an athlete or not. He is impartial to all students and would do anything for them as long as they respect their teachers, classmates, and themselves. This amazing precedent Coach Grant has set here at Millis has resulted in the Alfred “Hap” Mazukina Sportsmanship Award. This is the only award given in the Tri-Valley League and is given to the town that shows exemplary sportsmanship as well as highest win improvement percentage. Thanks to Coach, the level of play at Millis has escalated unbelievably in an undeniably classy way. He has improved the quality of our athletics, school, and town by promoting high-quality sportsmanship.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Katherine Murphy  
Notre Dame Academy (Hingham)*

Coach is defined as: one who instructs players in the fundamentals of a competitive sport and directs team strategy. My definition of coach is: one who instructs players about the game, teaches life lessons and promotes good sportsmanship. Anyone can instruct others, but it is a coach's job not just to instruct, but to teach players about improvements and teamwork.

When I was on the freshman softball team, our team was not winning many games. We were discouraged, angry and started to lose interest in the game because our hard work never paid off. Our coach sat us down and told us that winning did not matter. He also said that everyone has bad days and that in order to win games, we needed to have fun, work better with our teammates and truly enjoy the game. After that, our team really came together. We started having more fun with our games and even came up with little cheers for each other. This is when the wins started occurring. Not every game was a win, but we did begin to see improvements and that made us feel good. I am a junior now and I will never forget the lessons I learned from my freshman softball coach. Meaningful lessons never leave you. Our team sportsmanship improved because of him. Our attitudes improved by his simple encouragement and even when we did lose, we remembered what he had told us and accepted our losses with gracefulness.

Coaches like my freshman softball coach change their player's lives. Coaches teach the fundamentals of a game, because they are knowledgeable about a particular game. They teach their players that being a good athlete is only one qualification of being a member of a whole: the team. Coaches also instruct their players to be good sports, show courtesy to others, play fair and gracefully accept a loss. Without a coach teaching these valuable lessons, sports would not be as enjoyable to watch or participate in.

I have learned from my coaches the theory of TEAM. Together everyone achieves more. It is so basic, and it is so profound. Together everyone does achieve more. Coaches push their players to go beyond their physical limits, but also challenge them mentally to realize that they are just one member of a bigger picture, of a whole team that is counting on them for their good conduct and support. Good athletes are recognized for excelling at a specific sport, having strength, endurance, agility, good sportsmanship, playing fair and truly enjoying the game. Good coaches are recognized for teaching these vital skills. After all, the game is only as fun as you make it, and good sports make it fair and fun.

## **The Role of a Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Lauren Spivack*

*Whitman-Hanson Regional High School*

Dear Coach Floeck,

I just want to start out by saying “Thank You” for everything that you have taught me ever since I have started playing soccer. Even though you have only been my coach for the past two years, you have impacted my game of soccer since I was ten years old. I remember going to Panther Soccer Camp every summer in order to improve my game along with the rest of the kids, mostly my future teammates from Whitman and Hanson. You were always there coaching us and helping us to succeed to the best of your ability. I also remember thinking about how great it would be to play varsity soccer in high school, knowing that you were the coach of the team.

Although I have been on many teams and encountered many different coaching styles, the style you possess is by far my favorite, for your style is the most memorable and also most effective. To start, knowing that you give everything you can in order to see the team succeed helps us greatly. You devote all of your free time to help us even though you already have a busy schedule being the vice principal of our school. When the team notices the amount of dedication you possess, we follow your lead and also devote our best to the team. This enables us to work closely together for our common purposes. When each player realizes that everyone on the team is giving her absolute best, we are able to play at the top of our game.

Whitman-Hanson girls’ soccer is noted for its excellent sportsmanship every year. A teams’ sportsmanship is rooted in its coaching staff. Before every game you remind the entire team to go shake the opposing coaches’ hands and wish them good luck. You also lead us by setting a great example. During a game if anyone talks back to the referee or says anything that they are not supposed to, you take us out of the game and tell us to stop or we will sit on the bench. It is easy for us to realize that this is unacceptable behavior because you do not do this yourself. While other coaches yell and scream at the referee during games if they do not like a call, you calm down and talk to the referee at half time or during a time out so that you understand the reasoning of a call. By doing this you keep our games under control so that we do not get into fights with the other teams. One can tell the difference between our team and some of the teams that we play easily. Some girls on other teams walk onto the field and constantly make crude remarks the entire game. Not only is this aggravating, but it would also be embarrassing because it makes the team look bad. In addition, you remind us everyday that we need to earn the respect of our opponents each time we play them. You tell us that respect is not only earned by playing the best that we can physically, but also by our attitude on and off the field.

With your lead in sportsmanship, our soccer team is able to achieve great goals that we set for ourselves such as becoming the 2005 Atlantic Coast League Champions. Thank you for everything you have instilled in me regarding soccer, school, and life itself. I will always be proud to be able to say that I have had you as my coach.

Sincerely,

Lauren Spivack

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Samantha Tolken*

*Bourne High School*

Sports games are not just about winning and losing. A major part of a sporting event is the learning experience that surrounds the game. Sportsmanship during a game can mean fair play, being courteous to teammates and the opposing team, or acting appropriately within the rules of the game. Above all others, the coach of a team has the most important part in promoting sportsmanship.

A coach is someone to whom a team looks up to, can be guided by, and depends on. When a team sees the way a coach acts, they follow example. A coach can show sportsmanship by simply shaking the other coach's hand at the beginning of a game and slapping the player's hands at the end of a game. Promoting sportsmanship is not only important to one team, but when another team sees the way they are treated they earn a certain degree of respect for the other team and may return the good sportsmanship. Sportsmanship ensures that there will be less likely a chance for any fights or conflicts to appear during the game. When we can cooperate well with others, even in an intense game situation, is where everyone benefits the most. The term "good sport" also pertains to sportsmanship, whether a team is winning or losing it is up to the coach to set the correct example and take pride in a team no matter what outcome. In any type of sport the coach's role in promoting sportsmanship is absolute necessary.

At the end of the day we realize that people play sports for the competition, excitement and fun. No matter what level of play or type of sport, the coach has the greatest role in promoting sportsmanship. Sportsmanship can start with the simplest gesture as coming onto the field with a positive attitude, but it can end with a fun game, a good team effort, or even a victory.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Lauren Johnson*

*Austin Preparatory School*

Dedication, motivation, inspiration, leadership and encouragement are all key ingredients necessary for coaches to have in promoting good sportsmanship among their players, which we have at Austin Prep for girl's Ice Hockey. My ideas about how coaches should promote sportsmanship in their players are based on the examples I have seen in my hockey coaches. This is the first team I have been on where the coaches really put all their effort and time into making everyone work together and understand everything, striving to make us better not only on the ice but in who we are and how we think of ourselves, and our teammates. They really do make us all feel like we belong and are contributing to the team, which ranges from sixth graders all the way up to seniors. They encourage all players, old and new, experienced and newcomers, to come play and learn a thing or two. They expect each of us to be a student, not simply an athlete.

When I first tried out for the team in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I was a bit apprehensive and unknowing of what to expect in terms of the other players, coaches and, considering I had never played, what it would be like when I first stepped out on the ice. Not to my surprise, the coaches and players were helpful and supportive in making it a very good experience, one which I would remember the rest of my life.

Since I've been there, the coaches have always taught us to be fair when playing the game, to follow the rules, and to have respect for the opponents and referees. I believe this is a great way to teach us to have a more positive attitude when we play fair and with the "Golden Rule" you might say in treating the other players the way you would like to be treated. Our coaches would never put up with us disrespecting others or going so low as to play unfairly since we would not like it if they did that to us. They make us have that attitude which I know makes us play more like a team on the ice. They model respectful behavior and make sure that all their players are doing the same to everyone. The coaches build character in the student-athletes by demonstrating with their words and behaviors important traits such as responsibility, caring, and respect.

Even though wins look good, my coaches would always rate sportsmanship and togetherness as most important on the ice. Leading by examples, my coaches teach us to encourage and include everyone, and to be respectful for our teammates, opponents, referees and ourselves. I know they have taught me to have a new level of dedication and responsibility for what I do and to always try my hardest, never give up and to exceed my limits of expectation in whatever I am doing, both on and off of the ice.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Megan Wilkens*

*Saint Mary's High School (Lynn)*

My basketball coach always told our team that we should win the same as we lose. We should be a good winner as well as a good loser, because nobody likes to lose. He would tell us to put ourselves in the other player's shoes. In all sports there is the question of why we play. We play for fun, competition or just the love of the game. In each sport we play, there is some passion to receive a positive result. Sometimes players can go overboard and forget about sportsmanship and good manners. Coaches are there to guide their players by teaching them the skills they need and the rules of the game. They are there on the sidelines to tell us how to behave our best and show us the proper attitude to have. Coaches should promote sportsmanship, on and off the field.

Coaches are the people the players go to for support, during a tough game we can get frustrated and a coach will tell us what to do. Their attitude affects the whole team, if they are angry or upset or think that by cheating is the only way to win that will rub off on the players. If they have a good attitude through the heat of the game it will help promote sportsmanship in the players.

Another way that coaches promote sportsmanship is by being fair. If we are ahead by a considerable amount they might tell us not to score again. He or she might take out the starters; by doing this a coach shows the player when to be fair. When the game is over and we go to shake hands a coach shows the player when to be fair. When the game is over and we go to shake hands a coach is there with the team. Shaking hands at the end of play teaches good sportsmanship on the part of both teams.

Coaches teach us many lessons in sportsmanship. They help us to understand that we should not hurt other people deliberately, or start a fight. They also tell us to do our best, but not to go insane and cheat. Coaches tell us to do our best and do a good job, to enjoy the game, because it is only a game.

Another way coaches teach us sportsmanship is by showing us how to win and lose gracefully. When we win we are not obnoxious about it. By being respectful everybody goes home with pride. Coaches are helpful in the development of moral values. While showing us how to play the game, coaches help us build character. Sportsmanship is a moral value that we use everyday.

In conclusion coaches help to promote sportsmanship through everything they do for their team. They give talks to tell us what to do, and what is right and what is wrong. They influence the whole team, for most of their lives; by the way they act during and after a game. No matter what a player plays for whether it is love, competition or fun coaches are there to help in the development of the player's skills and sportsmanship.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Kimberly Neil  
Scituate High School*

Professional athletics in society today are focused on winning. With victory comes wealth and fame. The idea of winning takes precedence over everything else, including sportsmanship. Good sportsmanship consists of a level of respect between the players, parents, officials, opponents, and coaches as well. Sportsmanship is the attitude and conduct a player has both during the sporting event and afterward. Coaches play a major role in a team's sportsmanship. Children learn by example, so a coach who promotes sportsmanship will provide their team with skills to succeed in life.

The coach of a team is not only a coach, but also a role model for all the team members. The team members look up to their coach and imitate the way in which the coach carries him or herself during the event. The coach has a responsibility to promote sportsmanship to the team members. A coach who is focused on winning at any extreme will lose focus on the primary goal of sports. Sports are ways in which people can strengthen their self-esteem by seeing an improvement within them through hard work. A coach who promotes sportsmanship will encourage the team members to love the sport they play and look forward to a challenge. Team members who show sportsmanship will bring that conduct to other areas of life as well. The coach teaches team members how to deal with losing. Promoting sportsmanship encourages the team members to take pride in their performance. Whether they did good or bad, a team member will continue to improve with positive encouragement from a coach. Through sportsmanship, a coach supports honesty and fairness, which become a vital part in the future of every team member. Levels at which a player is not being paid should remain for fun. Obviously since they are not receiving a check, they are not playing for the money, rather for the fun and love of the sport. So by promoting sportsmanship, a coach can maintain the fun of the sport and the players will continue to love the sport.

Coaches coach the future. It is the responsibility of the coach to instill positive traits to their team members. Leading by example, a coach who promotes sportsmanship will be seen through the conduct of his or her team. Sportsmanship is not only the way someone acts after a loss but also the way they carry themselves. There is no need for a tense, competitive, stressful atmosphere during a sport that is being played for fun. Pressure is unnecessary to gain results and is unnecessary unless it becomes a profession. However, even then, sportsmanship must also be promoted to keep a respectful atmosphere. A coach who promotes sportsmanship will also promote a positive attitude that a team member will carry throughout his or her life.

**A Tennis Tale**  
*By Nancy Huynh*  
*Mystic Valley Regional Charter School*

Let me tell you a story. It was around three o'clock in the afternoon. The summer sun beat down relentlessly on my exhausted body. Beads of sweat rolled down my face as I stared at the ball in my opponent's hand. The score was 40-40: deuce. The ball flew up, and the server hit it smoothly over the net. One bounce. I dove to send back the ball and hurried to the back line to prepare for the next hit. A flawless return from my challenger. We went back and forth for a while until the ball finally soared over my head and bounced inside the box. Ad-in. Next point, and they win. All I could hear was my heart thumping as I watched the ball's path...The green orb just grazed the boundary. I never had a chance. Game, set, and match.

I slumped down on the bench next to my dejected teammates and buried my head in my hands. What was it? The tenth game we had lost? More? We sadly watched as the victors celebrated, slapping each other; we saw the stark contrast. Then I heard someone say, "I think they cheated." All of a sudden, my coach, who had only been smiling weakly at us the whole day, abruptly jerked upright. "What did you say?" she asked. "I know we had a hard day, but that is absolutely no reason to blame the other team."

That verbal explosion caught our attention. We all looked up, surprised. Our coach sounded as if she were on the other team! Sensing our astonishment, she sighed and relaxed. "Sorry for the emotional outburst, guys," she said. "It's just that I cannot stress how much sports is about sportsmanship, not winning. I'm sorry for not emphasizing that enough before." We were still in shock. Sure, we had all heard about sportsmanship at one point or another, in physical education class, but to actually have to display it was a totally different story, especially after losing ten games. "Listen, I want all of us to go over to that team right now and congratulate them on a great game," said the coach. "And I'll be the first." We followed her as if in a dream. By the end of the day, however, everyone had joined in the festivities. Enemies shook hands, and we had a wonderful time. I even made a new friend.

My coach made the whole difference that day. If it wasn't for her, my team and I would have still been moping on the bench. Sometimes, we need a reality check, and I know that whenever I need one, I look to my coaches. They point me in the right direction and are the first ones to go down that road, even when they're fighting an inner battle themselves. Coaches...how would we act without them?

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Luke Bruno  
Andover High School*

What is more important, a championship squad or a team of class acts? Should a coach's emphasis only be on winning or on something else? It may seem a little old fashion to use the familiar quote, "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game," but it is true: the most important lesson a coach can give his/her players is how to be a good sportsman.

Andover High School golf coach Ken Kwajewski, a respected club pro in New England, tells his golfers that he does not care if they win. All he wants to see is them trying their hardest to get every point in their match while acting as gentlemen. In his first year with the team, Kwajewski benched two of his star players because of their poor etiquette on the golf course. "I was not going to permit my golfers to poorly represent Andover. I don't care if it is my best or worst player, everyone who wears the A.H.S. golf sweater must carry themselves with class," said Kwajewski. Despite the bit of criticism that the coach received, Mr. K. knew that he made the right decision. He is not an in-your-face type of coach; however, when he speaks all of his players listen. Andover's golf team has been considered to be one of the most respected programs in Massachusetts. This year under "Coach K" the squad made it to the state finals and, more importantly, there was not one incident of bad sportsmanship.

Another example of a coach's positive influence on his/her players' conduct on the field is Bill Parcells. Since coming to the Dallas Cowboys in 2003, Parcells has been able to control what was considered to be one of the most wildly behaved teams in all of professional sports. From 1994 to 2002 the Cowboys were terrible role models. Several players and even head coach Barry Switzer were arrested during that span of eight years. Not only were they a losing team for a period, but the organization was an embarrassment. When Parcells became head coach, this erratic behavior disappeared. He is uncompromising in his expectations for his players' conduct, both on and off the field. Unlike Kwajewski, Parcells is far from mild-mannered. His style is fierce and some would even say mean. However, he understands the importance of discipline and respect, and doesn't let anyone get away with anything unruly, even the biggest superstar.

Despite their different approaches to coaching, both Bill Parcells and Ken Kwajewski are capable of sending the important message of sportsmanship to their players. These two coaches understand that players represent much more than themselves. They also represent their families and schools or cities, and for this reason sportsmanship must be a top priority. Whether the sport is golf or football, ultimate frisbee or chess, all coaches should be teaching and modeling how to be a class act.

## **The Role of the Coach in Sportsmanship**

*By Mac Alen Gerard*

*Trinity Catholic High School*

The role of the coach in sportsmanship is the most important. The integrity of the coach is carried by the team. The way the coach acts is reflected in the team. The active presence of the coach and his disciplinary actions towards his players determines whether the team will showcase their moral values. Depending on the sport, what the coach does can lead to the overall appearance of the team.

The game of football calls for a strong sense of morality in coaches in order to be viewed as sportsmanlike. The game itself is a giant chess game where the players are merely pawns, or reflections of the coach's moves. The coach makes the decisions and moves all the pieces. He decides whether he wants his team to use dirty tactics in order to win. He is the source of either the positivity or the negativity in the game of football.

The game of basketball is a good example of coaches involved in teaching their kids sportsmanship. If the coach does not tell the athletes to respect the referee then there will be players who will openly show their disregards to the refs. The coaches must also lead by their example in these cases. If a coach outwardly speaks to the referee in a negative way this will probably be followed by the student athletes.

The coaches for hockey are most notorious for their players being unsportsmanlike. There are constant fights between the opposing teams in a hockey rink. Even though this might be entertaining, this goes to show the personalities of the coaches. If a player is not taught to keep their heads in the game and to not get into fights then there will obviously be fights.

The mark of a true coach is one of honor. This coach manages to rise above unfair and illegal tactics in order to win a game. They do not come to meet low standards of play in order to try and capture a chance at victory. Coaches that tell their players to try to injure their opponent do not have the right to be coaching. Games were not meant for things like this.

Unsportsmanlike conduct should be left out of sports. Games like football have transcended to something more. They teach the discipline to be on time. They teach the leadership skills. They give ground morals of loyalty and hard work. These are characteristics that are needed in the future. They build character and are all taught by the coaches.

Coaching should be a job where you teach kids fair play and motivation to succeed on and off the field or court. The coaches hold a great responsibility and can influence their students in either a good or bad way. The role of a coach represents that of a role model. It represents more than just a job. It is a passion and love for the game. It is the backbone of education. The way you act on the field is the way you act off the field. The world is the playing field and your coach is your guide.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Brendan Grealish*

*North Attleborough High School*

A coach has one of the most important roles in promoting sportsmanship. Sportsmanship is the key defining factor between a good player and a classy player. A player that keeps his cool and can lose elegantly and also win elegantly is a player with sportsmanship. The coach starts his job out when players are very young teaching them to hold their heads up high after a loss and to not brag about a win. Sportsmanship is the measure of class, respectability and leadership. In all teams for all ages the coach plays the most important role in defining all of these factors.

A team or a player with class is always respected more than the others. A coach with class is held even higher. The team looks up to the coach as their mentor. Sometimes it is very difficult for a coach to keep his cool, but one that does is respected by all. A team without the support of their coach will never exhibit sportsmanship, a coach is needed to keep his players in line. This is why a coach is the most important factor in determining sportsmanship. A team that can lose together and win together and that exhibits sportsmanship to the other team will go far. Even when you may not like the team you are playing, you still must respect them. The coach must teach his team to have class, to not take cheap shots and play the game for what it is.

A coach must teach his team to be respectable. It is the coach's duty to let his team know that they should not cheat or mouth off or anything of that nature. They must show class. If the coach is respectable he will teach his team to just bring their game face and not their attitudes to the game. Even if the team is very bad but they show sportsmanship they will be respected throughout their league. A good coach will tell his team that it is not only about the outcome of the game, it is about something bigger. A player that shows sportsmanship will go far in the world whether it is in sports or not. Someone who shows respect will receive respect in return.

Player that are captains or are looked up to often portray sportsmanship. On a sports team, in order to be a leader it is imperative that you show sportsmanship. You not only represent yourself, but also your team and in high school sports you represent your town. If a coach does a good job, his team will know that they represent something more. If they do not show sportsmanship, they will not only embarrass themselves but give a bad reputation to their town.

A coach's job is crucial to the development of sportsmanship on his team. It is up to him to set a good example and keep his players in line. The coach has to teach his players class, respectability and leadership. Sportsmanship is very important to all sports. Sports are supposed to be fun, but sometimes without sportsmanship, sports can turn very bitter and not fun. Through a good coach, sportsmanship is achieved and when a team shows sportsmanship it is more likely that they will succeed.

## **The Role of the Coach in Promoting Sportsmanship**

*By Molly Thornton  
Walpole High School*

On any given team, the role of a coach is complex, yet essential to the success of that team. Similar to a teacher in a classroom, a coach must be nurturing and understanding, yet authoritative and firm. Among a coach's many responsibilities are the promotion of positive sportsmanship and camaraderie. Although this can be taught in several manners, the make-up is constant.

A quintessential coach is one who treats his or her players with the utmost respect and confidence. When the players are treated in this manner, they are more likely to follow the example of their coach. The epitome of a good coach also teaches the players to be confident but not cocky about the team's ability to succeed. By respecting the opponent in any given game, a team is more bound to win, and win gracefully.

A great coach also promotes team chemistry and cohesiveness. When a group of individual players becomes the paradigm of a true team, great things will occur. A collective unit will function much better than a group of individuals, which is a large part of winning, and winning with great sportsmanship.

An outstanding coach is one who expects the highest possible performance out of each and every one of his or her players. The coach must encourage the players to reach their highest potential by any means possible. Part of this responsibility is knowing when a team needs to be pushed, and also knowing when a team has already given their entire effort. When a coach drives his or her team in this manner, the individual players will in turn expect the most out of each other, creating positive reinforcement as well as positive criticism. When the team respects each of its members, good sportsmanship will not be hard to achieve; it becomes standard.

An admirable coach only tolerates positive support and encouragement. By eliminating any negativity in practice or off the field, court, or any other playing surface, the coach promotes genuine sportsmanship and camaraderie. If negative attitudes are avoided in practices, then chances are that the same negative attitude will not transfer into games.

Being an athlete for several different coaches and teams, I know what it is like to have a great coach who instills good sportsmanship in his or her players. However, I also know what it is like to play for coaches who are indifferent to the behavior of his or her players. From personal experiences, I can say that the latter is much less enjoyable for everyone involved, including players, parents, coaches, and fans.

Born and raised in Walpole, I come from a town rooted with a tradition of excellence in both academics and athletics. Being a three sport athlete, I have been a part of several teams that are successful, each in their own right. In 2004, I was a member of both the Walpole High School Girls' Basketball and Field Hockey teams that respectively won the state championship. On each team, the players were led by a mentor who promoted positivity, respect, and the desire to win. Each coach instilled the qualities of dedication, perseverance, and persistence into her players, which ultimately reaped success. Each team achieved success in different manners, with one being an underdog, and one being a dominant team for many years. However, both teams possessed exceptional character among the coaches and players. In each situation, the coach respected the players, who in turn respected each other. When the players and coaches both expected excellence from each other, the entire team accomplished a common goal: that is what high school sports are all about.

## **A Coach's Sportsmanship Role**

*By Alex Petrucci*

*Mount Everett Regional High School*

The coach is the one who a team looks up to when down by a basket with 6 seconds left. The coach is a person who will always help when you are in need. There are many roles a coach plays on a sports team. The most important role a coach can play is being a quality role model for his team by promoting good sportsmanship. Coaches can display sportsmanship on and off the field by setting examples, helping the team through a tough loss, and even by getting through a win. Most athletes remember if they won or lost against a certain team, but all remember how the other team acted on the field.

Many strong coaches show good sportsmanship by being a role model for their teams. The coach should be a friend to all. The coach should give respect towards whoever deserves it. An athlete should be able to trust his or her coach if he is a quality role model. Coaches should be leaders on and off the field. Any athlete should be able to respect their coach if he or she is a quality role model. The coach should be with his or her athletes through every challenge the season may face. If the coach succeeds at all these qualities, he or she should be considered as a role model.

Coaches can show great sportsmanship by helping their teams get through tough losses. If after a loss the coach throws a chair across the court and starts swearing uncontrollably, that would not be considered good sportsmanship. If after a tough loss the coach talks to his team, goes over shakes the other team's hands, other team's coaches and, official's hands that would be considered good sportsmanship. Walking off the field or court respectably and respectfully is very important because it shows class and character. These qualities are important not only in games, but also in real life.

Coaches can show good sportsmanship even by getting through a win and showing respect to the opposing team. A coach with good sportsmanship won't excessively celebrate and rub the win in the other team's face. A good winner doesn't need to show off. The feeling that you have just won the game is enough for a good coach. The coach will also tell his team to stay respectful even if the other team is a sore loser. The coach will show great sportsmanship if he can keep it together through a big win.

The most important role a coach can play is being a quality role model for his team by promoting good sportsmanship. The coach can do this by being a good role model for their teams and lead by example, getting through a tough loss while still keeping their team's dignity, and by being good winners. These qualities represent the most important guidelines in becoming a coach who demonstrates strong sportsmanship. All coaches, no matter what sport, should follow these if they would like to be the best coach they can be. The coaches that demonstrate good sportsmanship will lead their players to victories beyond championships.

## **The Important Aspects of Sportsmanship**

*By Jaime Bezek  
O'Bryant High School*

Most coaches, like my stepfather, (Dave McKenzie, who coaches kids' soccer), try to tell their players on a regular basis to "Do your best, have fun, and that it isn't all about winning." These three simple lessons are a part of a coach's main job; to prepare his players for competition, and to promote good sportsmanship amongst his team. Teaching athletes, especially student athletes, good sportsmanship is very important because it not only helps your athletes to develop good character, but helps them to handle problems on and off the field.

Trying your absolute best every game is a very good philosophy that most coaches' utilize. It is a basic aspect of sportsmanship that most people understand well. What my stepfather does by telling them to do their best is to give them a sense of accomplishment whether they win or not. If you try your best, there is a much better chance of winning, no way that you feel completely down when you lose, and the excellent sensation of winning is that much greater. This also helps them with problems off of the field. If they try their best at anything, anything at all, they will have a good chance to succeeding and won't feel downtrodden if they do not.

Another important mantra that coaches need to stress is that their athletes have to "have fun." Taken in simple context, this means that when you are playing that you can't take anything in the game too seriously. But, when you really think about it, it dawns on you that it is an integral part of sportsmanship. If you try your best, it doesn't automatically mean that you have to get all worked up and immersed in the idea of succeeding. You have to relax and just do the best you can, and it becomes a lot easier to act polite and respectful of the winner or loser of the game. Also, if you do not have some modicum of fun or any other kind of motivation to do anything and everything, whatever you're doing probably won't turn out too great. Coaches need to enforce this by talking with his team a lot more often.

Finally, the last value that can be extracted from the introductory quote is that "it isn't all about winning." This is the most important aspect of sportsmanship that a coach can teach, in my view, because it is the mindset that will help any athlete in the long run. If you employ this in the game, it becomes a lot easier to accept defeat because you realize you were beaten fair and square. And just like you might face difficulties on a court or on a field, you will face hardships in your everyday life, and this attitude will help a lot. Just like you can't win every game, you won't win every fight throughout your lifetime. This will help athletes adjust to adversity and difficulty in any situation, whether it is education, tragedy, or the challenges that come with living with a disease. They will find it much easier to muster enough courage when the time arises.

In the end, these aspects of sportsmanship are imperative things that a person would most likely learn without playing a sport. But, when someone plays a sport, they are shown how each of these virtues comes in handy and therefore the aspects are reinforced even better. If any coach helps his athlete to apply the aforementioned aspects of sportsmanship into their lives, I for one, think that the athlete's endeavors will turn out way better than initially possible.

**Sportsmanship**  
*By John Henry Dupuis*  
*Chelmsford High School*

There are dreams that linger in every boy's mind.  
 They never vanish with happiness we find.  
     For in us lives a burning desire,  
     To hit the ball farther or jump higher.  
 No matter the sport it is always the same.  
 The dream is that dream hardest to obtain.  
     We sit at home and we watch the pros.  
     Will we get there? No one knows.  
 However, we will always try and will never quit.  
 For our love of sports and dreams are a perfect fit.  
     We will need as much help as we can get.  
     Many have helped me, I will never forget.  
 Regardless however where my efforts lead,  
 The lessons I learned set me up to succeed.  
 Through high school we train to be the best,  
 To compete in our sport superior to the rest.  
 Sadly though our good fortune sometimes turns away,  
     The score may sometimes go astray.  
 When it's over we're helpless, we feel so bad.  
 Sometimes the events may make us mad.  
     Then we remember the lessons taught.  
     No matter how hard and long we fought.  
     We realize then, sportsmanship true  
     This keeps us away from feeling blue.  
 For no matter the score we come out on top.  
 Our love of the game makes our anger stop.  
 We begin to appreciate the game for what it was.  
 No matter the crowd or the newspaper buzz.  
     We leave with our heads always high.  
     We may give a frown, we may give a sigh.  
 Thanks to what we have learned we can handle defeat.  
     Our coaches grin, their dreams complete.  
     All they wanted was to make us men,  
 To remember the time of sportsmanship way back when.  
 Hopefully now we have learned the true purpose of sports,  
 To control our emotions as they swing and contort.  
 Coaches dream of the day our sportsmanship flows.  
     Without restraints as the wild fern grows.  
     Sportsmanship touches a new aspect to life,  
     To avoid all the anger and strife.  
 My coaches taught me the greatest lesson of all.  
 Sport's about heart, and not about the ball.