

Catholic Youth Ministries Sports
GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS
Updated October 2005

I. Athletic code of behavior

A. All parents must receive and be encouraged to read the deanery orientation letter from the deanery at the beginning of the season accompanied by the Athletic Code of Behavior.

B. Athletic Code: Deanery athletic competition is a means of developing youth and giving them the opportunity to enjoy healthful sports. One of the most important lesson young athletes can learn is that whether you win or lose, that they learn to respect opponents, officials and spectators. The most powerful way they learn this lesson is through example. Therefore it is important that all concerned with the Deanery athletic program follow this code:

- To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
- To demonstrate courtesy to opponents and officials.
- To respect the integrity and judgment of officials.
- To have a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules and standards of eligibility.
- To recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players.
- To remember that a game is only an activity and not a matter of life or death for player, coach, school, parish, official or fan.

Players should:

- Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
- Curtail fellow teammates whose behavior is unbecoming.
- Respect the property of hosts and the decision-making responsibilities of officials.
- Show respect for injured opponents.
- Not applaud errors of opponents or penalties inflicted on them.
- Not heckle, jeer or intentionally distract members of the opposing team.
- Never criticize fellow competitors or the coach for losing.
- Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach and not be a second guesser.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior before and after contests.

Coaches Should:

- Read, understand, support and sign the Coaches Code contract
- Always set a good example for others to follow.
- Teach the values of honest effort in conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
- Instruct the players of their sportsmanship responsibilities.
- Discipline those players who display poor sportsmanship behavior and remove players who flaunt disciplinary action.
- Be a gracious host to opponents and treat them as you would want to be treated.
- Provide opportunities for social interaction among coaches and players.
- Respect the officials' judgment and interaction of the rules and lead by example to the players.
- Help players in recognizing the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco use to their bodies and minds.

Parents and Fans Should:

- Be courteous to players, coaches and fans of opponents.
- Cheer a good play by an opponent.
- Not applaud errors of opponents or penalties inflicted on them.

- Serve as a role model for the players.
- Respect the property of your own facility and that of your opponents.

All players, coaches or spectators who are not living up to the deanery Code of Ethics will be subject to immediate suspension or expulsion from athletic competitions. The head coach is ultimately responsible for the conduct of his or her players and assistant coaches. The head coach and any parish or school administrators in attendance at a game are asked to be responsible for the behavior of their fans.

We hope that all involved in deanery athletics will work together to implement this Code of Ethics. The reality is that no philosophy can be fully implemented through legislation. Only by constantly focusing upon the philosophy by a team of fully committed Christian adults can we help the youth grow in all dimensions through athletics.

II. ELIGIBILITY/PARTICIPATION

Our 3rd/4th grade sports are instructional only and are intended to teach the fundamentals of the sport and Christian-centered values. In basketball, for example, the score is never kept and every child is guaranteed full participation in all games and drills.

Our 5th and 6th grade sports build on the fundamentals and introduce athletes to healthy competition. There will be no cuts at this level and players may play in different leagues based on their skill level so that all athletes will have opportunities to improve. We encourage athletes in the A and B leagues will be guaranteed playing time in each game, although the increment of playing time may vary.

Our 7th and 8th grade sports builds upon the basic fundamentals already learned and help athletes continue to develop individual and team skills. In certain sports, it may be necessary for parishes to have try-outs prior to the season as teams are limited to a maximum number of players. However, we encourage parishes to have "cuts" only when absolutely necessary. In basketball, for example, players at the 7th and 8th grade level are not guaranteed playing time in every game, however, all players are guaranteed the chance to play during the course of the season.

A. Grade Levels

1. Third/Fourth Grades: A player is not eligible to play for any part of the season if his/her eleventh birthday falls prior to August 15. However, that player is eligible to play on the fifth/sixth grade team.
2. Fifth/Sixth Grades: A player is not eligible for play for any part of the season if his/her thirteenth birthday is reached prior to August 15. However, that player is eligible to play on the seventh/eighth grade team.
3. Seventh/Eighth Grades: A player is not eligible to play for any part of the season if his/her fifteenth birthday is before August 15.
4. A player may only move up one level for the following reasons:
 - a. Date of birth requires it.
 - b. Needed to meet the minimum requirements for team entry in league, with approval of Deanery Early Adolescent Athletic Committee.
 - c. Move limited to one grade level, example follows:
 - Fourth grader may move up to fifth/sixth grade team.
 - Six grader may move up to the seventh/eighth grade team.

B. Transfers

1. Players who move to another parish or school during the school year or season may finish the sport with which they initially played.
2. Those who want to play a sport that is not offered by their home parish may participate in that sport at the closest parish. Such a move is subject to the approval of the Early Adolescent Athletic Committee and the respective parishes.
3. If a sport is offered at your home parish, you must participate at that parish
 - Exceptions:
 1. If a player is cut from the team and another parish is in need of players.
 2. If a player attends Providence Junior High School.

Note: The above exceptions must be submitted and approved by the Early Adolescent Athletic Committee.

C. Participation and Grade Requirements

1. Participation in deanery athletics is left to the full discretion of each student athlete's parents or legal guardians. If an athlete's parents or guardians determine that their child's academic progress is being hindered, then they are encouraged to suspend their child from all athletic practice and competition until they are satisfied that sufficient progress by their child has been made. At that time they may reinstate their son or daughter, without further penalty by the team or the parish, for full athletic participation.
2. Athletes in 7th thru 8th grades who attend public school and are members in good standing with their respective parishes, may not play for both their public school team and their parish team when any portion of those seasons runs concurrently. They will be allowed sufficient time to try out for their public school team while trying out for the parish team, but they must choose a team before final rosters are determined for the parish team. If it is determined that a student is trying to play for both their public school and parish team at the same time after the final rosters are turned in, he or she will be ruled immediately ineligible for participation in deanery sports for the remainder of that year and sanctions may be taken against the parish if appropriate.
3. Athletes and their parents should be instructed that practice and play in the deanery athletic program during a given season should be sufficient exercise. Outside activity with other teams while participating in Deanery athletics, such as boys and girls club, YMCA leagues, A.A.U, and other youth athletic organizations, could be cause of mental and physical fatigue, causing athletes to fall behind in their school work or cutting into family time.

Additionally, the deanery does require a commitment from players and parents that the Deanery sports program, during respective seasons, will take priority over any other community sports programs, practices or games. If athletic conflicts outside of deanery athletics are unavoidable, the student athlete and their parents are required to make a choice prior to the deanery season about who they will play for. There should be no conflict with deanery practices, games or tournaments. Should conflicts arise during the season, the athlete's parish athletic committee will take steps to penalize that player during the season or during next year's season.

4. Unless the league is designated as a co-ed sport, members of the opposite sex will not be permitted to practice or compete on a team that is designated for boys only or for girls only.

III. Practice sessions , league games, and tournament games

Practices

7th/8th Grade

When School is not in session, practice will be limited to four (4) days a week, including chalk talks, practice games, and inter-parish/school scrimmages. When school is in session, practice will be limited to three (3) days a week, including chalk talks, practice games, and inter-parish/school scrimmages. Practice (as defined above) will not exceed 2 hours a day and must conclude no later than 9:00 p.m.

5th/6th Grade

When School is not in session, practice will be limited to three (3) days a week, including chalk talks, practice games, and inter-parish/school scrimmages. When school is in session, practice will be limited to three (3) days a week, including chalk talks, practice games, and inter-parish/school scrimmages. Practice (as defined above) will not exceed 2 hours a day and must conclude no later than 8:30 p.m.

3rd/4th Grade

When School is not in session, practice will be limited to two (2) days a week, and should be limited to practicing drills and team scrimmages. When school is in session, practice will be limited to two (2) days a week. Practice (as defined above) will not exceed 1 1/2 hours a day and must conclude no later than 8:00 p.m.

*Remember that this indicates the **maximum** allowable practices that may be used and not what is expected for all teams and in all sports.*

Games and Tournaments

1. All deanery practices, and games will begin with the entire team, or all of the teams participating in the game or competition praying the Lord's Prayer together at center court/field. Fans should be encouraged to join with the athletes as they pray through an invitation over the public address system if possible.
2. All league and tournament games must start no later than 8:30 p.m. for 5th through 8th grades and by no later than 7:00 p.m. for 3rd /4th grades
3. In addition, no practice or games should be scheduled that will conflict with liturgies on Holy Days or Sundays. Therefore, no games, practices or tournaments should be scheduled until after 12:30 p.m. on Sundays. Other important parish or school events should be considered when scheduling practices and games. Please notify your parish athletic representative before deanery scheduling takes place if there are major parish considerations.
4. It is not permitted for teams to participate as a team under parish name nor use their parish uniforms once their season is complete, in any other league, organization or tournament. Young athletes can participate as individuals however.
5. Any team participating in athletics through the New Albany Deanery will be limited to competing in a maximum of 18 games or competitions for a given sport. Teams must play their entire deanery schedule (if applicable) and may, if the parish chooses, schedule outside games with public or other private schools. However, the total number of games scheduled during the course of the season may not exceed 18. Practice games count towards the 18 total games.

6. 5/6th and 7th/8th grade teams may play in one invitational tournament during the season as long as it does not conflict with deanery league or tournament play and it takes place before the end of the regular scheduled season and tournament.

IV. DEANERY SPORTS OFFERED

1. The deanery offers a variety of sports on a deanery level that are open to youth of any parish. These sports include football, wrestling, swimming (boys and girls), and tennis (boys and girls). Many other sports are organized on a parish or inter-parish level.
2. All deanery sports must submit a schedule, rooster of coaches and participants during the course of their season. In addition, all coaches must undergo a background check before they begin practicing, and attend a Virtus training as well as the coaches orientation during their first year of coaching.
3. All finances for these sports will be managed through the deanery youth ministries office.

V. AWARDS

- A. No player may receive an award in any sport which exceeds \$5.00 in value from his/her parish or parents group within the parish.
- B. The Deanery may present individual awards to champions and runner-ups.

VI. ROSTERS

- A. Additions and Corrections
 1. Each team must submit a completed team registration form to the athletic coordinator at the beginning of each season for each parish team..
 2. Rosters must be submitted to the Coordinator prior to each sport season.
 - a. Notice of any changes in the roster must be given to the Deanery Coordinator before the player may participate.
 - b. Some restrictions apply to certain sports regarding participation before a given date.
 3. There will be no limit as to the number of players who may dress for games, but a maximum number will be required in some cases due to the limited number of spaces in the official scorebook.
 4. A final roster must be filed with the Coordinator four weeks prior to tournament play for basketball, and two weeks for all other sports.
 - a. Only the players on the final roster are eligible for the remainder of the season and for any deanery sanctioned or sponsored post season tournaments.
 - b. No additions may be made on this final roster.
 - c. No participant may play until his/her name is on file with the Coordinator.

VII. PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS

A. Complaints / Grievances

1. A complaint made against a player, coach, or fan should be presented to your parish representative and parish athletic committee. The deanery Rep and the parish athletic committee are then asked to respond or address the complaint according to their parish rules and policies.

If the complaint remains unresolved, the parish representative will forward the complaint to the Deanery athletic Coordinator. If necessary, a meeting will be called with the other parish representatives or the Director of deanery Youth Ministry.

- a. The deanery athletic coordinator and/or the deanery youth ministry leader (if applicable) may work with the deanery rep to resolve issues or clarify deanery policies, when appropriate.
- b. If the parish representatives or YM Director decide that the complaint is beyond step a. and is valid, the player or coach, his/her parish representative, and his/her pastor will be notified in writing that the offending party has been placed on probation until the complaint is reviewed by a Grievance Committee charged by the deanery youth ministry director. The Grievance Committee will make recommendations ruling on the violation/violations and penalties to be imposed.
- c. An additional valid complaint will result in immediate suspension. This rule applied to deanery and outside deanery contests and tournaments.

2. . When it comes to matters of coaching style, strategy, techniques our policy is to not second guess any coach and to support our volunteer coaches 100%. The code we ask all parents and players to abide by states clearly, we will...“Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach and not be a second guesser”. Any discussion of a coach’s winning performance on the court as a way of evaluating their volunteer role is inappropriate and is not grounds for removing any of our coaches.

VIII. Grievance Procedure

This Grievance Procedure of the New Albany Deanery Early Adolescent Athletic Program is in place to insure a just procedure to deal with any protests of problems that occur. Its primary purpose is to protect our young people in the Parishes, as well as the adults who work with them.

I. Reasons for enacting the Grievance Procedure

- A. Vulgar language on the part of the coach.
- B. Abusive or vulgar language on the part of the team.
- C. Any action on the part of the team, coach, or fans which degrade, belittle, or destroy the self worth of an individual, especially a young person(s).(this includes 'trash talk')
- D. If a coach or adult supervisor is ejected from a game or other contest, based on the severity of the violation the offending party may be suspended until the grievance process has been followed.
- E. Violations of the Deanery rules and guidelines.
- F. Destruction of Parish property, especially where the team is a guest.
- G. Fighting or physical abuse of participants.
- H. Prolonged, continuous bickering, griping, or questioning of rules on behalf of a coach. The attitude of a coach directly impacts the attitude of the youth and the fans.
- I. Any action that is deemed by parish or Deanery leaders as improper conduct.
- J. Judgment calls by referees are not grounds for a protest and/or enactment of the grievance process.

K. Other violations of the deanery athletic code.

II. Instituting the Grievance procedure

A. In the event that there are any, or a continuation of the infractions listed above, a grievance statement/protest may be filed and the grievance proceed enacted. All complaints should begin at the parish level and tried to be resolved at that level. If that is not possible or appropriate then please use the following steps:

1. All grievance statements of protests must be submitted in writing to the Deanery athletic coordinator.
2. The grievance statement should include all pertinent information: date, teams reason, witnesses, and the name, address, and phone number of the person(s) filing the statement.
3. Send a copy of the grievance statement to the Deanery Office of Youth Ministries: 707 W. Highway 131, Clarksville, IN 47129.

III. The Grievance Procedure

A. Upon receipt of a grievance statement or protest, if warranted, the following actions will be taken.

1. A Grievance Committee will be called together to review the statement or protest.
2. Notification to the individual or parish who the grievance is filed against is mailed.
3. The individual and Parish Representative against whom the grievance is filed will be asked to state his/her case.
4. The Grievance Committee will gather information from other reputable sources concerning the incident. The Parish Representative will be informed and included in the process throughout.
5. The Grievance Committee will recommend actions on the statement or protest to the deanery Director of Youth Ministries.

B. It is the intent of the New Albany Deanery Early Adolescent Athletic Committee (Parish Representatives), to have the parishes deal with their own problems in an effective manner. Recommendations may be made as to how to most effectively deal with them. In the event that the Early Adolescent Athletic Committee (Parish Representatives) do not feel that appropriate action has not been taken by the parish, the Committee may choose to deal with the problem in the best interest of the youth, the parish and the Deanery.

C. Results of the Grievance Process

1. A written notification of recommended action will be sent to the Pastor, Parish Representative, and the individual against whom the grievance was filed.
2. The Parish Athletic committee and/or deanery office will decide on the appropriate actions to take.
3. An initial reprimand may be a written notice; the second complaint may result in probation and a third will result in suspension.

4. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the first two may be overstepped and suspension be immediate.

IX. CANCELATIONS, POSTPONEMENTS AND FORFEITURES

- A. Cancellation of games because of weather conditions will be left up to the discretion of the Deanery Athletic Coordinator or the Deanery Director of Youth Ministry. In addition, the parish rep can also be responsible for canceling games hosted at their parish due to weather. Games are not automatically cancelled when school is cancelled. If games are cancelled, the parish athletic reps will be contacted and should in turn contact the parish coaches, and families.
- B. Games will be delayed, postponed, or re-scheduled by the parish representative or Deanery Coordinator.
- C. Teams are expected to be on time for games. Only fifteen (:15) minutes of grace will be given before a forfeit is claimed.
- D. The forfeiting team will pay cost of officials if prior notifications, 24 hours minimum, of forfeiture is not given.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND RULES OF COACHES

The primary purpose of **Youth Ministry Athletic Programs** is to provide physical activities for the youth. Opportunities of confidence building and achievement for the youth, positive social interaction with peers and adults, to help them understand discipline and teamwork through structure and clear limits and to provide meaningful participation in programs. **In no way is winning ever to be the primary purpose of these programs.**

I. COACHING ELIGIBILITY

- A. Age - Adult head coach over 21, assistant coaches - minimum 17, teams must always be attended by an adult coach. (Includes on bench and in huddles during game and locker room)
- B. Coaches contract must be signed by coaches and retained by parish representative. In addition, all coaches must have a background check done before they begin the season, as well as attend a one-time coaches orientation. They are also asked to attend the diocesan Virtus training during their first year of coaching
- C. When coaching players of the opposite sex, an adult of the same sex must be present at all practices and contests including on bench and locker rooms during and after games.
- D. Coaches may not be paid for coaching any deanery early adolescent sport.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. He/she must receive the signed Parents' Permission Slip (waiver form), and physical form before the first competition of the season. All forms must be turned over to the parish representative.
 - a. He/she should inform parents as to what is expected of them regarding the program and code of behavior.
 - b. Coach must be familiar with all deanery rules related to the sport they are coaching.

III. DUTIES

- A. He/she must send a completed roster of players, managers and coaches to the parish representative to be placed in his/her file. A copy should be forwarded to the Deanery Early Adolescent Athletic Coordinator.
- B. The head coach and assistant coach should document any disturbances regarding their sport to their parish representative, who will report to the Coordinator. Complaints will be investigated, then findings will be presented to the Early Adolescent Athletic Committee who will decide if the matter should be turned over to the Grievance Committee following designated procedures.

Parish Representatives for Deanery Athletics

It is the primary responsibility of a parish's deanery representative to provide leadership and direction for parish athletics, when at the Deanery meetings, representing his/her parish. This should be a non-coaching position.

1. Parish Representatives on the Deanery Athletic committee are asked to serve a three year term, when possible.
2. Parishes may appoint their Deanery Representative to serve more than one term.
3. Attendance of parish Representatives at deanery meetings is mandatory. There is typically a meeting at the beginning and end of each sport season.
4. Deanery Reps are responsible for deanery paperwork including: turning in a team registration form (with coaches information) for each parish team competing at the beginning of each season, and each team's roster. They are also responsible for initiating payments to cover teams registration fees.
5. He/She must receive a signed parents' permission slip waiver form and physical exam form before the first competition of the season. Retain copy in parish file.
6. Parish Reps are responsible for choosing (or working with their parish athletic committee) to choose coaches that exemplify the deanery philosophy on athletics and supporting, informing and guiding those coaches.
7. Parish Reps (with the help of their parish athletic committee) are responsible for ensuring that all coaches have completed a background check before they begin the season, and attending the deanery coaches orientation as well as the Virtus training during the course of the season. They are asked to verify these requirements through the deanery youth ministry office.
8. Parish Representative is responsible for communications received from the Deanery to inform his/her parish, coaches and parents. They should also serve as a source of communication from the parish to the Deanery.
9. Parish Representatives, when hosting games at their facility are to instruct all score keepers to record all technical and inform offending coach and a brief written explanation be given to Deanery.
10. He/She (with help of coaches and athletic committee) should recruit parents and other workers to help with home games and inform parents as to what is expected of them regarding the Host Responsibilities.
11. He/She (or delegate from parish athletic committee) should always be present at game sites when Parish is Hosting and at major deanery-wide athletic events.
12. He/She is responsible for communicating, weather related cancellations or changes to the parish teams and coaches in a timely manner. If games are being played at your parish, the parish rep can also be responsible for canceling games hosted at their parish due to weather. Such cancellations should be communicated to deanery sports coordinator.

In situations where complaints or athletic issues arise in your parish, the parish rep should work, within the structure of their parish athletic committee, to resolve issues, disputes or complaints in a fair and Christian manner consistent with deanery rules and philosophy. When all parish resources have been exhausted, parish reps (or other appropriate parties) may follow the procedures outlined in the deanery rules to file a complaint at the deanery level.

**Catholic Youth Ministries Athletic Program
Coaches Code**

Parish _____ Sport/grade _____

These things I believe about Catholic Grade School/Parish Athletics:

- That this is a Catholic program and all actions and activities by individuals, players, coaches and spectators will at all times be in keeping with the teaching of Christ and His Church.
- That through participation in an organized sports program, it is possible for all involved to grow physically, mentally, socially and spiritually.
- That pride in growth and development supersedes pride in winning titles, trophies, ribbons, etc.
- That among the primary goals of coaching is to set a positive example of an Adult, Christian, Catholic role model for the athletes.
- That the representatives of each parish coaching staff work together for the positive development of their programs and goals, both at the parish level and inter-parish level.

As a member of a parish coaching staff, I agree to:

- Read, understand and support the Athletic Rulebook of the Deanery Athletic Programs, and the individual parish athletic program guidelines. See www.nadyouth.org.
- Understand and agree to all practice, game, tournament time schedules and competition time guidelines set by the parish or New Albany Deanery Catholic Youth Ministries.
- Teach the values of honest effort in conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
- Refrain from any form of illegal recruitment of players and insist that the Catholic Youth Ministries recruitment guidelines be followed at all times.
- Insist on good sportsmanship from myself, my fellow coaches, players and spectators at all times, including no physical or verbal abuse.
- Refuse to be a part of any and all methods and/or means of training players that may in any way, be potentially dangerous to players' health and well-being.
- Respect and support NADCYM policies which govern participation in other sports programs at the same time as parish programs/seasons are in progress.
- Treat Officials, opposing coaches, players and fans with respect at all times, including no physical or verbal abuse.
- Conduct myself as a Christian, Catholic man/woman at all times, and serve as a positive and encouraging role model for the athletics.
- Be accountable to the appointed administrative officer of the parish athletic committee.
- Help players in recognizing the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco use to their bodies and minds.
- Respect the officials' judgment and interpretation of the rules and lead by example to the players.

This agreement may be terminated upon mutual consent of the affixed parties or by the pastor, or administrative officer, for any of the following causes: failure to perform, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct, insubordination, conduct reflecting great discredit on the parish or deanery.

Coach

Parish Representative

Date