

February 24, 2009

Dear CYO Basketball Coach/Athletic Director,

Congratulations on being invited to the 2008 Archdiocesan CYO Basketball Tournament! You and your young players should be proud of your accomplishments this year. I am pleased to affirm you and your team for the dedication and sacrifice that has led to this successful outcome. The tournament committee and I are proud to be hosting an Archdiocesan tournament with so many teams of both talent and character. Please know that we all appreciate the efforts that went into developing such high quality teams in the many leagues that make up CYO Basketball.

Point of Emphasis for the 2009 Archdiocesan Tournament:

- 1. All teams will be expected to be in full uniform – matching shirts and shorts. Shorts must be of the nature that they designate a specific team, in other words, five players on a team may not have five different shorts - they must be matching – this includes the striping on the shorts – they must be matching. We only caution this as it is a requirement for all our tournaments. Teams not complying will not be allowed to participate.**
- 2. Only legal numbers will be allowed. Players may have either “0” or “00” but not both. No digit greater than “5” is legal. For example, “14” & “15” are legal “16”& “17” are illegal. If you are unclear on the interpretation of what is considered a legal number please contact your area coordinator prior to the tournament.**
- 3. Coaches are asked to please bring a scorer/timer to the tournament with them. These individuals will *not* be charged an entrance at the gate.**

In the past, the tournament committee has offered the Athletic Directors and coaches of participating teams a few points that are essential to the proper running of the Archdiocesan tournament. Those of you who have been around a few years will recognize these guidelines from past tournament invitations. ***Please do not pass over this letter without carefully considering its content.*** Reviewing each of the guidelines with your team and coaches will be a valuable expenditure of time for all concerned. Over the years we have found that the full implementation of these pointers has contributed greatly to very positive tournament experiences. When these pointers were not fully implemented, we have had some less than pleasant tournament experiences. We offer these tournament guidelines with the expectation that they will be implemented in the 2009 Archdiocesan CYO Basketball Tournament. By keeping to these principles, we expect that the 2009 tournament will be a fitting conclusion to a positive season.

First: All adults serving the young in the name of a parish during this tournament must conduct themselves in accordance with the child protection policy of the Boston Archdiocese (*Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children, 2003*).

Second: I ask that you concentrate on creating an environment of peace during all of the tournament contests. We look forward to many highly competitive games during this year’s tournament. However, we do not want the intensity of competition to lead to any violence in either word or action. As coaches and Athletic Directors, you are responsible for the conduct of both your team and spectators.

Third: I ask that coaches and athletic directors display an attitude of respect toward all representatives of opposing parishes. As participants in CYO athletics, we are colleagues in a ministry of the Catholic community. We must never allow our competitive spirit to destroy the bond that makes us one in Christ. As a league we cannot and will not tolerate disrespectful attitudes and/or actions among athletic leaders who act in the name of the church.

Fourth: I ask that coaches demand that their players display the sportsmanship that is the hallmark of CYO Athletics. In a single elimination tournament, the role of a coach in maintaining an atmosphere of peace cannot be underestimated. It is all too easy for a coach to get so caught up in the game that winning takes precedence over the wellbeing of the players. I expect you implement three points in this regard:

1. All instances of “trash-talking” among players must be dealt with quickly and decisively. In my experience, instances of violence on the basketball court have their origin in “trash-talking” among the players. This will not be allowed in the tournament. The referees will be informed of this league policy. I expect your full cooperation in eliminating this threat to the success of the tournament.
2. Coaches are expected to maintain their professional comportment throughout the tournament. It is quite understandable that a coach who cares deeply about his or her team will disagree with an official. While a coach has the right to express these disagreements, he or she can never allow his or her feelings to be expressed in a way which incites the players to even more demonstrative (and perhaps even violent) expressions. Discussions with tournament officials are to be carried on peacefully and without player involvement. Coaches must never lose sight of their primary focus: the good of the players.
3. Single elimination tournaments have the unfortunate quality of leaving many teams with a season-ending loss. Coaches should keep this troubling reality in mind as the tournament progresses. Most of our teams will conclude their season with a disappointment. We cannot allow our teams to react to these losses with blame or excuse. It is our challenge as coaches to use tournament losses as an opportunity to help the young to deal with disappointments which are an inevitable part of life. If your team ends its season with a victory, I am sure that you will help the young to react to their success in an appropriate way.

Fifth: The responsibility of coaching includes supervision of the team in the locker rooms before and after the tournament games. The place of the coach after an emotional contest is with the team in the locker room. Assistants can look after the equipment, check with the official scorer, and arrange for the trip home. If a coach neglects locker room supervision, he or she and the parish will run the risk of being held responsible for any injury or damage resulting from that neglect.

Sixth: Athletic Directors during tournament games will be expected to deal with any problems that may arise with spectators from their respective parishes. ***Athletic Directors cannot consider themselves fans cheering for their parish team.*** They are officials representing their parishes. It is unfair to expect the site coordinators to deal with problems that arise among spectators from the participating parishes. The Athletic Directors will be expected to assume that responsibility

Seventh: Keeping the schedule in the Archdiocesan CYO Basketball Tournament is very important.

1. Please review the tournament rule on forfeit due to tardiness. It may be wise for you to leave

- a little early and arrange for backup transportation if the need should ever arise.
2. You can go to our website, www.oymboston.org, for the links to the tournament brackets. Please be aware that your team may be scheduled to play at any time during the first three weekends of March. You will need to reserve the first three weekends of March for this purpose.
 3. The tournament finals will be held on March 15 (Saturday), and March 16 (Sunday).
 4. The New England CYO Basketball Tournament this year will be held in Boston at the Reggie Lewis Track & Athletic Center, Friday, April 4th, Saturday, April 5th and Sunday, April 6th. Please be aware that the New England tournament is governed by rules that are, to some extent, at variance with those in the Boston Archdiocese. By rule, multi-parish teams cannot play in the New England CYO Basketball Tournament. Only two non-Catholic players are allowed on any team that competes in the New England CYO Basketball Tournament. Those teams qualifying for this tournament will receive the necessary information after the conclusion of the CYO Basketball Tourney.

Also, please be aware that every coach, Athletic Director or representative is expected to help at the tournament other than at your own game. Please call Peter Williams at 617-479-4850 to let him know when you will be available. Your invitation to the tournament is conditioned on your response.

Best wishes for a happy end to an already successful season. May our young players learn from us to approach life with the spirit that has characterized our 2008-2009 CYO Basketball season.

Thank you for the endless time and effort you have dedicated to the young. Because of you, many teenagers know that the Church loves and values them highly.

Sincerely yours in the Lord Jesus,

Mr. Peter Williams
Athletic Director
Archdiocese of Boston