

Background

The Altoona Backcourt club was organized to develop in the children of Altoona the spirit of competition and winning, while incorporating the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect. The Club accomplishes these objectives through a coordinated program of basketball skill development and ensures the availability of proper equipment necessary to conduct organized basketball activities. The Club will promote excellence in basketball by developing and improving the basic skills of each player and requires the enthusiastic support of both players and parents. The goal of the Club is to have the players become a team and learn to play together as a team in order to help their chances of competitive success.

Eligible Participants

All boys meeting ONE of the following criteria are eligible to belong to the Altoona Backcourt Club and participate in its activities:

- a) are enrolled in the Altoona Elementary or Middle schools, or
- b) who are living in the Altoona School District and home educated with the intention of attending Altoona High School

In addition to Backcourt, members are highly encouraged to also participate in the Altoona Middle School basketball program.

To be selected for active participation, the players and their parents are expected to make a positive commitment to the program. **The player's presence at all practices and games will be mandatory and the parents will be required to assist in all fundraising activities sponsored by the Club.** All members are encouraged to follow a policy of good sportsmanship and to refrain from any criticism of the officials, and other players or coaches at any of the games or practices. Should participants have complaints or problems, these should be reported to the Board. It is the sole responsibility of the Board to resolve such situations in any manner they deem appropriate.

Team Selection

Teams will be formed according to the rules listed below. These teams will be established by the grade level with separate teams for fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade players. These teams will primarily travel on weekends to participate in tournament play. It is understood that Backcourt Club activities are outside of the normally run school program and are not meant to replace that program.

A team will be established for each grade level and will consist of approximately eight to ten players. Players who wish to be considered for a team will be required to attend a mandatory registration meeting with at least one of their parents. The goals, objectives, and rules of the Club will be explained at the meeting and all players and parents will be required to sign a pledge to uphold those rules. From the list of those making such a pledge, each coach will select team members based on their basketball skills as well as their attitude and dedication. Prospective players may be asked to attend a tryout, interviews or other such activity deemed necessary by the coach or Board. The coach will then submit the player selections to the Board for their reviews and approval. **It should be understood that not all boys who register may make a team.** If enough players commit to the Club, the Board may consider forming an additional team at any of the grade levels. It is the policy of the Club that any such teams will be divided into groups by skill level with the most skilled players being placed on the same team.

Players and parents should understand that under Club policy, players do not have any playing time guarantees and not all players may get playing time in any particular game.

Substitute Players

The Backcourt is committed to having teams consisting of players from the same grade level to develop player skills and teamwork within that grade level.

A player from another team of the same grade level or from a lower grade level will only be allowed to play with another team under the following

circumstances, and then only on a tournament by tournament basis. A coach may need to call such players because of injury, illness or family business of players on his/her roster. This will only happen if the roster is down to 7 or fewer players. If a coach must call additional players, first preference must be given to a player from another team of the same grade level. If no players of the same grade level are available, the coach may then call players of a lower grade level. The players of the existing team roster will be given preference in playing time over other players that may be called to assist the team.

Coach Selection

The Board and Club parents will choose coaches with the best interests of developing a good program in mind. The parents of players are eligible to coach their child's team and encouraged to apply. All coaches must agree to abide by the philosophy of the Club and will be expected to maintain proper discipline while recognizing that they are coaching a youth sports program.

Tournaments

In general, the Backcourt Club sponsors "traveling teams" which participate in a number of tournaments during the basketball season. These tournaments are usually held on weekends and in many cases are held at locations far from the Altoona/Eau Claire area. Therefore, it is critical that both players and parents recognize that they will be expected to forgo the usual family weekend activities and travel to whichever city is scheduled for that weekend. In some cases, this may even require an overnight stay and parents are responsible for all costs of transportation, food and lodging.

Jersey and Additional Tournament Information

The Club pays for the following:

Third grade: Northwest League Fee and t-shirts

Fourth grade: Northwest League Fee and entry fee to 2 Northwest League

Pioneer tournaments

Fifth & Sixth grade*: Reversible jerseys, and Northwest League tournament entry fees with the following guidelines: 4-6 tournaments per team

Seventh & Eighth grade*: Reversible jerseys and Northwest League tournament entry fees with the following guidelines: 6-8 tournaments per team

*New jerseys will be purchased by the Club in 5th grade and 7th grade only. It is the expectation of the Club that players will wear the jerseys for two years. New jersey's will be purchased in 6th and 8th grade only if a new player joins the team.

The Board does not guarantee participation in any tournaments. It is the responsibility of the coach and parents to obtain the necessary entry information and provide it to the Board for approval. Upon approval, the treasurer will mail the completed entry form along with a check for the entry fee. If players, parents, and the coaches of any team desire to play in more tournaments that listed above, or want to submit other requests, they must seek additional authorization from the Board and such requests will be considered based on available funding.

Mandatory Practices

Practices are mandatory! Most will be scheduled on weekends (usually Sunday afternoon or evening) at one of the gyms in the Altoona complex. All coaches will be required to keep attendance and only those players regularly attending practices will be allowed to continue on the team. Generally speaking, only an emergency situation will be accepted as an excuse for missing practice without the prior approval of the coach. **Again, it is expected that both players and parents will be willing to forgo usual weekend family activities in order to attend these practice sessions.** Practice times are in high demand and will be allocated by the Altoona School System's Activities Director who is required to take gender equity into account in allowing practice time for all teams.

Player Eligibility

If a player is ineligible to take part in school activities due to infractions of the School's Activities Code, it is recommended that any such player or that player's parents will voluntarily withdraw the player from the Club's activities as a matter of honor.

Mandatory Meetings & Parental Participation

All parents will be required to attend the registration meeting with their prospective player. At that meeting, they will be expected to commit to the goals of the Club and agree to abide by its rules. In addition, all parents are required to agree to assist in the Club's fundraising efforts.

The primary fundraising activity of the Club is the sponsorship of basketball tournaments for teams in the age groups of the Club's players. The Club raises money at these tournaments through team entry fees, spectator admission charges, concession sales etc. **It is the responsibility of the player's parents to voluntarily organize and operate these tournaments and parent's participation is mandatory.** If parents do not cooperate, the Board can elect to remove their child from any further participation in the club activities both in the current year and in any future year.