

## ***What is important in High School Athletics***

***Success should never be measured by what you are; it should be measured by what you are, compared to what you are inspired by God to be.*** A person may appear successful when compared to others, but a true evaluation of our success must be measured by our potential. Many of us never reach our true potential. Most are not even trying. They find it easier to accept the hardships of failure than to adjust to the sacrifices that lead to success. This breeds mediocrity and contentment with mediocrity is a settled-for life. Working hard to be our best on and off the athletic field is the value that high school athletics should be teaching. But that value does not stand alone. Being competitive is useless, even dangerous, unless your motivation is to help other people. When it is all said and done in this life, the only thing you will be remembered for is what you have done for others out of a pure heart and love for Jesus Christ. Teamwork, sacrifice, dedication, the team as a family, representing your school, your parents and your community, or just being part of something bigger than yourself and your own statistics is what high school athletics is all about.

Therefore, the scoreboard is only one measure of success. And it should only be a measure to the coach and the players. Only they know what their goals were when they go against an opponent and they know if the score reflected their effort that day. It is not the measure for the fan. It is a fun part of the competition, but a true fan and parent looks deeper. Next time you go to a game look at the young people. Realize that this is an educational experience and not a professional game. When I step into our gym on any given night, I might see young people who have overcome severe health problems or injuries battling for our school, or a young man whose biggest fan is a special needs kid who comes to cheer for his buddy because that young man made him his friend at church, or a young lady sidelined with a season-ending injury who comes to every game and practice to root on her teammates. If you come just to look at the scoreboard, look down, because you are missing the real show. There are a hundred great moments and personal stories in the course of a game or a season.

There is never a time in a high school or middle school contest where it is appropriate to curse at an official, yell at a coach, or make a sarcastic remark about a player. It is certainly beyond any sense of dignity to yell at a coach to take a player out or make a hurtful comment about a young boy or girl who is playing in the game. Coaches and cheerleading advisors should never be confronted on the night of a game for any reason. Make an appointment and talk things out in private. It is time for adults to be adult about the way things are handled and for Christians to be more Christian. You do not know the circumstances that may go into a coach's decision to play this child or that child. There may be an injury, a discipline problem, or poor performance in the classroom. Maybe a coach is rewarding a player for working hard in practice or simply knows that this child needs to play on this day. Your job as a parent is to cheer for all the young people on the team as you do for your own child. It is never so discouraging in this job as it is when you see parents root for their own child and not for his or her team mates.

The greatest feeling in athletics is for a team to stand victorious in a game against a great opponent after giving everything they have. The second greatest feeling is for a team to stand there in defeat against a great opponent knowing they have given all they have. The worst feeling in athletics is to walk away from a season or a game knowing you could have won if only you had worked together and not been selfish or more worried about who got the credit. When we criticize coaches, officials and other players we contribute to such a negative outcome. Worse than that, we give our sons and daughters the excuses of failure that condemn them to mediocrity. And even worse than that, we cheat them out of the true fulfillment in life that is only found when you serve others and not your own self interests. Let us not miss the boat. Passion without a commitment to others is a dangerous thing. Ask the families of the victims of 911 in New York or the sons of the fathers who are in prison because a hockey game got out of hand or the football coach who did not play the son enough to suit dad.

We have built our athletic program on a chord of three strands. First is to be excellent in all we do to worship an excellent God, to show his beauty, grandeur and excellence and to make an invisible God visible. Second is to show the love of Christ by serving others, our teammates, our opponents, our school, our community. Finally, to be competitive to reach our God given potential, to learn how to be spiritually, mentally and physically tough, motivated and disciplined. This is the culture we are trying to develop here at CCS. Join us in the endeavor. Bruce E. Johnson Athletic Director