



Coach's Chat

**Sports Not
Only Build
Character—
They Reveal
It.**

From the President: Donnie Eddy

Happy New Year! What a year the HYSAC is planning for the 2010 sports season!

As many of you may know, a new staff member has been hired by the Parks and Recreation Dept. Michael Lennen joined the department in December and has been using the basketball season to get to know coaches and parents while he is learning the intricacies of the department. Michael has been hired to oversee all of the youth sports for the department. He comes to Highland after gaining some valuable experience working at the Lincoln Area YMCA in Lincoln, IL where he ran 28 different programs. The HYSAC welcomes Michael and we look forward to working with him.

With the end of basketball, we quickly start indoor soccer. Once again we will have a healthy number of participants.

The HYSAC has also approved a new policy that will hopefully entice parents to volunteer their time to coach. Beginning with Indoor Soccer and following through all sports, any parent that is selected by the HYSAC to coach, will be refunded their first child's registration fee in exchange for their time to coach. In addition, we will be performing background checks on all of our volunteer coaches to help ensure the safety of our children.

As many of you know, we continually struggle with retaining adequate numbers for the baseball/softball league. This year we have decided that when suitable, we will make every effort to organize teams so that

there is no longer two age groups being combined.

It is our philosophy that this will provide less intimidation for the younger age group and allow teams to be more equitable in talent. However, we realize that depending on the overall numbers and availability of space, there is always the potential to be forced into combining age groups again. This intent is focused primarily on the 4th grade and younger age groups.

We are also hoping to once again join with the TBSL to play baseball and softball games in the AA Division. This is a division that is evaluated every year as there are always a minimal number of teams that are formed.

Finally, the HYSAC had agreed with the start of the basketball season to expand our leagues to include anyone from outside of the Highland School District. The only exception is Indoor Soccer as the Parks & Recreation Department is limited on practice space and time to accommodate practices.

On behalf of the HYSAC, I wish all of our teams the best of luck in the upcoming seasons and hope that the changes we have implemented will make our children's experience more fun and meaningful.

Take care.

Highland Night at the Ball Game!

The Highland Parks & Recreation Department, in conjunction with the HYSAC will once again be guests of the St. Louis Cardinals on June 2, 2010. Children enrolled in the baseball/softball league will have the opportunity to take part in the pre-game parade on the field. Ticket prices will be announced at a later date.

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Special points of interest:

- February 1–28: Baseball/Softball Registration
- March 1: Indoor Soccer Games Start
- March 22–29: Baseball/Softball Teams Picked
- April 1: Baseball/Softball Practices Begin
- May 3: Baseball/Softball Games Begin
- June 2: Highland Night at Busch Stadium

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Tips for a Good Indoor Soccer Practice

- Kids love playing games and keeping score. In practice, try to use Practice Games and not drills.
- Everyone should stay active and participate. Avoid lines.
- Maximize "touches" on the ball. At least 500 touches per practice for each player.
- Teach proper technique and use games that practice skills or simulate play or "match conditions". Practice Games are much better than drills because they involve competition and pressure (which drills don't) and better prepare players to perform under pressure in "match" conditions and at "game speed". Players improve more quickly and become better players when they practice at game speed in match-related conditions.
- Run games by keeping time (e.g., so they last 1, 3, or 5 minutes) or by keeping score (e.g., first to 3, 12, etc.).
- Praise hustle, improvement and a good attitude. Measure each player's performance by his or her personal improvement and effort, and not by comparing them to someone else. Try to motivate in a positive way that builds self-esteem.
- A good Practice Game must be easy and quick to set up by one coach and should be simple to explain and manage. If you are spending too much time on set up or instruction, simplify it. You should be able to play the game in a small area and without special equipment, except for cones or "disk cones". This is important so you can achieve more in your practices and not waste time.
- If it's not fun, it's not a good Practice Game.
- Try to have at least one ball per player.
- DON'T use practice games that eliminate or "knock-out" players. For Recreational players, positive motivation and not punishment for a child who has tried their best but lost a practice game is a must. Practice games don't make the losers leave the game or run laps. Nor should you use knock-out or elimination games that leave the players who need the most practice on the sideline. From a practical perspective, punishing players slows down practice and elimination games don't produce as many touches on the ball.
- Avoid general scrimmaging for more than 10 minutes per hour. In general scrimmages players don't get enough touches on the ball, the weaker players tend to get the fewest touches and bad habits can be reinforced because players tend to do the same things they have always done. If you scrimmage, do so without a goalkeeper and encourage players to work the ball close to the goal before shooting.
- Adopt this philosophy: **Keep it simple, keep them active, keep it fun & at least 500 touches per player per practice".**

**“Little League
Baseball is a
very good
thing because
it keeps the
parents off
the streets.”**

Yogi Berra

FYI—Pricing: Park Rules

> 4 year old Preschool & Kindergarten T-Ball: \$20.00/child

> 1st–10th Grade:
\$50.00—First Child
\$40.00—Second Child
\$35.00—Third Child
\$25.00—Fourth Child
\$15.00—Fifth Child & Up

^ Please note that we cannot accept boys through the 10th Grade.

> Late Fees:

* March 1-9 \$5.00/child
* March 10-16: \$10.00/child
* March 17-23: \$15.00/child
* March 24-31: Waiting List

~ Please prohibit concessions from being brought onto Glik Park grounds during hours in which the concession stand is in operation. All players are eligible to receive a discounted

drink for \$.50. Your patronage is appreciated to off-set labor costs associated with park operations.

~ Please restrict your children from climbing trees, entering landscaped areas, riding bicycles through spectator areas and practicing fair play on the playgrounds. Thank You!

Characteristics of a Good Coach: By Michael Kozlowski

Although the emphasis in coaching professional and college athletes is on winning, that should not necessarily be the case in coaching youth sports. A youth coach plays many roles including that of teacher, mentor, friend, psychologist and cheerleader.

Winning Isn't Everything: A good youth coach emphasizes the importance of teamwork, good sportsmanship and effort. At the same time, a coach should not undervalue the importance of winning. Sports are fun to play but may be even more fun when you win. A quality coach will let his players know that winning is the goal, but that they should not be disheartened in defeat as long as they try their hardest

Playing Time: In youth recreational sports, it is important that everyone have a chance to play. A good coach will ensure that all players get a fair amount of playing time. Most youth leagues have playing time requirements, but a good coach will go beyond that. This does not mean that all players will have an "equal" amount of playing time. Although a good coach knows it is necessary to give the best players more playing time, she still finds ways to involve other players in the game.

Teaching Skills: Coaches need to be able to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their players. Practices should be devoted to teaching fundamentals and working on new skills. A good coach builds on a player's strengths and makes sure that these strengths are utilized during games. He also dedicates time to helping a player overcome her weaknesses.

Motivation: Good coaches motivate their players by encouraging and complimenting good play, pointing out strengths in a player's game and refraining from harsh criticism. This is a balancing act. To help players improve and recognize areas that need work, coaches must point out a player's mistakes and weaknesses. It is the manner in which this occurs that reflects a coach's skill in relating to her players. If a coach is honest and can remain encouraging, she will earn her players' respect.

Life Lessons: Many aspects of sports can be carried over to everyday life. Teamwork, a "can do" attitude, sportsmanship and strength in the face of adversity are lessons learned from playing sports that can serve players well throughout their lives. A good coach points out the parallels of sport and life.

Having Fun: While some children dream of playing sports at a higher level, it is the fun of the game that brings them to the sport. A good coach makes time for fun. It may be just a few minutes dedicated to goofing off at the end of each practice that becomes a player's favorite

A Real Sports Idol: Jesse Owens

African-American Jesse Owens won 4 gold medals at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. No other Olympian had achieved so much in previous Olympics. His success was a major blow to Adolph Hitler, who had hoped to showcase Aryan superiority at the games.

The grandson of a slave and the son of a sharecropper, Owens' victories were significant on many levels. Perhaps most importantly, it affirmed that an individual's performance distinguishes one more so than race, religion or national origin.

The 5-foot-10, 165-pound Owens won his first final in the 100 meters by edging out teammate Ralph Metcalfe.

The following day, Owens was nearly out of the long jump competition after qualifying began. He fouled on his first two jumps. One of the jumps was a practice run, but officials

counted it as an attempt. With just one jump remaining, Luz Long, a German long jumper who was Owens' toughest competition, introduced himself. Long had the blond hair, blue-eyed look that Hitler so favored, yet Long didn't buy into the "master race" propaganda that Hitler espoused. He offered a suggestion to Owens. To play it safe, make your mark several inches before the takeoff board and jump from there. Owens used the advice and qualified on his last jump.

Later that afternoon, Long's fifth jump matched Owens' 25-10 in the finals. But Owens won the gold medal with a final jump of 26-5½ on his last jump. The first to congratulate Owens was Long. "It took a lot of courage for him to befriend me in front of Hitler,"

Owens said. "You can melt down all the medals and cups I have and they wouldn't be a plating on the 24-karat friendship I felt for Luz Long at that moment. Hitler must have gone crazy watching us embrace. The sad part of the story is I never saw Long again. He was killed in World War II."

Owens added to his gold medal count with wins in the 200 meters and the 4×100 meter relay. The German crowd at the stadium, some 110,000 strong at times, cheered his accomplishments and sought his autograph in the streets during the games. Jesse Owens' inspirational sports story captured newspaper headlines across the world.

"One man practicing sportsmanship is far better than fifty preaching it."

- Knute Rockne

