

# BASKETBALL

## HANDBOOK



OLD TOWN HIGH SCHOOL

*written by:*  
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*Old Town High School, Old Town, ME*  
*1951-1955*

### PREFACE

This booklet is highly recommended for those who play basketball, and for those who watch basketball.

For those who are playing, it charts clearly the attitudes towards the game which are necessary if the player is to achieve the greatest possible success and gain the maximum enjoyment out of the associations and comradeship of athletics.

For those who see basketball from the spectators' seats, it tells clearly what contribution they can make in helping to develop a successful team that will provide real entertainment and relaxation for the community.

In writing this booklet, John T. Barker, Old Town high school coach and a serious student of athletics, has made an important contribution to basketball in this area by putting the game in its proper perspective.

—John R. McKernan

## — PART I —

## FOREWORD

This handbook is compiled primarily for the benefit of the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Junior High school squads of the Old Town school system. However, the contents might be both beneficial and interesting, not only to the players themselves, but also to the parents, spectators, and to all the youth in the community.

The purpose of this booklet is two-fold. The first is to present the traits of character which a player must develop if he wishes to attain his goal of becoming the best possible player and attaining a place on the team. Secondly, it is the hope of the writer that the contents herein will serve to help the members of our community gain a clearer insight into the educational benefits that our youth and adults can derive from this great American game.

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to the Old Town High School Athletic Association and to the Student Council whose generous support has made possible the printing of this booklet. Thanks are also extended to Miss Nancy Peters for typing the original copy.

## INTRODUCTORY

Success in basketball, like success in any sport or profession, is a frame of mind. More players fail mentally than physically. The boy who acquires a

proper mental attitude toward the game, and along with it realizes that most successful basketball players are **made**, not **born**, will soon be on the road to success.

The road to development of one's best self is not easy. The sooner a boy learns the lesson that nothing worthwhile in life ever comes easy, the sooner will he climb his way up the ladder to success in basketball.

He must resolve to be honest with himself and all with whom he comes in contact, if he hopes to acquire the correct mental attitudes which are so important in both the game of basketball and life. The boy who thinks he knows all the answers will end in failure, but success will usually come to the boy who is inclined to listen to wise advice. The payoff in athletics goes to the boy who desires to be outstanding and does not overlook any detail that will contribute to success.

## BASKETBALL AND LIFE

It is important to remember that making the team does not consist in merely going to practice, learning to shoot baskets, guard, and pass the ball. These fundamentals are definitely essential to success, but you can become very skilled in these mechanics of the game and still not make the team. You are not playing basketball just for the sake of playing basketball, and you do not become a highly skilled player overnight. However, as you play and learn and grow, you are acquiring valuable traits

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which we all must possess to succeed in future life. The very same principles which you must follow in basketball must be followed in any worthwhile undertaking. The next section lists several of these traits — be sure you learn them well and they will remain with you for life.

### TRYING OUT FOR THE TEAM

Since we are concerned only with mental attitudes at this time, the factors of specific skill and ability have been omitted. Any boy who desires to play basketball will do well to consider the following qualities that your coach will be looking for as he selects members of the team: 1. Good school citizen, 2. Ability to get along with others, 3. Determination, 4. Confidence, 5. Cooperation, 6. Loyalty, 7. Perseverance, 8. Hustle, 9. Clean living and speaking habits, 10. Unselfish attitude, 11. Eagerness to learn. If you do not understand the meaning of these characteristics, ask your coach — he will be glad to explain them. As a candidate for the team, it is up to you to be honest with yourself, and if you find yourself lacking in any of the above points — **WAKE UP** — it's never too late to improve yourself.

### LOYALTY TO YOUR COACH

The first person you will come in contact with when you go out for the team is your coach. He is your friend and also your superior. He has been

selected by authorities in the school who have received their power from duly elected representatives of the people. His job is to help you become a better ball player, so that you in turn can help the school to have a better team. Your job is to be loyal to him by not creating a discipline problem, so he may devote as much time as possible to the many details that are encountered in producing a winning team.

He may do some things with which you disagree. You may be able to see his faults, but always remember that whenever you feel like criticizing, stop, look at yourself, and examine your own faults. It is easy to find fault with the world, but it is also easy to find good in the world and do those things that are right. As a player, be so busy trying to do the right things, that you don't have time to pick out the faults of the other fellow. While you are out for basketball, let the world judge you as a **player** and not as a **critic** of others.

You should try your best to make every other boy on the squad the best possible player. This might mean that someone else will get your place on the first team. You should not expect to be on any starting team if there are five boys capable of playing a better game than you. An undeserved victory is worse than no victory at all. If you are a substitute, then be the best possible substitute. Be at every practice, so that you can be available if your services are needed. Don't miss a single one. Some coaches feel that if you miss a practice you are not interested, and then they may not be interested in you. Do not ever be satisfied with your

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ability as a player. Always work and practice toward improvements.

### CO-OPERATION WITH YOUR TEAMMATES

You must learn to be happy over the success of your teammates. When they make a good shot or pass, tell them so. A little praise goes a long way. When a teammate makes a mistake, give him a little pat and some words of encouragement. These are the little things that make an average team great. Many people have failed in life, simply because there didn't seem to be anyone who cared if they failed. When a teammate of yours has a "bad night", go to him and try to cheer him up — let him know that you are interested. It makes a lot of difference in our lives if we know that someone is interested in our success, and is sorry when we fail. Every player on the team should do just as much as he possibly can to help and encourage his teammates, for this leads to harmony, and in harmony there is power.

### THE GLAMOUR OF THE GAME

Some players are carried away by the glamour of the game and feel that their own personal gain is most important. These boys are purely selfish, and do things to put themselves in the limelight. In doing this they neglect the others and make themselves disliked. No one likes a selfish person. Do not fall for the glamour of the game — it is here today and gone tomorrow. Let glamour come to you, if it will, but never seek it.

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### THE OFFICIALS AND YOU

The official is sometimes known as "the man without a country", but he is also the ruler of the game. You must recognize this and accept his decisions. Sometimes you will think he has made a mistake — you will know, in some instances, that he has missed the right call. This does happen and it will continue to happen, because the officials are human and everyone makes mistakes.

However, it is not **your** duty to correct him. It is **your** duty to have faith that he is an honest individual who is doing what he thinks is right. You will have enough to do, **if** you are playing your best, without trying to officiate the game, too. In case you still have trouble minding your own business, perhaps the rule that is in effect, and will continue to be in effect, for the high school Varsity team will explain the situation for you. — **"ANY PLAYER WHO TALKS OR ARGUES WITH AN OFFICIAL OTHER THAN TO ANSWER A QUESTION IN A GENTLEMANLY MANNER WILL BE IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAWN FROM THE GAME."**

### THE CROWD

So far as your relation with the crowd is concerned, let that come only through your actions on and off the court. If you are a real sportsman and do your part, play with the other fellows unselfishly, pat them on the back when they make a good play, and assist your opponent to his feet after a



foul, you will not have to worry about what the crowd thinks. The crowd loves real sportsmanship and loves an unselfish player. Again, never look for, or be anxious for, approval from the crowd — it will come if it's deserved. Remember also, no one looks more foolish than a player who is obviously trying to be a crowd-pleaser. These boys always end up with the crowd though — **watching** the games from the bleachers (after they've been cut from the squad).

### ATTITUDE

If it were possible for coaches to order their teams from the sporting goods store, as we do equipment, I'd like to order twelve boys:

1. Who **know** why they come to practice and **act** as though they know why.
2. Who know when to be serious and when to relax.
3. Who are able to be friendly and have fun with the coach and still be respectful at all times.
4. Who never make alibis for their mistakes, but work harder to correct them.
5. Who have team spirit and prefer team victory rather than personal glory.
6. Who keep in top physical condition by seeing that they eat the right foods and get nine hours of sleep each night.
7. Who love to play for the pleasure of playing and who strive to overcome their weaknesses.
8. Who are mature enough to know that the

sun will still rise again in the morning whether they score 20 points or none at all.

9. Who forget **themselves** in a game, and thus can perform in the clutch because they do not experience the tenseness and over-anxiety that always mark self-centered players.

10. Who are gracious in defeat; who for this reason are not tense in a tight spot; who see defeat and victory in proper proportion and, as a result, are cool under fire. This is one secret of relaxation.

If you, as a player, do not have these above items in stock, try to order them as soon as possible.

Finally, I'd like to order twelve boys who believe with all their hearts that they can have anything they want, if they want it bad enough.

### A FEW "DON'TS"

1. Don't discuss the faults of any teammate with the other members of your team.
2. Don't be too chummy with one or two teammates. Avoid obvious cliques.
3. Don't give the impression that you are always hanging around the coach and discussing your teammates with him, unless of course, you are the captain and the coach asks your opinion.
4. When scrimmaging don't loaf or take it easy. This will keep the high respect of your coach and teammates. Everyone loves a boy who hustles.
5. Don't be a "Fancy Dan". In 99 cases out of 100 a simple pass is more accurate than a fancy one and there is less danger of losing the ball. Your coach will not be impressed at all.

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### CONDUCT ON THE BENCH

When a player comes out of a game he is expected to go immediately to the vacant seat by the coach for instructions. Hustling in and out of a game helps the morale of the entire squad. An indifferent or "I don't care" attitude will not be accepted from any player. No coach has time to coddle or baby a player who thinks he is a star. If a boy is too proud to sit on the bench with his teammates once in a while, perhaps he ought to take up officiating; "they're not supposed to sit down". Every man on the bench is important to the team or he wouldn't be there. There's no room for a slacker.

### FINAL MESSAGE TO PLAYERS

The kind of basketball player you are today will reflect the kind of man you will be tomorrow. Live at your best on the basketball court. You are shaping the lives of others who come after you. The boys in the grades are watching you. They will imitate you in many ways. Don't do anything to let these little fellows down. Give them some ideals to shoot at. Follow the advice given above, and long after you have folded up your suit and put it in the locker, long after you have left the school and become a part of the everyday life of this community, the ideals which you exemplified on the court will be carried on. They will be transmitted to those who watched you perform, and you will forever have the satisfaction of a job well done.

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### — PART II —

### FOREWORD

The following points are presented in the hope that perhaps, through the mutual understanding of common problems, we can all (players, coaches, and spectators) help the teams that represent our schools receive the very best that this game of basketball has to offer.

### RELATIONSHIP OF SPECTATORS TO THE COACHES

The writer realizes that one of the greatest joys that many spectators have is to sit in the bleachers and second-guess the coach. This is a privilege that should never be denied, as it serves to keep the coach "on his toes" and the fans feel more like a part of the team. It is a healthy situation, if it is not taken too seriously. For those who attend the game for a battle of wits with the coach purely for the mental stimulation and enjoyment they receive—"go to it and good luck". To the few in any crowd who insist upon ridiculing the strategy that doesn't work (they will never say anything if it does work) — to these people I offer the suggestion that they read the following, and if they honestly feel that the description fits them, I would advise that they immediately change their profession, leave the ranks of the second-guessers, and join the ranks of the "first-guessers", the coaches.

"Anyone who is sufficiently interested in the game to study, work, develop his personality, teaching ability, beliefs in sportsmanship, ethics, and character in athletics; who will attend coaching schools, clinics, tournaments; read books, articles, and papers; who feels a twenty-four hour day is too short, who thinks of basketball when he first awakes in the morning, while in the shower, shaving, eating breakfast, going to school, before and after classes, in the office during conferences with players, at lunch, before practice, while on the train, in the car, walking to the gym, at dinner, in the movies, night club, at a sports event where a pencil is borrowed not to keep the score but to jot down a play, on scouting trips, in a restaurant where tablecloth, envelopes, napkins, cuffs, and menus are used for plays, at home where the All-time All-American 'martyr', the wife, must approve this play, that rule, this bit of strategy; who interrupts the bridge game with a 'dummy' play all over the tally sheet, who refuses to stop planning (at 1 a.m.), even though his wife insists he can't 'revolutionize the game of basketball in one night', who finally goes to bed with a pencil and pad at hand so his dreams, nightmares, and sleep-walking technique can be recorded for the next practice — anyone who can do all this and then can hardly wait until the next morning to repeat the process, and love it — he can coach."

#### **PARENTS AND PLAYERS**

Behind every successful team we usually find

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conscientious and interested parents. The part that the parents play is extremely important because they are primarily responsible for the health of their sons. It is not possible for the coaches to have adequate supervision of their boys other than at regular practices, games, and during school hours. Therefore, it would be a great asset to all of our teams if the parents would do everything in their power to see:

1. That their boys are properly dressed during bad weather.
2. That they are getting enough sleep (preferably nine (9) hours per night).
3. That they eat the proper foods — milk, fresh vegetables, meats, eggs, etc. with a minimum of fried, heavy foods and pastries.

Since many fathers of the players have been active in sports in the past, it is only natural that they take a great deal of interest in the progress of their sons by helping and advising them as they are learning the game. This is encouraging to the coaches for it often hastens the development of younger players and creates a closer bond of friendship between father and son. However, when a boy develops his skills and abilities to the point where he is selected for the high school varsity team, it is time for the parent to let the coach shoulder the responsibility of teaching. Many times parents with perfectly good intentions will undo weeks of practice on the part of the boy by telling him to do something in a game which he has been instructed not to do. This only results in confusion in the

mind of the boy, and without a doubt disrupts the teamwork of the whole squad. If the parents really wish to help their sons, the best thing they can do is encourage them to become better team players, rather than individual players.

#### RELATIONSHIP OF SPECTATORS TO PLAYERS

In a community such as ours, where basketball has so much spectator appeal, we should take a moment and analyze the present situation to see if we can improve upon it. First, although the games provide much entertainment for our adults, both young and old, we should always try to remember that the game belongs to the boys primarily. It is in connection with this point that I'd like to mention a situation which is present among us and which, if it is not cleared up soon, will hurt not only many of our boys, but will have an effect upon our whole athletic program. It is a situation caused by a few, well-meaning (no doubt), rabid fans who sometimes forget to think before they speak. It can be corrected very easily — let's start this year. Isn't it true that many times in the excitement over the game we hear some people ridiculing the players for committing an error? Isn't it true that, after a game during the week, on the streets and in the mills, we hear some people repeating unkind and malicious statements about a player who happened to have a "bad night"? When these remarks reach the player's ears he feels miserable, begins to worry, and as a result his game begins to suffer. Are the results of a game so important that we

should undermine the confidence of even one of our boys? Of course not! Let us all try to encourage our boys and stand by them when they need us most. We want to build, not destroy, good citizens and promote good sportsmanship.

The spectators' part in producing a winning team is the support of their various teams by regular attendance and by the strength of their vocal chords. Everyone of us enjoys the approval of others when we have tried to do a good job, and the boys are no exceptions. The roar of approval from the crowd spurs a team on to greater heights, even to the seemingly impossible sometimes, and this support is a tremendous asset to our teams. The players and coaches appreciate the whole-hearted support you have given in the past and hope you will continue — we need you.

In conclusion, let's all try to make our community known throughout the state for: (1) its understanding of the real values of the game; (2) its wholesome desire to win —

"If you don't play to win,

Why keep score?"

and (3) its sportsmanship and fair play —

"When the One Great Scorer  
Comes to write against your name,  
He cares not who won or lost,  
But how you played the game."

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