



WAA TRAVELING BASKETBALL

Coaching Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in coaching for WAA Traveling Basketball. This coaching guide is meant to help new and returning coaches understand their role in our program and provide assistance in finding resources to answer your questions. Should you have any questions or needs please contact John Rodemeyer, Boys Traveling Basketball Director or Laura Maciejewski, Girls Traveling Basketball Director.

As a coach we expect that you are familiar and supportive of the Mission Statement, Program Values, and Program Philosophy. Remember, as a coach you are the face of our program. In addition, you play an important role in helping players and parents/fans maintain the integrity and spirit of youth sports.

Mission Statement

WAA Traveling Basketball is dedicated to growing each player's enjoyment of basketball by developing skills in practice and applying them at the appropriate level of competition based on age and ability. Our primary goal is to run a competitive program where all players improve, have fun, and return to play basketball next season.

Program Values

Our mission statement is achieved through our program values. These include:

- Fun - traveling basketball is meant to be fun, which is why kids play
- Development - focus on individual and team development, both on offense and defense
- Respect - sportsmanship and how we treat others is a reflection of our priorities
- Positive - encourage and support players & teams in their successes and failures
- Hard Work - effort shows mental toughness and leadership, regardless of outcome
- Teamwork - we would rather lose as a team than win with an individual
- Competition - competitive games make us better, whether we win or lose

Program Philosophy

WAA Boys Traveling Basketball is focused on what is best for the development of the large group over what is best for a few players. While we like to win, we are not a win-at-all-costs program. Players mature differently (physically, mentally, and emotionally), so our program strives to support the development of all players regardless of position (dribbling, passing, shooting, defense). We promote teaching skills and concepts, not just X's and O's. Developing an understanding of the game that is based on fundamentals and instincts makes the game enjoyable in structured and unstructured settings. Developing the overall skills necessary for long-term success outweigh the ability to win now (e.g. playing zone in 4th grade versus learning man-to-man fundamentals). We believe that practice and competition make players better. In-season practice is important, but off-season gym time is critical to repetitiously practice new skills. Competition allows us to apply what we have practiced, so we believe there is no substitute for playing time. Players must be willing to try new skills (successfully or not) in competition to maximize development.

EXPECTATIONS

The expectations for everyone associated with Woodbury Traveling Basketball are consistent with our mission statement, program values, and program philosophy.

- Coaches
 - Remember that the kids will remember the fun they had more than their record
 - Attitude reflects leadership – be positive and encouraging
 - Observe the playing time rules and embody the program values
 - Attend Parents Meeting and Coaches Clinic
 - Communicate practice and game information timely to parents
 - Utilize the WAA Basketball Board, other coaches, and the internet to enhance your coaching abilities and knowledge of the game
 - Complete Trusted Coaches assignments PRIOR to attending tryouts
 - Secure assistant coach(s) and communicate them to the WAA Basketball Board. Specific assistant coach(es) may be recommended/encouraged to you. You are responsible for your assistant coach(es) to follow the same expectations listed in this document, including the completion of Trusted Coaches assignments.
 - Ensure roles/responsibilities of assistant coaches are clear, and that the team understands who is providing the consistent coaching communication.
 - Promptly communicate to WAA board any misconduct, sportsmanship, or other issues associated with your team with as much detail as possible.
 - Communicate to WAA board any coaching equipment issues as they occur, and promptly return all of the coaches equipment at the end of the season.
 - Complete the coaches survey and player history forms after the season

WAA & WHS COOPERATION

WAA Traveling Basketball is distinct from WHS basketball. However, we operate with an understanding that supporting each other provides mutual benefit.

WAA leverages offerings from the WHS coaching staff in the following areas:

- Summer oversight and guidance at WHS open gym
- Skills development guidance and recommendations
- Assistance, when possible, at WAA traveling tryouts
- Coaching clinics and guidance, including an open invitation to watch practices
- WAA night at a WHS basketball game, plus other team nights available
- WHS Basketball drills included in coaching packet

In return, WAA Traveling Basketball provides opportunities for the WHS teams to work the Woodbury Classic (boys home tournament) & the Royal Rumble (girls home tournament) as a fundraiser for their booster program and may support other opportunities and initiatives that broadly benefit both WAA and WHS basketball.

While our mission statement and program values remain consistent across all ages and levels of WAA Traveling Basketball, we believe that there is mutual benefit at the higher grades and levels to have some WHS basketball influence.

** Core skill development should be the focus for coaches in grades 4 – 6, in grades 7 – 8 coaches should continue to foster those skill developments. Skill development and progression guides will be provided in separate documents on the website for each the boys and girls programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS & INSIGHTS

The following are practical ideas that have proven valuable to many of our coaches throughout the years.

Communication & Organization

- Send an introductory email within 1-2 days of the teams being announced
- Hold a parent meeting the first week of the season to share your expectations and goals.
 - Cover the practice schedule, tournament schedule, and issue resolution process.
 - Include a short handout that can be emailed to those parents not in attendance.
- Promptly upload practice and game schedules into TeamSnap once available.
- Follow-up with emails or TeamSnap messages throughout the season as needed for broader communication.
- Establish, and build, relationships with parents and players throughout the season

Practices

- - After warm-ups, try to divide practices into four portions. Here is a suggested breakdown using a 90 minute practice as an example:
 - 45 minutes - Individual skills/fundamentals
 - 15 minutes - Team Defense, including footwork, positioning, rebounding, man-to-man; pressing and zone when age-appropriate and per WAA directors guidance
 - 15 minutes – Team Offense, including sets, plays, press break
 - 15 minutes - Scrimmage (not pick-up style; use them for teaching) ,games (fun and competitive) and at least a couple minutes of stretching as you wrap-up
 - Try to use a season-long practice outline:
 - Start with the fundamentals (even at the older ages)
 - Reuse drills for familiarity and for more efficient use of your practice time
 - Gradually layer in plays, defenses, etc. throughout the season
 - Limit the number of plays you use (especially for the younger grades) and instead focus on teaching players how to move without the ball using "position-less based offenses" (ex: 5 out or 4 out 1 in) that emphasizes ball movement and player movement.
 - Regardless of grade and level, please focus on basketball fundamentals
 - Man-to-man defense and associated skills/drills
 - Dribbling with eyes up and using both hands (control dribble)
 - Shooting with both hands in practice and games (lay-ups)

Games / Tournaments

- Vary your starting line-up and let kids play with a variety of teammates.
- Tournament schedules usually come out 1-2 weeks prior to a tournament and can be found on that association's web site. MYAS.org has a link to most basketball associations.

Tournament schedules are rarely emailed or sent out to coaches.

- Understand how WAA and tournament rules vary by grade and how that impacts play
 - 4th grade – generally man-to-man defense only, with no/limited pressing
 - 5th grade – no pressing allowed (many tournaments allow pressing last 2 minutes of each half)
 - 6th grade plus – no longer equal playing time; much more game management

COACHING CLINICS & RESOURCES

- WHS Basketball Head Coach – hosts early season WAA coaching clinic
- WAA web site – see the “Coaches Corner” page under Boys Traveling Basketball for age-appropriate development with skills/drills, links, etc.
- Follow mandatory monthly skills drills provided by the WAA Travel Director(s)
- Use other WAA coaches as a resource and observe/consider plays from opponents
- Basketball web sites on the internet

SEASON OVERVIEW

- October – practices begin; pick up equipment bag; finalize tournament schedule
- November – tournaments begin
- January
 - Confirm if your team will participate in any state tournament (MYAS or MSF)
 - Help complete registration information and rosters for state
 - End of January – Woodbury hosts tournament; parent volunteer requirements
- March
 - Season ends
 - Complete Coaches Survey and Player History spreadsheet
 - Return equipment bag

ISSUE RESOLUTION

It is our hope that parents have read the Program Summary and understand the expectations we have of them. Please follow the Issue Resolution section of the Program Summary document and support parent’s use of the Issue Resolution Form to escalate issues, if needed.