

## St Agnes Basketball Program (Instructional, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Junior Raven, Junior Varsity & Varsity)



### 1. Objective

The goals of the St Agnes School (SAS) Basketball Program are to **teach basketball skills** to the youth of St Agnes School; to **encourage sportsmanship** at all times; build character and confidence, and above all else, to enable the youth to **enjoy the game** of basketball. To achieve these goals, the St Agnes Basketball program encourages all participants, be it players or coaches, to act in a responsible manner on and off the court.

### 2. Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is displayed through conduct and attitude. It is imperative that all participants in the SAS program, coaches, players and spectators exhibit superlative sportsmanship both on and off the court.

- a. Any instances of un-sportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated and the player(s) who exhibit such behavior will face disciplinary action including game suspension or permanent expulsion from the program.
- b. Parent and spectators are not to speak to the referees, and parents should refrain from attempting to coach their children from the stands. Parents and spectators who violate the general rule of sportsmanship will be dismissed from the premises and may be asked not to return.
- c. Coaches must lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all players. Coaches must lead by example. Abide by and support the rules of basketball in general and in specific the rules adopted by each individual league they play in, i.e., Suburban & CYO). Be gracious in victory and defeat. Maintain a positive, helpful and supportive attitude toward all players and coaches in the basketball program. Never forget that you are coaching someone else's children in a youth basketball program. Always emphasis fun and participation over winning and losing.
- d. Scorers and Timers must always remain objective to the events they are responsible for an immediate dismissal and removal from the eligibility list will result in any display of un-sportsman like conduct

### 3. Practice Objectives

#### Five Key Goals for Practices

1. Get the players in shape.
2. Understand each player's potential
3. Work on individual skills and position skills
4. Work on making them a team with sharp execution of plays and defenses
5. Motivate, Communicate, Lead

**Note:** Coaches for the Instructional players should not focus on offensive plays. Encourage good ball movement and basketball skills during practices. Let them have some fun!

#### FIRST GOAL - GET THE PLAYERS IN SHAPE

Conditioning is more important in basketball than any other major sport. It doesn't take much to get grade school children into shape; and there is just no excuse when they aren't.

#### Do: Warm Up

Make sure players warm up before practice. Early in the season the large muscles high on the inner thigh and groin area and the shins are vulnerable. Ankles and knees are cold if the kids just came in from outside. Tell your players that muscles are like bubble-gum. Unless they stretch slowly, they will tear.

#### Examples of warm-ups:

- a. Half dozen laps around the gym at a slow pace should break a sweat and warm up major leg muscles.
- b. Tell them to run backward and shuffle-step part of the time.
- c. Lay-up lines do the same.

#### Do: Start on Time!

Coaches will probably only have one to two hours per week to work with their team, take advantage of every minute.

#### DO: End on Time!

Leave the floor immediately when your time is over.

#### Do: Monitor Your Players

Be aware of the progress of your players and communicate with them and if necessary their parents if you have concerns about the health or mind set of a player.

### **Don't: Do Wind Sprints, Until the End of Practice**

Wind sprints require the loosest muscles, so they should normally be done at the end of practice.

The *suicide drill* is a great sprint drill for ending practice. The kids start at an end line, sprint to the top of the key, touch the floor, and sprint back and touch the floor. Then they sprint to half-court in the same manner. They finish up with the down court key and finally a full court sprint. The whole exercise involves eight sprints. Time them! Tell the players to teach out in a long stride. Do some backward and some sideways.

Finish practice with a few half-court races. Wind sprints are essential for endurance and leg strength. If they are waiting for their parents, remind them that foul shots are hardest to shoot when very tired, and the best time to get a few in is after sprints.

### **SECOND GOAL - UNDERSTAND EACH PLAYER'S POTENTIAL**

Coaches need to figure out what each player can do, so he/she can concentrate on developing the specific skills needed in his position.

Generally bigger kids play underneath, and smaller kids are guards, but not necessarily. Some big kids have remarkable ball handling and passing skills, and these should be developed. Some average-sized kids have great leaping ability and have a knack at getting into position for rebounds. So, keep an open mind, and figure out what players you need to move around a bit. While it's important to get things set early in order to concentrate on the special skills required by each position, coaches should allow every player a chance to play multiple positions on the floor.

Keep Track of Players' Strengths: Run sprints to see who your fastest players are. Who can accelerate the best, that is, has the best short-distance time? Who are the most agile? Who are the risk-takers, the fiercest defenders, the strongest players? Who has the best hands? Who wants the ball the most? Who are the natural leaders? Who has a three-point shot, a jumper, and a great foul shot percentage? Who can dribble, pass, follow play patterns to the letter?

### **THIRD GOAL - WORK ON INDIVIDUAL SKILLS**

Each week introduce a new skill and run drills that put that skill into practice.

#### **Example:**

- a. Setting a pick
- b. Boxing out
- c. Rebounding

- d. Left hand lay ups.

#### **FOURTH GOAL - TEAMWORK**

Organize 2 on 2 and 3 on 3 games during your practices. Direct the players to run screen roll plays and finding the open player on offense, and work switching on defense. Scrimmages are fun for the kids, and even 10 minutes at the end of practice is a good idea. However, in the first weeks of preseason they have much to learn, and there will be little time for anything extended.

#### **FIFTH GOAL - MOTIVATE, COMMUNICATE, LEAD**

Many coaches seem to spend a lot of time hollering, trying to motivate players, and to get them to increase their concentration. Energy is sometimes great and coaches have to yell to be heard, the screamer routine is often quite overdone. Furthermore, there is a line that shouldn't be crossed, and that is humiliating a player. The idea is to be firm, to let players know that they can do better if they focus a bit more.

Ask yourself what your ultimate goal is. To help a young boy or girl learn how to face challenges, then try the positive reinforcement methods. Coach a kid according to *his* needs—some need caring, some need a gentle boot in the can, some need patience.

Most importantly, reward good effort. Praise good hustle. Yell out, "That's basketball!" It can get infectious. You are the leader of the team, the most significant person out there. What do you want their memory of you to be?

#### **THE PRACTICE PLAN**

Each practice should follow a written practice plan. It just takes a few minutes to think through what you want to accomplish, and it does wonders for efficient use of time. A practice plan follows a general routine. It varies somewhat in the proportion of time spent on areas as the season moves along, and the actual drills used (mix them up for variety). This will also help pass down guidelines of what works for future coaches.

During the first weeks in the season, your plan should focus on (1) conditioning, (2) individual skills development, (3) evaluating your players and (4) "homework" time spent looking at play patterns. Then the plans focus shifts to team dynamics and specialty plays.

### **4. Basketball Tournaments**

The SAS Basketball program supports two annual basketball Tournaments (Father Mee – November and Father Whelan (Suburban Boys – March). All sports parents and coaches are expected to work both tournaments. These tournaments are considered one way to fundraise for items such as uniforms, equipment, referee/umpire fees, giveaways, and end of year party as well as the Joseph Santos Scholarship.

- a. Father Mee – played during the November/Thanksgiving timeframe runs approximately 3-4 weeks depending on team entries. This tournament is a

warm-up to the basketball season. Door, kitchen and entry fee are revenue for the program.

- b. Father Whelan – played during the March timeframe runs approximately 3-4 weeks. The Father Whelan Tournament is hosted by St Agnes but is run by the Suburban Boys League. The kitchen is revenue for the sports program.
- c. Greg Frost Tournament (Girls only) run by Suburban Girls league off site and only parents of the girls program are required to work the program.

## **5. Games**

### **Instructional Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade**

Our philosophy for this program is not to have them play structured games as they need to learn the fundamentals of basketball before a game can be played. Your child will learn how to dribble, pass, catch, shoot, as well as how exercise is important in the day to day sports activity. Your children will also learn about sportsmanship, playing as a team member, discipline, **having fun** and developing their confidence at mastering a task/skill.

We will incorporate drill specific games that will build on the fundamentals we are teaching during each practice. I believe that our children will have fun, learn the skills necessary for basketball and want to return year after year to the sports programs

Practices will usually be held on a Saturday Morning

### **2nd Grade**

This program will combine the instructional and game strategy to our children. Players will learn about game situation and clock time at the same time continuing to build on their dribbling, passing, catching, and shooting skills by playing other schools in the area.

Running clock with substitution

All Play rule

Coaches will be referees

### **Junior Ravens 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

CYO program – Teams will be playing other CYO teams.

Running Clock with free substitution

2 halves running clock of 20 minutes each.

All Play rule

Referees are introduced at this level but will be utilized to help instruct players on rules of the games. Coaches will start to introduce offense, defense strategies as well as continue to promote sportsmanship, dribbling, passing and shooting skills.

Coaches must remain in front of and within the length of their bench.

Coaches are responsible for their players after practice and games to insure the players are picked up and will be taken safely home. If a team has more than one on the bench; only one coach may stand at a time, the second coach must sit.

### **Junior Varsity 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Coaches will continue to emphasize offense and defense drills, building on teamwork and sportsmanship goals

6 Minute quarters

Emphasis on Team Rosters

All Play rule

Fouls enforced

Foul Shooting

Official scorer and clock

Time outs (4 per game)

Referees

Press is introduced in the last 2 minutes of the game

Introduce Man to Man

Introduce Full court and half court press

Season is approximately 14 – 16 games

Participation in the Father Mee Tournament

Participation in the Father Whelan (Boys only), Greg Frost (Girls Only)

Coaches must remain in front of and within the length of their bench.

Coaches are responsible for their players after practice and games to insure the players are picked up and will be taken safely home. If a team has more than one on the bench; only one coach may stand at a time, the second coach must sit.

### **Varsity 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

8 minute quarters

All Play Rule

Time outs (4 per game)

Team building skills

Continual stress on Man to Man and Full Court Press options

Shooting opportunities

Press

Participation in the Father Mee Tournament

Participation in the Father Whelan (Boys only), Greg Frost (Girls Only)

Continual enforcement of strategies, defense and offense plays.

Coaches must remain in front of and within the length of their bench.

Coaches are responsible for their players after practice and games to insure the players are picked up and will be taken safely home. If a team has more than one on the bench; only one coach may stand at a time, the second coach must sit.