

Sportsmanship: The True Meaning

In the realm of all sports and athletics, where two teams compete and battle for victory, sportsmanship can be valued and practiced, or its entire idea can be completely lost and misunderstood. The choice seems obvious—to value it—however, too often are teams blinded by hatred, hostility, and resentment by their desire to succeed.

The truth is that the same quandary happens in the game of life; people lose the idea of exuding respect, compassion, and kindness towards others and themselves by their flawed idea of success. Today, it seems that more emphasis is continually being placed on outcomes, results, and awards, which are perceived as the direct effects of being successful. This developing fallacy has unfortunately crept into the game of sports.

Success is far more than just the grade on the test, the numbers on the scoreboard, and the trophies collecting dust in the showcase. Success is what was learned from the class, the respect and friendship gained on and across the field, and the priceless memories created during each season. Sportsmanship derives from this paradigm of thought—that competitions are for the quality of experience, not the quantities of gains or plastic titles of qualifying distinction.

Alas, this is reality's rarity—this way of viewing sports, of viewing life. Those few who understand this genuine meaning of the game are the true disciples of sportsmanship. They are the players who help others up, off the court or the field and the players who traditionally meet after the game, gracefully shaking hands after the hard-fought battle on both sides. They are the few teams that gather after a game, center field, holding hands and praying together. Those players, those teams are the ones that others can learn from. Only then will respect and friendship be created with the most promising memories—those are the games that will be remembered. Success is thus achieved—more so than that of any trophy. More importantly, these philosophies of sportsmanship will be carried off of the field and into daily life.

In the realm of all sports and athletics, sportsmanship is defined where two teams compete and battle, not for victory, but for the respect of their opponents, their brothers across the court or on the other sideline.

From: **Jacob Doyle** JDoylo@lhsaa.org
Subject: **LHSAA Beyond the Game Essay**
Date: **June 8, 2015 at 2:54 PM**
To: rexben55@yahoo.com

Congratulations Benjamin,

Your essay, "Sportsmanship: The True Meaning", was chosen from several dozen applicants as the winner of the 2015 LHSAA Beyond the Game Essay Contest. I would like to formally invite you to the annual Coaches Clinic on Tuesday, July 21 at 2:00 PM at the Crowne Plaza hotel in Baton Rouge. We will recognize you at the General Business Meeting and present you with a certificate and a \$500 check as the winner!

Please let me know if you will be able to attend in case we need to make other arrangements in sending you the certificate and check.

Also, could you send me a picture for our website? I was hoping to include it as one of our rotating headline stories.

Feel free to contact me via email or cell which can be found below.

Sincerely,

Jacob Doyle

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"The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual." -
Vince Lombardi



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