

St. Lorenz Invitational Tournament: Culture of Christian Sportsmanship

As a Lutheran school, we are committed to honoring God in all we do – including sports. We teach, encourage, and expect our athletes, coaches, and fans to practice Christian conduct and sportsmanship. To help achieve this goal, we have developed the following definitions and guidelines. Teams that participate in St. Lorenz sponsored tournaments do so as representatives for their school, church and, ultimately, our Lord. Additionally, all team coaches and athletes, as well as the athlete's family members, are asked to uphold a culture of Christian Sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship can be defined as: Competing according to the established rules of the contest, respecting the officials who enforce those rules, losing without complaint, winning without gloating, and cheering in a positive way without taunt, ridicule, or intimidation toward anyone. **Christian Sportsmanship** is the practice of good sportsmanship as an expression of the Christian faith and an opportunity to bring glory to God's name. *"Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all to the Glory of God."* – 1 Corinthians 10: 31

What does this mean?

1. Competing according to the established rules

- Honor God and find success by playing to the best of your ability (win or lose). Do not look for ways to cheat or circumvent the rules.
 - ✚ Proverbs 12: 20 - Deceit is in the hearts of those who plot evil, but those who promote peace have joy.
 - ✚ Psalm 101: 7 - No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence.
 - ✚ Matthew 5: 16 - In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

2. Respecting the officials

- Do not "boo" or make verbal, personal attacks on officials and their calls.
- You can be unhappy about certain calls, but do not resort to loud, excessive complaints and reactions to unfavorable calls.
 - ✚ Romans 13: 1-2 - Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ²Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.
- Respect the integrity, judgment, and training of the officials. Understand they are helping promote the game and student-athletes. Admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
 - ✚ Titus 3: 1-2 - Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, ²to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle towards everyone.
- Recognize that some calls will be missed as no one is perfect. Do not assume officials are "home-town refs" or against your team. Assess your own knowledge of the rules, your perspective from the bleachers/sidelines which may not be the best, and your natural bias to the situation.
 - ✚ Proverbs 3: 7 - Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
 - ✚ Proverbs 17: 27-28 - The one who has knowledge uses words with restraint, and whoever has understanding is even-tempered. Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues.
- Own your mistakes and/or accept the calls that are made. Excessive complaints and railing against the officials will not result in a positive outcome.
 - ✚ 1 John 1: 8-9 - If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
 - ✚ Colossians 3: 13 - Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

3. Losing without complaint

- Shake competitors' hands at the end of the contest and congratulate them on their win.
- Do not blame officials, coaches, or teammates for a defeat. Accept and respect their decisions that are made in the moment. Identify possible areas for growth.
 - ✚ 1 Peter 2: 17 - Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God.
 - ✚ 1 Peter 5: 5-6 - All of you, clothe yourselves with humility towards one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.' ⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

- Do not use profane or abusive language.
 - ✠ Colossians 3: 8 - But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

4. Winning without gloating

- Thank God for your abilities and give glory to Him for any success.
- Let your (the team's) abilities and success speak for themselves. Do not brag or let your happiness of winning lead to a celebration of your opponent's defeat.
- Respect the efforts of your opponent. Do not humiliate or belittle your opponent or their abilities.
 - ✠ Proverbs 18: 12 - Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor.
 - ✠ Proverbs 24: 17 - Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice.
 - ✠ Romans 12:10 - Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

5. Cheering in a positive way

- Cheer for your team not against the other team.
- Provide encouragement for the athletes that represent your school and community. Refrain from taunting, ridiculing or intimidating anyone.
- Remember that a ticket to a school athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest not a license to openly contest calls, verbally assault others, or be generally obnoxious.
 - ✠ Ephesians 4: 29 - Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.
- Treat others as you want to be treated. Be a role model of good sportsmanship and represent your team/school/community in an exemplary manner - even if you are not treated with good sportsmanship.
 - ✠ 1 Peter 2: 12 - Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.
 - ✠ 1 Peter 3: 9 - Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.
- Acknowledge good play regardless of which team performed it. Do not "boo" the success of other players, or yell at the other team's fans.
 - ✠ Philippians 4: 8 - Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.

Violations

Failure to uphold this culture and violations against it by a coach, athlete or fan may result in a warning (issued directly by a representative of St. Lorenz or through your team's coach). Should a second violation take place, the individual(s) will be banned from the remainder of the tournament. Additionally, future tournament involvement will be discussed with the school's administration.

The emphasis on Christian Sportsmanship and the preservation of this culture is not intended to take the joy and excitement from competition. In fact, it is just the opposite. Young men and women participate in sports for the fun and excitement. The practice of good sportsmanship helps to promote that outcome and teach tremendous life lessons. More importantly, positive Christian conduct allows sports to be an avenue for honoring God and ministering to others. The desire to win must not override our core beliefs and values.

Athletic directors are asked to share Christian Sportsmanship expectations with all coaches, athletes and fans. Head Coaches specifically need to be aware of these expectations. They will be seen as a primary representative for the school and responsible for team and fan behavior as well as their own. Issues will be communicated to Head Coaches and they may be asked to serve warning to athletes or fans. We thank you for your help in preserving the joy of the game and bringing Glory to our Lord and Savior.

Commitment to Christian Sportsmanship

We acknowledge that we have read the expectations and guidelines from St. Lorenz Lutheran School regarding a Culture of Christian Sportsmanship. We pledge to share these expectations and guidelines with our athletes and fans and, on behalf of our school, agree to uphold this culture while participating in the St. Lorenz Invitational Tournament.

We understand that failure to uphold this culture and violations against it may result in a warning and/or being banned from the remainder of the tournament. We respect these guidelines and will submit to the appropriate actions should violations occur.

We commit to honoring God through our performance and conduct at the St. Lorenz Invitational Tournament.

School

Date

Athletic Director (Print)

(Signature)

Head Coach (Print)

(Signature)