

# **A Code of Behaviour in Sport**

(Revised in 2013 by the Headmasters of the GPS Schools of NSW)

The GPS Headmasters have produced the following guidelines to assist teachers, coaches, boys and parents.

Games in our schools are an important part of a fully balanced education for our students. The Heads are concerned to preserve sound educational and social practices in the many inter-school games that are played and ask for the co-operation of school communities to ensure that these aims are realised.

The trend towards professionalism in school sport is to be viewed with caution. Where such an approach involves sound coaching techniques and is aimed at producing a satisfying and improved level of performance, this approach can be beneficial. However, care should be taken to exclude from our schools practices which place the pursuit of victory above those aspects of sport concerned with enjoyment, balanced development and good sportsmanship.

In other words, the spirit of the amateur - in its best sense - should remain the ideal which guides these aspects of school sports.

More specifically, the following points are made: -

## **A. PLAYERS**

1. Play may be hard and vigorous, but deliberate violence should never be used towards opponents.
2. No person shall act towards or speak to any other person in a manner, or engage in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person (the person vilified) on any basis, including but not limited to a person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, special ability/disability or sexual orientation, preference or identity.
3. Players should not react with violence to any physical or verbal provocation.
4. Use of bad language, where directed at an umpire/referee, another player or oneself, is unacceptable.
5. Players should never argue with an umpire/referee (whether boy or adult) or contest a decision. Any negative response towards an umpire's ruling is unacceptable. (A Captain - only - may ask a referee to clarify a ruling in the event of uncertainty.)
6. Immodest behaviour in victory or success, and manifestation of self-disgust at an error or failure are poor sportsmanship. Gracious conduct, whatever the result of a game, is important.
7. Unfair or illegal tactics to gain an advantage should never be used.
8. Excessive or inappropriate talk should not be used on the field of play.

Players are encouraged to play in a positive and sportsmanlike manner and to extend every courtesy to the opposing team. This should include pre-match courtesies, recognition of good play on the part of the opposition and extending thanks to the umpire/referee and to the opposition after the match.

## **B. COACHES**

1. All coaches (and particularly those who are not on the teaching staff) should ensure that they are fully aware of the expectations and practices of the school in which they are coaching. Coaches should remember that school sport plays an important role in a boy's education and is for the benefit of boys rather than adults.
2. Coaches should teach sound sportsmanship along with games skills; chivalrous conduct is an important element of school sport.
3. Coaches are asked to bear in mind that even senior school students need guidance; make clear the school's expectations regarding courtesies, punctuality, behaviour and dress.
4. Leadership and responsibility on the part of the captain should be encouraged. Coaches should refrain from running every detail or interjecting from the side-lines. (It is acknowledged that

traditions and practices differ between, say, basketball on the one hand and, on the other, cricket and rugby.)

5. Coaches should not engage in excessive and ritual “psyching up” of a team.
6. If a match is lost, coaches should avoid giving the impression always that it could have been won if the team had played with more determination. (The opposition is sometimes just too skilful!) Similarly, coaches should avoid stating or giving the impression to players that bad refereeing decisions cost them the game.
7. Coaches should avoid any hint of criticising the umpiring or refereeing of a match - particularly in front of boys or parents.
8. A coach’s aim should be always to coach in such a way that boys are able to learn for themselves.
9. Coaches are encouraged to establish and regularly to renew cordial relations with the coaches of opposing teams.

### **C. SPECTATORS**

1. Parents are asked to make their presence and support as positive as possible.
2. If your school is host, parents are asked to assume some responsibility for making visiting parents feel at home.
3. When visiting another school, the host school’s premises and rules - in matters of parking, tidiness, etc - should be respected. Adults are asked to note that, with the exception of family picnics in some circumstances, alcohol should not be consumed at GPS matches. If in doubt about such matters, visiting parents should check with an official of the host school.
4. Parents should never seek, during or immediately after a match, to give advice to coaches, umpires/referees or to players.
5. Barracking may be enthusiastic, should be positive rather than negative, avoiding excessive attention to the individual - even to praise him. A good example should be set by applauding skilful performance and play regardless of school.
6. Parents can assist their son’s fuller education by being sensible about the number and length of his sporting commitments. While these are regulated within the school context, parents should see that other, outside sporting involvement does not interfere unduly with academic study, religious activities, cultural and social life, as well as time spent with the family.

### **D. SCHOOLS**

1. Heads of schools, through their Sportsmasters and Masters in charge of sports, will foster sound attitudes towards sport in players, coaches and spectators.
2. Host schools will ensure that First Aid equipment, toilets, change rooms, refreshments, etc., are provided for visiting teams.
3. Visiting teams should be met courteously and shown the facilities they will use.
4. Forfeiting matches is to be avoided wherever possible. Early notification is an important courtesy in the event of inability to field a team.
5. Schools are to regard themselves as responsible for the conduct of their supporters, whether parents, boys or Old Boys.
6. In non-competition games, it is expected that a player will play in only one game per day, except where replacing an injured or absent player, at an appropriate level.