

# TIME OUT



WISCONSIN BASKETBALL  
**WBCA**  
COACHES ASSOCIATION

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WISCONSIN BASKETBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2019



PROUD PARTNERS OF

**MACC FUND**

Hope for Kids

## IMPORTANT DATES

All-Star Game Nomination Deadline  
March 5

Girls' State Tournament  
March 7-9

Boys' State Tournament  
March 14-16

Academic All-State Nomination Deadline  
April 10

Team Academic All-State Nom. Deadline  
April 10

WBCA All-Star Games  
Girls - June 14; Boys - June 15

WBCA Showcase  
June 21-22

Hall of Fame Banquet  
September 28

## FAST BREAK NOTES

### Good Luck

First and foremost, as we head down the tournament trail, I wish all coaches the best of luck!

### All-Star Nominations

Remember all nominations are done on-line. Page 4 gives a rundown of the nomination process. Also, if your player is not nominated, they will not be considered for the games. Remember also that a coach must be a member of the WBCA to nominate a player. Deadline is March 5.

### Individual Academic All-State

All nominations will be done on-line. This is always a very competitive honor and we ask that you please nominate your student athletes by April 10. Find the link to nominate by going to [www.wisbca.org/nomforms](http://www.wisbca.org/nomforms).

### Team Academic All-State

This honor is by division for both boys' and girls' basketball. Once again, a coach must be a member to nominate a team. Do so online. Deadline is April 10.

### Conference Championship and Coach Awards

Did you know that every coach who is a WBCA member can receive a plaque if they win a conference championship and other honors if they reach a win milestone? To submit your information for these awards please visit the nomination forms page of [WisBCA.org](http://WisBCA.org) or go to pages 5 and 6 and send in the form or submit online to me.

### State Tournament Hospitality Rooms

This is one of the most popular events that we sponsor for both the boys' and girls' tournaments. The boys' will be held at the Nicholas Suites in the Kohl Center as it always has been. The girls' hospitality room will be in the same location in the Resch Center as last year. Your membership card gets you and a guest into the rooms. For the boys' tournament and the upstairs hospitality suite for the girls' tournament, guests under 18 are only allowed in between games and at halftime. Please note that kids cannot sit in the seats.



## UPDATING STATS WITH WSN

Once again the WBCA is using the WisSports.net stats database for our All-State, Academic All-State and All-Star game nomination forms.

Regular season stats must be updated on WisSports.net by one week after the season. The stats that have been entered at this time will be used for by the voting committees that decide on these honors.

If you have any questions on how to update stats or to receive online access please email [WisSports.net](mailto:WisSports.net) at [info@wissports.net](mailto:info@wissports.net).

*Continued on page 2...*

## WBCA CORPORATE SPONSORS

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# FAST BREAK NOTES

## College Forms

Forms are available in this newsletter for "College Staff of the Year" and academic awards for college teams. As always, schools have to be WBCA members to qualify.

## Concerns & Issues

If you have basketball concerns or issues that you want to put on the agenda for the Coaches Advisory group, then contact Dan Witter, WBCA President, at [dan.witter@wrps.net](mailto:dan.witter@wrps.net).

## Memberships

Join the WBCA before the state tournament so you can get into the hospitality rooms where you get free soda, water, and food. It's a place where you will see all your coaching friends. Sign up online at [wisbca.org](http://wisbca.org)

## Referee's Corner

We have added referees to our WBCA Basketball Museum. We have established plaques with a referee's name, city and number of games officiated during their career. If you know of a referee who is retired, you should inform them that they should go to our website and send in their name and information. They can then be recognized with a nameplate on the museum wall.

## Lifetime Members

As a coach, if you retire and get a lifetime membership to the WBCA, it is good as long as you are retired. However, if you get back into coaching, then you need to apply for a new membership while you coach again.

## Hall of Fame

If you know a coach that should be considered for the WBCA Hall of Fame (active or retired), please get them nominated. Go to the website to find the qualifications needed and the form is available there also or you may nominate them right on-line.

## Tribute Awards

If you know of someone who has done a great deal of work for basketball in your school, please nominate them for the WBCA Tribute Award. Tribute Award recipients will have their names on a wall in our Hall of Fame and Basketball Museum. This person could be a scorekeeper, band director, bus driver, announcer, etc.

## New Award

The WBCA has added a new award for 2019. A Sportsmanship Award will honor many girls' and boys' on high school teams. Details for this award can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.

## College Player of the Year

For the first time, the WBCA will recognize the College Player of the Year for Division I, II, III and Junior College for both Men and Women. Details for this award can be found on page 3 of this newsletter.

## Team First Award

Back by popular demand will be the Team First Award. This award is chosen by the head varsity coach for each individual school. Up to three members of your team can be given this award (both girls and boys). This means that the person or persons you choose will probably not be a starter, but is someone who always puts the team first and is a great teammate. Also, remember for any WBCA awards, the school or coach has to be a member of the WBCA.

## New Website

Coaches, we are excited to announce a brand new website for the WBCA. Take a look at it at [wisbca.org](http://wisbca.org).

## Remember:

Most forms for awards from the WBCA can be found on the website at [wisbca.org](http://wisbca.org).

Jerry Petitgoue, Executive Director of the WBCA  
[jerrypetitgoue@icloud.com](mailto:jerrypetitgoue@icloud.com), 608.778.1986  
218 South Lincoln St., Cuba City WI 53807.

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## WBCA ONLINE ALL-STAR NOMINATION PROCESS

The nomination form is online and can be found on the home page of WisBCA.org as well as by clicking on the "Nomination Forms" on the Navigation bar on [www.wisbca.org](http://www.wisbca.org).

Nominating your student-athlete online is the only way for them to be considered for participation in the games.

### **ONLY A VARSITY HEAD COACH WHO IS A WBCA MEMBER CAN NOMINATE A PLAYER.**

Once again, stats will be verified from the WisSports-net database after the regular season is concluded. If you need access to your team to update your all-star nominee's stats you can contact WSN at [info@wissports.net](mailto:info@wissports.net).

Only students who are scheduled to graduate in the current spring (2019) are eligible to be nominated. We may request confirmation from the principal and guidance counselor that the student has passed all necessary requirements and will graduate. If the student fails to graduate, he or she will NOT be allowed to play in the WBCA All-Star game.

Students who have committed major athletic code violations during their senior year are not allowed to be nominated for the game. Furthermore, if a violation occurs after they have been selected from the team they will be replaced. These major athletic code violations would include any suspension for alcohol or drugs related activity and if the student-athlete participates in a violation of citizenship, which includes violating any criminal law or local ordinance. If a coach feels like their student-athlete's violation was not justified they may appeal to the all-star committee before the all-star selection meeting takes place.

The dates of the girls game is June 14th and the boys game will be on June 15th. **IF YOUR STUDENT-ATHLETE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GAMES PLEASE DO NOT NOMINATE THEM.** We only announce confirmed participants so it is to no benefit for your player to be nominated if they can not attend due to injury, college commitment or any other reason.

Lastly, each participant in the games is required to raise a minimum of \$500 as part of our fundraising efforts for the MACC Fund to help fight childhood cancer and blood related diseases. The WBCA covers lodging, meals and gear for all players selected to the game so there are no expenses required beyond raising the money for charity. As the nominated varsity coach, you are guaranteeing that they will raise this money and that you will be held responsible, along with your player for their fundraising efforts. **DO NOT NOMINATE YOUR STUDENT ATHLETE IF TOGETHER YOU ARE NOT WILLING TO FUNDRAISE FOR THE GAME.**

You will receive an email confirmation/receipt after your nomination is submitted. If you do not get this email, that means you did not complete the process.

Varsity Coaches who are current WBCA members will be invited to attend the selection meeting to speak on their player's behalf.

This year the boy's All-Star selection meeting will take place the Sunday after Sectional finals, March 10 in Wisconsin Dells. The girls will remain on the Saturday of the state tournament in Green Bay. Both locations are to be determined but if you nominate a player you will receive an email with location details.

The deadline for all-star nominations will be March 5.

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## CRITERIA FOR COLLEGE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

1. School must be a WBCA member to have a player selected, except for Division 2.
2. One man and one woman will be selected in the following divisions:
  - a. **Division 1** – Player must attend a Division 1 Wisconsin college or university. All grade levels allowed.
  - b. **Division 2** – Because we have only one Division 2 school in the state, the winner can be from another Division 2 college or university out of the state. However, the winner has to have attended a Wisconsin high school.
  - c. **Division 3** – There can be one winner from a public college or university and one winner from a private college or university. The player must attend a college or university in Wisconsin.
  - d. **Junior College** – The same criteria is used as Division 1.
3. Player can be nominated, but it is not necessary to be chosen. If a school wants to nominate a person, they can do so online to: [jerrypetitgoue@icloud.com](mailto:jerrypetitgoue@icloud.com)
4. Winners will be announced in March.

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## WBCA LAUNCHES SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

The WBCA is on a mission to be a game-changer in High School Basketball in the State of Wisconsin. As a group, we fully endorse the teaching of life-lessons by coaches to enforce standards of excellence as part of the educational experience.

Our goal is to recognize those coaches and teams with a WBCA Sportsmanship Award. We believe that “True Sportsmanship is knowing that you need your opponent because without him or her, there is no game. Acknowledging that your opponent holds the same deep-rooted aspirations and expectations as you do. Knowing that, win or lose, you will walk off the court with pride. Always taking the high road. And always, always, always being a good sport. “

You will be receiving an email which identifies details on this award. Officials and School Administrators will be part of the selection process. Your participation will be essential to the success of this special honor.

For more information, please contact WBCA Executive Board Members, Terry Erickson at [coachtce@aol.com](mailto:coachtce@aol.com) or Loren Homb at [hummerrefs@gmail.com](mailto:hummerrefs@gmail.com).

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## MASTERING THE ART OF ANTICIPATION

The meaning of the word anticipation is having a sense that something is going to happen. It's a realization in advance, intuition and foreknowledge. This anticipatory skill is often based on prior experiences.

The famous American poet, Norman Cousins, said that “Wisdom consists of the anticipation of consequences.” It may seem out of place used in the educational content geared for Basketball Officials, but has a deeper way of reminding us to be prepared to officiate a potentially challenging basketball scenario. Let's explore.

First, officials need to sharpen their skills to anticipate a play, not necessarily fouls or violations. If a team is trailing late in the game, anticipating a press after a score is vitally important. All three officials need to position themselves to expect this kind of pressure in the backcourt. Anticipating a shot, a drive, or a set play are also skills that officials need to acquire.

Officials need to look and listen for a timeout request. This often happens after a team has scored late in the game and wants to discuss defensive strategy. Timeouts are frequently called when a player is about to be tied up, unable to get the ball inbounds prior to a 5 second violation, or on the verge of being called for a closely guarded violation. In pre-game, crews often discuss not making players or coaches work for timeouts and being anticipatory when those situations are about to happen.

Good officials anticipate free throw situations. Is the team in the bonus? Is it a double bonus? Is the player a shooter or is it a non-shooting foul?

Anticipating the block-charge call may be the most difficult for officials. The ability to split-screen your vision and find the defender who lies in wait while tracking the movement of the ball handler is necessary. On a breakaway, anticipate when the defender will put their stake in the ground and attempt to take a charge. This is especially important with the lower defense box and restricted arc.

The consequences of not anticipating situations during the game could very likely create some unpleasant experiences. Officiating is difficult enough without adding pressure because you don't look ahead to difficult scenarios.

By Terry Erickson  
WBCA Executive Board



WISCONSIN BASKETBALL  
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# ANNUAL COACHING AWARDS FORM

### CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Conference Championship Awards  
 Can be picked up at  
 The Fall Clinic

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Conference: \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to  
 enclose one wallet  
 sized photo.  
 Please include home  
 email address.

### CAREER WINS

(100-200-300-400-500 Plateau) If you received an award for 100 wins, you do not qualify for another award until you reach 200 wins, etc.

100 & 200 Win awards can be  
 picked up at the Fall Clinic. Ev-  
 erything above 200 wins is given  
 at the Hall of Fame Banquet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total # of Wins: \_\_\_\_\_

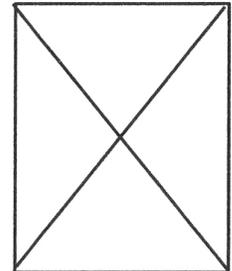
Remember to  
 enclose one wallet  
 sized photo.  
 Please include home  
 email address.

### 25-YEAR WATCH

You must be a WBCA Member for the last 5 consecutive years.

25-Year Watch  
 Can be picked up at  
 The Hall of Fame Banquet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total # of Years: \_\_\_\_\_



### 35-YEAR AWARD

You must be a WBCA Member for the last 5 consecutive years.

35-Year Award  
 Can be picked up at  
 The Hall of Fame Banquet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total # of Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to  
 enclose one wallet  
 sized photo.  
 Please include home  
 email address.

**NOTES:** 1) Conference Championship awards will be handed out at the fall clinic. You must be there to pick up the award, if you cannot make the clinic please have someone pick up the award for you. No awards will be mailed.

**RETURN FORM BY AUGUST 1ST TO JERRY PETITIGUE  
 218 SOUTH LINCOLN ST., CUBA CITY, WI 53807  
 OR VIA EMAIL: JERRYPETITGOUE@ICLOUD.COM**



WISCONSIN BASKETBALL  
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### Assistant Coach of the Year

(Must be in coaching 20 years and a WBCA member the past 5 years.)

Assistant Coach Award can be picked up at the Hall of Fame Banquet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Years \_\_\_\_\_

WBCA Member: Y or N

Remember to enclose one wallet size photo. Please include email address and phone number:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Administrator of the Year

Administrator Award can be picked up at the Hall of Fame Banquet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to enclose one wallet size photo. Please include email address and phone number:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Media Person of the Year

Media Person of the Year Award can be picked up at the Hall of Fame Banquet  
You must be a WBCA member.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to enclose one wallet size photo. Please include email address and phone number:  
\_\_\_\_\_

For the above awards, please include a brief resume of career accomplishments.

If you cannot make the banquet, please have someone pick up the award for you.

If there is no picture included, then the award will be completed without it.

**RETURN FORM BY AUGUST 1ST TO JERRY PETITIGUE  
218 SOUTH LINCOLN ST., CUBA CITY, WI 53807  
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### Athletic Director of the Year

A.D. Award can be picked up at the Hall of Fame Banquet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to enclose one wallet size photo. Please include email address and phone number:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Tribute Award

Tribute Award: If you know someone who has done a great deal of work for basketball in your school or community, please nominate them for the WBCA Tribute Award. Tribute Award recipients will have their names on a wall in our Hall of Fame and Basketball Museum. This person could be a scorekeeper, band director, bus driver, announcer, etc.

The Tribute Award can be picked up at the Hall of Fame Banquet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to enclose one wallet size photo. Please include email address and phone number:

\_\_\_\_\_

### 25 Year Golden Whistle Award

The Golden Whistle Award can be picked up at the Hall of Fame Banquet. You must be a WBCA member.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Community \_\_\_\_\_

Total # of Years \_\_\_\_\_

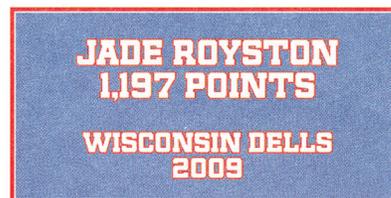
Remember to enclose one wallet size photo. Please include email address and phone number:

\_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN FORM BY AUGUST 1ST TO JERRY PETITIGUE  
218 SOUTH LINCOLN ST., CUBA CITY, WI 53807  
OR VIA EMAIL: JERRYPETITGOUE@ICLOUD.COM**

# 1000 Point, 300 Win & 1000 Games Officiated Club

As part of the WBCA Hall of Fame we honor coaches, players and officials that have hit these landmark milestones.



Points must be from WIAA varsity contests only. Games officiated must be from WIAA varsity and college games. Coach record may be WIAA Varsity or JV but please specify if it is your JV record.

For a \$20 donation you can have your achievement on the walls of the WBCA Hall of Fame at the JustAgame Fieldhouse. Each donation will be given a 6x3 inch plaque in the Hall of Fame.

School (for Coach & Players) : \_\_\_\_\_

Colors (for Coach & Players): \_\_\_\_\_

Player/Coach/Official	Years	Points/Record/Games
Bob Sample	1997-2001	1,343 Points
Joe Sample	1978-2000	525-341
Jim Sample	1985-2013	1500 Games Officiated
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

If you need more space please use back of sheet or attach another sheet. Each player, coach or referee requires a \$20 donation. Checks made payable to:

Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association  
 Attn: Hall of Fame  
 218 South Lincoln St.,  
 Cuba City, WI 53807

Please allow some time after submittal for your plaque to be displayed. For coaches or players we reserve the right to ask you for documentation or school authorization of your record.



## BENEFITS OF WBCA MEMBERSHIPS

If you have not signed up yet, please consider joining one of the finest coach associations in the country. If you have signed up, please help us by reminding your fellow coaches and officials to sign up. Below is a list of some of the benefits of WBCA membership.

1. Become active and have ownership in the WBCA and WIAA working relationship.
2. Take advantage of WBCA Mentor Program.
3. Receive WBCA newsletter four times a year.
4. Be selected as a head or assistant coach for the WBCA All-Star games.
5. Be eligible to attend hospitality rooms at the Boys' and Girls' State Tournaments at the Kohl Center and Resch Center.
6. Be elected to the WBCA Executive Board.
7. Be named Coach of the Year
8. Be selected as a fall or youth clinic speaker.
9. Attend WBCA sponsored fall clinic or youth clinics at a discount rate.
10. WBCA legal assistance available to all WBCA members who need it.
11. Attend outstanding WBCA Hall of Fame banquet.
12. Be eligible for the following awards:
  - a – Conference Championship plaques.
  - b – 100-200-300-400-500+ win plaques.
  - c – Referee Golden Whistle plaque.
  - d – 25-year watch award and 35-year plaque.
  - e – Head and Assistant Coaches of the Year Award.
  - f – Athletic Director and Administrator plaques.
13. Be eligible for the prestigious Steve Randall Memorial award.
14. Be eligible for the prestigious Eli Crogan Humanitarian award.
15. Be eligible for State Championships ring.
16. Be eligible to be selected to the WBCA Hall of Fame as a:
  - a – Coach - High School and College
  - b – Assistant Coach
  - c – Player - Men and Women
  - d – Referee
  - e – Friend of Basketball
17. Become more professional by attending your professional association.
18. Receive discounts, specials and tickets from vendors and sponsors
19. When selection criteria are close to equal, preference for awards and all-star game spots to WBCA Member coaches.
20. Associate membership of the National High School Basketball Coaches Association (NHSBCA)
21. Be eligible to nominate your player to participate in the WBCA All-Star games.
22. Be eligible to have your team play in the WBCA summer tournaments.
23. Be able to express your concerns about basketball in our state to the advising coaches board to the WIAA.
24. Be proud of the fact that you are a big part of an organization that has given over \$2.5 million to Midwest Athletes Against Childhood Cancer.
25. Team first award
26. State Banners awards
27. High School Sportsmanship Award

## 2018 HEAD COACHES – BOYS' WBCA ALL-STAR GAMES

### Division 1:

TBD  
Scott Scheuer Marshfield

### Division 2:

Tim Ladron Beaver Dam  
Joel Claassen Milwaukee Pius XI

### Division 3:

Mike Huser Platteville  
TBD

### Division 4:

Tom Uppena Darlington  
Sam Bertsch Iola-Scandinavia

### Division 5:

Nick Verhagen Sheboygan Lutheran  
Nick Schradle Clayton

### Selection Meeting

Sunday, March 10th at 10:00 a.m. at Buffalo Phil's in Wisconsin Dells. Coaches can come in at this time to advocate for their player with the coaches from their respective divisions. Only one coach can speak on behalf of a player.

## 2018 HEAD COACHES – GIRLS' WBCA ALL-STAR GAMES

<b>Division 1 North</b>	Matt Bullis	D.C. Everest
<b>Division 1 South</b>	Robert Shea	Oconomowoc

<b>Division 2 North</b>	Jan Stitch	River Falls
<b>Division 2 South</b>	Dena Brechtl	Waterford

<b>Division 3 North</b>	Mike Vander Loop	Freedom
<b>Division 3 South</b>	Robert Buss	Wisconsin Dells

<b>Division 4 North</b>	Joey Arneson	Melrose-Mindoro
<b>Division 4 South</b>	Gabe Haberkorn	Waterloo

<b>Division 5 North</b>	TBD	
<b>Division 5 South</b>	Ben McCullick	Wauzeka-Steuben

## SITES FOR THE GIRLS' AND BOYS' ALL-STAR PACKET PICK-UPS

Madison	Edgewood H.S. (Krantz Center Gym)	10:00 a.m.
Pewaukee	Pewaukee H.S. (Auditorium)	1:30 p.m.
Neenah	Neenah H.S. (Activity Room)	2:00 p.m.
WI Rapids	WI Rapids H.S.	TBA (!:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m.)
La Crosse	Logan H.S.	2:30 p.m.
Fall Creek	Fall Creek H.S.	1:00 p.m..

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# 2019 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

## **“Friend”**

Steve Gauger, Fox Valley Lutheran  
Russ Thomas, Milwaukee

## **“Referee”**

Brad Presentin, Madison  
Gary Wild, Juneau

## **“Player-Girls”**

Jennifer (York) Arians, Portage  
Tonia Ford, Milwaukee Washington  
Leah Hefte, McFarland  
Deb Hughes, Monona Grove  
Aimee (Tranel) Richard, Cuba City  
Candace Smith, Madison West

## **“Player-Boys”**

Bill McLintock, Milwaukee West  
Tim Moriarity, Appleton West  
Bill Pearson, McFarland  
Kurt Spychalla, DC Everest  
Dennis Sweeney, Edgewood  
Jack Ulwelling, Appleton  
Nick Van Exel, Kenosha St. Joe’s

## **“Assistant Coach”**

Gary DePerry, Whitefish Bay Dominican  
Michael Goodwin, Milwaukee Schools

## **“College Coach”**

Kevin Borseth, UW-Green Bay  
Pat Miller, UW-Whitewater

## **“High School Coach”**

Mark Adams, Brookfield Central  
Joel Claassen, Milwaukee Pius  
Jim Gosz, Milwaukee King  
John Leadholm, Cambridge  
Bob Maronde, Grafton  
Roger Pribbenow, Oregon  
Jim Prochaska, Fennimore  
Al Schieve, Slinger  
Duane Vike, Holmen

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## 4 STEPS TO BECOMING A GREAT FREE THROW SHOOTER

If you have ever watched a poor free throw shooter who also happens to be a professional basketball player, then you understand the liability that this can be for a team. Dwight Howard and Deandre Jordan both immediately come to mind of players who fit this definition in today's NBA. While both are certainly valuable players, they also are unable to help their teams at the end of games due to their free throw shooting woes.

The bottom line: free throws are important to winning games. As such, you need to hone your skills, so that when you are shooting free throws at the end of the game you will sink those freebies putting your team on top. Here are four tips that will help you on your way to becoming an 80%+ free throw shooter.

### **Have a Free Throw Shooting Routine**

A pre-shot routine will help you clear your mind and tap into your muscle memory, something extremely important to being a good free throw shooter. Since my early days of playing competitive basketball, I have always flipped the basketball with backspin twice before collecting myself and taking the shot. It is what feels comfortable. It is up to you to find what routine feels best and then repeat it every single time you go to the line.

### **Think of Shooting Free Throws as a Chain Reaction**

When you shoot a free throw you start by bending your legs, extending, and then moving your arms upward until you release the basketball toward the hoop with a good follow through. Think of this process as a chain of events, where timing is critical. The best free throw shooters have this timing down to a science, which is why they rarely miss. While poor free throw shooters struggle with making sure each link of the chain is in sync.

### **Practice, Practice, Practice**

One of the most enjoyable personal competitions I have is to see how many free throws I can make in a row. This is a great simple game for a couple reasons. The first is that by shooting a bunch of free throws you are going to develop the muscle memory necessary to be a good shooter at the line. Secondly, the pressure of each free throw slowly builds as you get closer to your personal consecutive makes record, which allows you to better handle the pressure of an in game situation. Make sure to do your pre-shot routine each time when doing this drill.

### **Envision That You Are By Yourself**

This last tip is more about the psychology of shooting free throws. When at the free throw line during a game envision that you are by yourself shooting the free throw. Also imagine yourself at the place where you generally practice your free throws. This is often your driveway with your own hoop, or at the local gym. Mentally taking yourself to where you have practiced your free throw shooting will alleviate pressure, and you will fall back on the important muscle memory that made you a great free throw shooter in the first place.

# 7 HABITS OF TRULY TOUGH PLAYERS

Jay Bilas has talked about toughness for many years. He's even written an entire book on the topic. He talks about multiple habits that 'tough' players have. His definition of toughness is probably vastly different from a lot of your players.

Bilas doesn't define toughness as pushing guys around. He doesn't define it as being the strongest guy on the court. It's not thumping your chest after a big play, or taunting an opponent after a big dunk. Those habits are what Jay Bilas calls "fake toughness".

As Bilas puts it...

"Toughness has nothing to do with size, physical strength or athleticism. Toughness is a skill, and it is a skill that can be developed and improved."

Bilas points out 31 different habits that tough players have, but if you could get everybody on your team to adopt the seven habits highlighted below, your team will be on the fast track to becoming tougher.

## 1 - Talk on Defense

For whatever reason, kids want to talk everywhere except for the basketball court. If you go into the lunch room on any given day, you can probably find your players talking and screaming to their peers. But the second they step on the basketball court, their mouths remain shut. By talking on the defensive end, your players let their teammates know that they are there, and it makes everybody on the floor a better defender. Not only does talking on defense make your team better, it lets your opponents know that you are fully engaged in the game, which can be an intimidating factor.

## 2 - Get on the Floor

The first player on the floor is typically the one that comes up with a loose ball. Too often, players want to try and scoop the ball and score. But when the player that dives for the ball gets possession instead of the player that tried to scoop it, the player that tried to scoop got out-toughed. If you can create a culture of every player on your team diving for loose balls, not only will you have a tougher team, you'll have more possessions and chances to score.

## 3 - Sprint the Floor

Sprinting the floor on offense and defense isn't flashy or glamorous, but it's what tough players do. Sprinting the floor in transition can get your team easy baskets, even if there isn't anything easy about it. As Bilas notes, "easy baskets are hard to get." By sprinting the floor, you're able to attack a defense before it can get set up and keep the defense on their heels. It also forces your defenders to sprint to keep up with you, which can wear teams down. Again, sprinting the floor isn't going to make a bunch of highlight reels, but it's what tough players do.

## 4 - Play So Hard, Your Coach Has to Take You Out

This is something that a lot of players struggle with. They don't like to be uncomfortable. They shouldn't want things to feel easy. They shouldn't be pacing themselves. They should be playing so hard that their coach has to take them out so that they can rest before putting them back in the game. There is never an excuse for not giving 100% of everything you've got on the floor. But there aren't a lot of players that do that, and that's because they don't like to be pushed outside of their comfort zone. If you can get your entire team to play so hard that you have to take them out, you will be one of the toughest teams to play against, regardless of what level you're coaching at.

## 5 - Show Strength in Your Body Language

Body language is such a strong indicator of how things are going in a basketball game, but it shouldn't be that way. How many times have you seen your kids hanging their heads when things aren't going your way? Or yell at a teammate for making a mistake? Complain to officials when a call doesn't go their way? The habits listed above are all negative body language. Tough players don't do those things. Instead, tough players' body language communicates confidence and security, and the rest of their teammates feed off of that.

## 6 - It's Not 'Your' Shot, It's 'Our' Shot

There is not a selfish bone in a tough player's body. They are not worried about their individual stats, or 'getting theirs.' They are worried about getting the TEAM the best shot on every possession. That may mean that they set 10 screens in a possession, they may pass 25X more than they shoot. But if it's for the betterment of the team, they don't care. It's not something most players would refer to as 'toughness', but it fits Jay Bilas' definition perfectly.

## 7 - Look Your Coaches and Teammates in the Eye

We talked about body language earlier, and this point coincides with that. Bilas notes that tough players never drop their heads. They let their coaches and teammates know that what they're saying is important by looking them in the eye. It's something so simple, but also something that seldom happens with teams.

Creating a culture of toughness isn't something that is easy to do. It's easy to let players slip through the cracks.

Developing culture happens one small action at a time. By focusing on these seven behaviors, your players will begin to understand what toughness truly looks like in the game of basketball.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write this letter, we are in the middle of a deep freeze here in Wisconsin. No school, no games, no practice, in the middle of the season that can make it tough on everyone. The best we can do for our players is to concentrate on what is in front of us and not dwell on the negative. We need to keep trying to improve throughout the season.

March is coming fast and seeding meetings and playoffs are in the near future. As I begin my tenure as President of the WBCA, I would like to thank Niki Sutter for her leadership and dedication to our organization and Wisconsin Basketball. She has led us with class and integrity. I would also like to thank Dan Bureson for all his help. Their advice and preparation has made this transition possible. It is an honor and privilege to serve this great organization.

We have a few deadline reminders coming up soon:

- 1) Attend your seeding meetings
- 2) WBCA Awards
  - a. All-Star Nominations
  - b. Individual Academic All-State
  - c. Team Academic All-State
  - d. Conference Championship and Coaching Awards

Also, with March approaching, I encourage you to attend the boys' and girls' state tournaments. The coaches' hospitality rooms are very popular and give coaches a chance to collaborate, meet new coaches, or connect with old friends. To be able to use the hospitality rooms, you must be a member of the WBCA. There is still time to become a member.

The Basketball Advisory Committee will be meeting in early April. If you have questions or recommendations, please contact me or any member of the Executive Board.

In closing, I would like to thank Kate Peterson Abiad for her hard work, guidance and leadership as we move forward to make our great game even better. In listening to some of the "noise" from some of my contemporaries, I hear, "back in the day we would have gone to school no matter how much snow or cold there was." I am reminded that things change and evolve with time and we must embrace the change and keep improving.

Thank you for being leaders and mentors to our student athletes and in our schools and the communities you represent.

Yours in Basketball,

**Dan Witter**