

A Day in the Life of Tualatin Youth Basketball

SUBMITTED BY: **GEORGE KLEIN**

Two years ago, I went to the 5th grade recreational Basketball player evaluation day with excitement for my son Adam. When we got there, the league President announced that there were almost 50 players and only two coaches. In order to move forward, they needed 3 or 4 more coaches. I briefly played in grade school about 40 yrs. ago and wanted to help the kids. However, I knew I couldn't do it alone.

Brian Marx, like a typical parent, was hoping to drop his son off for the recreational player evaluations. He had volunteered to coach flag football and thought he was going to get a hall pass for basketball. As he walked into the gym, I shared with him the need for coaches. Like everyone else, Brian had a full time job, a side business and a "honey do" list a mile long. After trying to convince me that he didn't have time for this, he did some soul

searching. I think he realized that maybe he could make a positive impact with the boys and community while spending more time with his son. Although his brain was saying no, Brian's heart said yes. That day, Brian and I became Tualatin Youth Recreation Basketball coaches. Wow, were we a pair!

During the last two years, Brian has learned that there are some basic skills that you must have in order to be a youth coach: Ability to herd cats, administer ice packs, motivate and love working with kids. He also said it helps to know a little bit about basketball. He once told me that he gleaned some insight from a couple of top sellers: Coaching Basketball for Dummies and Coaching Youth Basketball for Baffled Parents.

Sometimes coaching youth sports is like the Forest Gump box of chocolates and you never know what you are going to get. You would like to have the same team as last

year, but it's virtually impossible based on the draft. Also, you'll end up with players with all skill levels. The challenge is putting together a team that can win a few games, while enabling equal play time. It's extremely gratifying to watch good players turn into awesome players. It's heartwarming to see one of your players lend a helping hand to his opponent. However, there is nothing more rewarding than to see a player make his first basket, hearing the crowd roar and to see his fellow team mates give him a high five. Seeing that boys gleaming smile, tells you that you have

Shortly before going to press, we received the following letter from one of the parents of a boy on our team:

Brian & George,

On behalf of Peter and me, thanks for a great basketball season! This was Peter's first season of basketball and neither of us knew what to expect. Both of us were extremely happy with every aspect of the season. We appreciated all the hours you spent and the care you took to make sure it was a wonderful experience for each young man.

As a dad, I encourage and sign Peter up for sports for several obvious reasons: improving his skills, learning skills to enjoy a sport for years to come, exercise, making friends, keeping him off the streets, etc. The not so obvious prayer of mine is for Peter to be coached by men that are great examples for him. Boys need men of integrity and men of great character as examples for them to aspire to be like. You are such role models.

Peter will probably never grow up and be in the NBA but he will grow up and become a better man because of his time with you. You are greatly appreciated and were an answer to prayer.

**Blessings,
Michael**



Tualatin Youth Basketball "Sesame Street Homies" - Row 1: Elliot Welborn, Will Chick, Griffin Plummer, Peter Hulsman, Joey Mazza. Row 2: Coach Klein, Adam Klein, Sam Sass, Beau Thompson, Nathan Marx, Coach Marx.

just created a memory that will last him a lifetime. You then realize that all of the time that you have invested in coaching has been worthwhile.

Our bleachers were always full of supportive families enjoying and watching the best games of their lives. I'd pay a \$100 a game to watch the boys play their hearts out. During the games, it was so much fun to coach and watch the boys getting better. They helped each other at practice and during the games. They always demonstrated good sportsmanship. They stayed late or came early to support other Tualatin teams, even their fiercest competitor. These boys became one, which was why they had a winning season.

Brian said, during the season, you will experience the exciting wins and agonizing losses. Some of your boys will get teary eyed

after losing a game. As a coach, you try to emphasize the positives while you console your team. In life, there are so many more important things to focus on vs. whether or not you win or lose a recreational basketball game. We sometimes have to remind ourselves that we are truly blessed.

We were fortunate to have a great season. As a matter of fact, we made it to the championship game, but lost. Sure, as coaches, we were extremely sad. However, it wasn't so much losing the championship game as it was realizing our 6th graders would never play 6th grade basketball again. Although the season is over, the friendships will last forever.

Time marches on. Enjoy your kids! Congratulations to the 6th Grade "Sesame Street Homies", on your 15 and 2 record!