

# Respect in Sports



A monthly newsletter for everyone interested in supporting a positive youth sports experience.

## Sports Alliance of Minnesota - "Respect in Sports" By Kevin Merkle, Minnesota State High School League

*The last Olympic gold medals that were made entirely out of gold were awarded in 1912.*

The Sports Alliance of Minnesota is a coalition of sports organizations whose mission is to provide tools for creating a positive sports environment.

### A City, Not a Country

When choosing locations for the Olympic Games, the IOC specifically gives the honor of holding the Games to a city rather than a country.

The Sports Alliance of Minnesota is a coalition of the largest youth sport organizations in Minnesota. Together we touch more than 500,000 youth sport athletes. Our mission is very simple – to work together in providing the tools necessary to create a positive youth sports environment.

Despite the great efforts of many, there are situations in youth sports where the environment is not always positive. SAM's goal is to provide education, resources, and leadership to assist in dealing with these issues. There is no silver bullet or magic wand that can be used to solve all of the problems, however, many individuals and organizations working together, and taking small step, will result in significant change and progress toward having "respect in sports."

All youth sport leaders need to be diligent in teaching all youth sports participants the importance of and the skills necessary to show respect in sports. There are always new students: participants, coaches, officials, parents and administrators. In addition there is always new information, new ideas and new approaches. The education evolves, but the need never ends. The result will be good sportsmanship at events, but more importantly, our youth will learn skills that will last a lifetime. These skills must be intentionally taught, beginning at a young age and continuing through all levels of sport.

There will be disappointments with performance; losses; mistakes; and disagreements – along with feelings of success and accomplishment. We must plan for how we will deal with these emotions in advance so that we can deal with each in a respectful manner. Easier said than done, but by working together and giving consistent messages – at all levels of sport -- we can and will make vast improvements.

**We're on the web!**  
[www.sportsalliancemn.org](http://www.sportsalliancemn.org)

## Ten Ways to Raise a Good Sport By Craig Clifford and Randolph Feezell

Among the greatest problems faced by youth-league coaches or for that matter, virtually any non-professional coach, are problems associated with parents of players. Of course, it's difficult for parents to understand why little Kaitlin is not a regular starter, despite the fact that her batting average is far below the Mendoza line, her arm strength is like a pop-gun, and she couldn't catch a beach ball if you lobbed it to her. (But she runs so fast!) For our purposes, though, let's consider parent problems related to sportsmanship. What if Kaitlin is the best player, but she's obnoxious to teammates, coaches, opposing players, umpires. John Rosemond, where are you when we need you? How did Kaitlin get like this? What can be done? Let's assume her parents are not like the ones who criticize and yell from the stands, publicly berate the coach, head butt the referee, etc. They want some help in changing the behavior of their child. For parents who

Thank you to our sponsors.



**"It's a dream until you write it down, and then it's a goal."**

Anonymous

