



# Respect in Sports

Volume 1 Issue 6

A monthly newsletter providing information for anyone involved in youth sports in Minnesota.

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You don't have to take the worst behavior of others as a standard for yourself. You can choose to be better than that.

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

[www.sportsalliancemn.org](http://www.sportsalliancemn.org)

## **DR. MARK C. DIENHART TO SPEAK AT THE 2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL SUMMIT FOR YOUTH SPORTS LEADERS**

Dr. Mark C. Dienhart, St. Thomas University Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer will offer the Keynote Address at the 2006 Summit for Youth Sport Leaders on **Saturday, November 11, 2006**. Dr. Dienhart will speak on **Respecting the Game: Steps to Creating a Positive Environment for Youth Athletes**. Dienhart was a standout student-athlete at St. Thomas – All American and two-time Academic All-American in football and was the school's first individual national champion (shot put). He served in many positions at UST after graduating summa cum laude and in 1986 became the executive director of public and alumni affairs. From there he moved to the University of Minnesota serving as men's athletic director from 1995-1999. In his current post, Dienhart oversees Institutional Advancement which includes the Development, University Relations and Constituent Relations offices. He also has responsibility for four other divisions or offices at St. Thomas University.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summit for Youth Sports Leaders**

Saturday, November 11, 2006

Eisenhower Community Center

1001 Highway 7

Hopkins, MN 55305

8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

#### **Session I Sportsmanship: Expectations for Parents, Coaches and Officials**

Presenters: Frank White, founder of *Respect Sports*, Manager of Recreation Programs and Athletics for Richfield Recreation Services Department and Rick Aberman, PhD Developmental Psychology & Family Therapy and author of *Why Good Coaches Quit: How to Deal With the Other Stuff*.

#### **Session II Healthy Youth Development: Training Practices and Healthy Policies**

Panel will include Murray Harber, Exercise Physiologist; Kevin Johnston, Manager, Hopkins District Facility Use; Corey Eckhoff, Velocity Sports Performance; Brittany McFadden, Program Director, Tobacco Free Youth Recreation; Janet Keysser, Minnesota Department of Health; and Sonja Savre, Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health.

#### **Breakout Sessions**

- ✕ **Coach's Asthma Clipboard**, Janet Keysser, Minnesota Department of Health  
An interactive training for working with young athletes who have asthma.
- ✕ **Screen Smart and WIN!** Donna Ploof, RHR Information Services & Judy Praska, North Country Region USA Volleyball Executive Director  
Learn the pitfalls of the wrong background screening choices and the satisfaction of making the right choices while competing for prizes.
- ✕ **What do Kids see from the Field/Court/Rink?**  
A panel of middle and high school aged students discuss what they see from the field/court/rink and their opinion on the issues in youth sports today.

The 2005 Summit introduced the Sports Alliance of Minnesota (SAM) and started the conversation around a positive youth sports environment. In 2006 current practices and ideas on sportsmanship and healthy youth development will be gathered and discussed during the "Best Practices" networking lunch. These materials will then be available in SAM's toolkit for statewide distribution. Pre-registration is \$25. After October 20, registration is \$35. Register online at [www.sportsalliancemn.org](http://www.sportsalliancemn.org). Stay at the Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place, Hwy. 100 & I-394, St. Louis Park. Call 952-542-8600 for the special SAM rate of \$79.95.

## Founding Members

Hennepin County Human  
Services and Public Health  
Department

Minnesota Amateur Sports  
Commission

Minnesota Hockey

Minnesota Recreation and  
Park Association

Minnesota Sports  
Federation

Minnesota State High  
School League

Minnesota Youth Athletic  
Services

Minnesota Youth Soccer  
Association

North Country Region USA  
Volleyball

Tobacco Free Youth  
Recreation

Respect Sports

**Thank you to our  
sponsors:**



## **Rising when we fall and learning when we lose**

**Katherine Kersten**, Star Tribune—Published September 3, 2006

This school year marks the end of 18 years of kids' sports for my family. We'll miss it all: winning by one basket in double overtime, the warm nights when the parents on the sidelines seem like your best friends, even the lightning strikes from nowhere that ended the game when your team was about to score. (Isn't your team always about to score?)

I reminisced about this last week with my son, now a college sophomore.

What was the greatest memory of his sports career? His answer was prompt: the soccer team his junior year in high school. I was astounded. Their record was a dismal 0-15.

To shed some light on this paradox, I tracked down the team's coach, Chris Lynch, now teaching and coaching in his home state of Massachusetts.

Were there lots of close games, overtimes and maybe some big-time individual stats that carried the season -- stuff that I didn't remember? Nope. Just huge mismatches and point gaps, said Lynch.

But as we talked, I began to understand why my son treasures memories of being part of the team.

It starts with this: Today, many kids aren't used to merit-based competition. They've experienced only a steady stream of bland praise intended to boost a largely meaningless sense of self-esteem. Sports presents a high-stakes challenge: the possibility of very public failures in front of schoolmates and family.

In sports, someone always wins and someone loses.

Lynch saw in this not a recipe for despair but the greatest of teachable moments for his young, inexperienced team.

One particularly brutal game sticks in Lynch's mind: "We -- a varsity team -- were getting crushed by another school's junior varsity." How's that for humiliation for a 16-year-old? "In games like that," Lynch said, "a boy's tendency is to pretend you don't care, to stop putting your best on the line."

I know what he was talking about. I've seen that "whatever" look on the faces of a team that's losing badly.

Lynch would have none of that. At halftime, he launched into his typical pep talk: "We're down 7-0. We're not going to win this game, but we've got 40 minutes. How are we going to respond? We can fall apart, we can blame each other, or we can give our best effort for 40 minutes more."

It worked. The margin of defeat didn't shrink, but the kids played their hearts out. "When you ask kids like that, they'll deliver," Lynch said.

"As the game went on, I watched our goalie continue to make save after save," he recalled. "And I thought, 'We talk to kids about doing the right thing when no one's looking. But actually, it takes a lot of courage to do the right thing when a lot of people are looking.'"

In other words, it's humiliating to give your all and still get killed. But the guys on Lynch's team refused to give up.

Athletic losses can be devastating. But with a great coach, kids can learn to

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## Member Spotlight

### Minnesota Hockey

Formerly Minnesota Amateur Hockey Association.



#### Mission Statement

The mission of Minnesota Hockey is to provide the best possible experience for all participants and to promote the grass-roots growth of hockey in Minnesota.

#### What is Minnesota Hockey

Minnesota Hockey is the non-profit organization devoted to promoting and growing the sport of hockey at the grass-roots level in Minnesota. It is the governing body of amateur hockey in Minnesota and is an affiliate of USA Hockey.

Utilizing a large group of volunteers in local, district, regional and state positions and one paid employee, Minnesota Hockey registers more than 57,000 players, coaches and referees each season. Since 1947 Minnesota Hockey has fostered the growth in numbers of players and coaches by administering programs that provide a positive and safe environment for participation in youth hockey.

Under Minnesota Hockey's leadership, the youth hockey programs in Minnesota have become recognized as the standard for the entire nation.

Minnesota Hockey is

- A volunteer driven organization involving players, coaches, parents and families.
- Twelve districts and 160 community-based local associations representing more than 200,000 family members. Responsible for managing virtually every facet of youth hockey in Minnesota...from screening and education programs for coaches to instructional programs crossing every age, gender and skill level.

#### Minnesota Hockey Members

Youth Players	47,607
Coaches	8,029
Referees	2,428
Other Volunteers	75,000 – 100,000 est.

For more information on Minnesota Hockey and its programs contact Executive Director Mark Jorgensen at 651.602.5727 or please visit [www.MinnesotaHockey.org](http://www.MinnesotaHockey.org).

### Coaching Tip:

Be on Time. Play Hard.

Do what's right.

Buck Nystrom, Winningest High School football coach in Alaska.

*Rising when we fall .....Continued from page 2*

look long odds in the eye without fear. Lack of success can drive them to tap reserves of fortitude and perseverance, instead of drifting into apathy or despair.

My son's 0-15 season was not like "Rocky" or "Hoosiers." His team didn't get beaten down, then surge back to glory. Instead, they lost -- and lost again.

But isn't life often like that? In my son's future job or marriage, he may face similar challenges. Then, I suspect, he'll draw on qualities he honed in his 0-15 season.

Lynch quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Our greatest glory consists not in never falling but rather in rising when we fall." He adds: "Rising becomes especially tough and, I think, heroic when we know we are bound to fall again and again."

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## Board Notes - Code of Conduct

*By Ryan Gunderson, Minnesota Sports Federation, SAM Founding Member*

Youth sports codes of conduct come in all forms. They may focus on the positive or the negative behaviors of athletes, parents and coaches. Here are some guidelines that may help your organization in developing a youth sports code of conduct.

*Who is the event centered on?* The code of conduct should encourage behaviors that put the participants' experience ahead of personal desires.

*What is important?* A safe, healthy, and fun environment and experience for all participants should be inherent throughout the code of conduct.

*Discourage inappropriate or disrespectful behavior.* A code of conduct should discourage behavior that sacrifices the experience and well-being of all participants.

Now does a code of conduct stand on its own? If a code of conduct does not have consequences for failure to abide by its tenets, it will be less effective. Below is a sample of escalating levels of enforcing a code of conduct:

*Verbal or written warning issued by the league or organization.*

*Suspension or ejection by league or organization's authorized personnel.*

*Suspension from multiple events by league or organization.*

*Season suspension or multiple season suspension by league or organization.*

Does your league or organization have a code of conduct for participants? If not, developing one may help make the youth sports experience more enjoyable - for everyone!

### Some thoughts from Dr. Mike Pritchard on Athletics and Respect before you begin:

Coaches, athletes, and their parents must always treat the players, referees, opposing players and their fans with respect, courtesy, and consideration. This means avoiding and preventing put-downs, name calling, trash-talking, insults, or other verbal or non-verbal conduct. It also means never taunting an opponent or engaging in flamboyant displays of chest-thumping, ball-slammings, or high-fiving. Coaches, athletes, and their parents must be informed that if they think an official misunderstands a rule or made a bad call, they should not humiliate the referee through their own behavior. Coaches need to maintain control over the conduct of their parents, fans, and players by preventing negative cheers, name-calling, trash talking, or the like. It should be emphasized that demeaning, ridiculing, yelling at, or embarrassing players for their mistakes or for any other reason will not be tolerated. Treat all of your players as you would like to be treated, recognizing and appreciating their diversity in gender, ethnicity, skills, and race as a part of good sportsmanship and respect. And finally, emphasize that everyone associated with the team will be listened to for their input and opinions without fear of reprisal or put down.

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Principle Six of the Arizona Sports Summit Accord holds that "All sports participants must consistently demonstrate and demand scrupulous integrity and observe and enforce the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.

"Kids spend several hours a day playing video games and less than 15 minutes in P.E. Many are obese, and nearly half exhibit risk factors of heart disease." Quote from free American Council on Exercise Poster at [www.acefitness.org](http://www.acefitness.org)

## 2006 Summit For Youth Sport Leaders Presenters & Session Descriptions

### Summit Session #1 – Sportsmanship: Expectations for Parents, Coaches and Officials

**Presenter:** *Frank White, Respect Sports*—We hear about violence in sports much too often: fights among fans and verbal abuse of officials, to name a few. *Respect Sports* emphasizes the importance of the involvement of all people. "Good citizenship can be demonstrated anywhere," White says. "It has a place in classrooms, hallways, homes, workplaces, when you're with friends....anywhere." This kind of respectful behavior in youth athletics will result in the establishment of standards that foster a healthy and safe environment. White's session, however, does more than just stress the importance of promoting a respectful environment. The sessions provide an established and useful model for reducing negative behavior by participants, coaches and spectators.

**Presenter:** *Dr. Rick Aberman, The Lennick Aberman Group*—Dr. Aberman will discuss the demands of coaching on and off the field. He will address "the other stuff" that coaches routinely encounter on and off the field—meddlesome parents, demanding administrators, misbehaving kids, confusing rules, negative media—and offer practical advice on how to survive and thrive in the business of sports. His book, co-authored by John Anderson, Head Baseball coach at U of M, "*Why Good Coaches Quit: How to Deal with the Other Stuff*," is a great resource on effective leadership for coaches of any sport and at any level of competition, as well as school and program administrators who hire and maintain a coaching staff. The book will be available at the Workshop.

### Summit Session #2 – Healthy Youth Development: Training Practices and Healthy Policies

#### **Presenters:**

*Eat to Compete - Sonja Savre*—Healthy Living for Young Athletes - Brittany McFadden, Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation

Athletes need healthy environments in order to perform their best. Are you providing them with healthy places to play? Find out how to establish a tobacco, alcohol, and drug policy for your organization AND the facilities that you use.

*Training Practices—Corey Eckhoff, Sports Performance Director, Velocity Sport Performance and Kevin Johnston, Facilities Manager, Hopkins School District*  
Learn the aspects of developing, training and effectively coaching today's young athlete from pre-puberty through high school. We will talk about the physiological, psychological and sociological components of development and training to assist everyone involved in creating a healthy youth sports environment and experience.

*Murray Lynn Harber, Exercise Physiologist*

Preventing injuries in young athletes can improve the student-athlete's experience in sport. Participants will learn simple tips in planning practice and pre-competitions to reduce the risk of injury and to maximize performance for all involved with sport. Learning the basic principles of warm up, speed play, conditioning, cool down, and recovery to practice and play will reduce their risk of injury and injuries themselves. You will leave with a guide on how to implement in your organization.

#### **Breakout Sessions:**

**Coach's Asthma Clipboard** - Janet Keysser, Coaches Asthma Clipboard, Minnesota Department of Health

Athletes with asthma require especially healthy environments. Are you prepared to manage an asthma attack that happens to an athlete on your team? The brand new electronic "Coaches Asthma Clipboard" training will help you understand everything you need to know to coach kids with asthma!

**What Do Kids See From the Field/Court/Rink?** - Presenters: Middle & High School athletes

Hear it from the athletes' own mouths. A panel comprised of middle and high school students discuss what they see from the field/court/rink and give their opinion on the issues in youth sports today.

**Risk Management – Screen Smart and WIN!** - Presenters: *Donna L. Ploof – RHR Information Services, Inc. and Judy Praska, Executive Director, North Country Region Volleyball USA*

Through the use of an innovative motivational style, Donna brings the task of screening individuals interacting with youth into a "reality show" training program. Learn the pitfalls of the wrong screening choices, the satisfaction of making the right choices while competing for prizes. It's not how much you spend on the screening process, but how wisely you spend! Judy Praska will share her perspective on the practical aspects related to background checks, review and enforcement.