🏀 Bloomington Boys Traveling Basketball - Coaching Philosophy

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🎯 Our Purpose

“Success in youth sports isn’t measured by trophies or wins, but by the smiles, the effort, the growth, and the love of the game that lasts a lifetime.” — Unknown

We are building **competitive teams through process over outcome**. Our mission:

- Develop individual skill and team success
- Prepare players for the next level (high school and beyond)
- Instill values like character, self-discipline, and leadership

We are part of the broader **Bloomington Basketball community**, growing players into well-rounded individuals.

🧠 Coaching Style

- **Be yourself.** Find your voice as a coach. Animated or reserved — be consistent and confident in your style.
- Be respectful, easy to work with, and uphold our standards with **players, parents, refs, and opponents.**

📋 Coaching Guidelines

🔧 Fundamentals First

“Effort without technique is like running in the wrong direction. Teach them how before pushing how hard.” — Unknown

- Prioritize technique and teamwork, especially at younger ages
- Early habits = long-term success

⏱️ Playing Time

- **Younger teams (Grades 3–5):**
  → Aim for **equal playing time** 80% of games
  → All players should experience both starting and bench roles

- **Older teams (Grades 6+):**
  → Playing time varies by role, game context, and growth
  → Communicate clearly with players and parents

✅ **Tips:**

- Get players in **early** in games
- Use lopsided or “friendship” games to get everyone involved
- Talk with families when needed to manage confidence and expectations

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🛡️ **Defense**

- Man-to-man is our base; zone used **sparingly and strategically**
- Emphasis on **pressure, positioning, and communication**

✅ **Indicators of success:**

- Players talk constantly
- Proper switching and help defense
- Strong box-outs and rotations
- Aggression and physicality without fouling

🧮 **Offense**

- Run **motion/spread offenses**: cutting, passing, spacing
- Set plays are tools, not the foundation

✅ **Indicators of success:**

- Ball movement (side to side and inside-out)
- Screens, cuts, give-and-go action
- Transition with outlet passes
- Read and react to defensive setups
- Spacing and patience

🔄 Positions

- **Positionless basketball** builds better players
- Let kids try multiple roles
- Understand physical and skill development evolves over time

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🏃‍♂️ Practice Philosophy

“Deep practice is built on a paradox: struggling in certain targeted ways—operating at the edges of your ability, where you make mistakes—makes you smarter.” — Daniel Coyle

- Focus on **skill development through gameplay**
- Keep energy high and touches frequent

✅ What good practice looks like:

- Fun, competitive, and organized
- 90% of time spent **playing basketball**
- Segments ≈ 8 minutes each
- Fast transitions between drills
- Scorekeeping and player accountability
    - Players want to compete - encourage competition in all drills
- Small-sided games with constraints
- Teach technique **during play**, not after
    - Correct and praise as the event occurs. Players will not remember an action or event after the drill is over.
- Let players figure things out before stepping in
    - Ask questions to let players come to the appropriate conclusions, direction without building an understanding will not yield positive outcomes.
- Finish together with a team huddle and player-led closeout

🎮 Game Coaching

“When coaches shout constant instructions from the sidelines, they are often doing the cognitive work for the players.” — Doug Lemov

- Avoid **micromanaging during live play**
- Don’t coach every movement — let them make decisions
    - Live-ball direction should be focused on strategy along with instructions on helping, hustling, talking, etc.
- Coach during **timeouts, halftime, and post-game**

🧘 It’s okay to sit and let them figure it out.

🔊 Yelling (and Not Yelling) - Know the difference between yelling and vocalizing instruction. Yelling is generally negative with the intent to express frustration, anger or disappointment. Loud instruction is generally positive and encouraging - know the difference.

- Never embarrass players in front of fans
- Motivate - do not humiliate
- Profanity = never tolerated

John Wooden’s Breakdown:

- 6.9% Positive Reinforcement
- 6.6% Expressions of Displeasure
- 75% Pure Information (what to do, how to do it)

👨👩👧 Parents on the Sideline

- Encourage them to **cheer, not coach**
- Explain your team strategy to reduce confusion
- Players must not rely on parent instruction during games

🚦 Discipline

- Be consistent and fair
- Have rules, but don’t overcomplicate
- Discipline during wins and losses
    - Every game has lessons, good and bad - focus on finding the silver lining and what you can do better in both wins and losses
- Build character and accountability at all times

💡 Final Thought:

“Great coaches are not magicians... They are master engineers of the learning process.”
— John Welbourn