

Winning isn't everything

Editor's note: Russ Phillips made a very appropriate speech at the Boy Scout Banquet last month. Several people have mentioned that they would like to see it in print. So here it is:

Sportsman: one who abides by a code of fair play in games or in daily practice.

Winning: Successful in achievement, especially in competition

Just about everyone has taken part in a game of one type or another, whether it be an athletic

sport such as baseball, hockey or soccer; or a leisurely game of cards, darts or monopoly, played to fill some idle time or occupy oneself on a dull day. The basic principle is the same, participation for enjoyment.

All too often, perhaps because of the fast pace of our lifestyle, we forget the enjoyment of participation and the good company this can bring. Too much emphasis is placed on winning. Winning at all costs is a

common phrase used today, as shown by some of the tragic accidents which result in someone being seriously injured or maimed for life.

Today's professional athlete is a prime example of this 'winning at all costs' philosophy. These people play injured or resort to questionable tactics because of pressure placed on them by fans, family, team mates and team owners. The problem we should look at is, how can we as players, parents, fans or

coaches, make the most of your time as a player. What would you, as a player or participant, like to see. The Sports Council or Government's fitness and Amateur Sports Division has now faced the problem and through the National Coaches Certification Program has attempted to lead the way in putting enjoyment and participation back into sports, ahead of winning. Through this program, various levels are set out to instruct

people and to develop a coach's positive attitude and philosophy with regard to their responsibilities in the development of the people with whom they are involved. This is aimed at you, the hockey, baseball or soccer player. From this it is hoped that you will carry their ideas over to your own games which you play on your own or amongst friends. This philosophy is much the same as that of your Scouting Organization, that being to assist you in becoming a better person. It is hoped you would carry these beliefs with you throughout your life, and that you would be a better person for this.

There are, however, several problems which occur. The first and foremost is that we are not all physically and mentally the same. This means we grow at various rates, some of you

are big or small for your age as compared to a level set some time ago. Look about the room, not all the fathers are the same height or weight and neither are the age groups of the boys here. We can find bigger ones and smaller ones in any age group.

We also develop at a different rate. Some of you run faster, jump higher, or can throw farther than your friends who may be the same age as yourself and perhaps taller or shorter.

Many of the problems which occur in minor sports which you fellows participate in, stem from this different rate of development. We must accept this different rate of growth and development as players, coaches and parents. It is not possible for everyone to be the best skater, runner, batter or kicker. If so, would there really be a game or contest.

It is through this participation that you develop your ability similar to your schooling. A period of conditioning and skills development must be followed. You are a sportsman because of your involvement and you practice your skills and conditioning along with teamwork to prepare for your challenges or games. In Scouting, this teamwork is important also because as a team you work together on various projects, when camping or hiking. Teamwork or group participation prepares you for later life. Many of your parents work together to make the jobs they do, successful and easier. A group of people performing a task is most often easier and quicker than a single individual doing it.

If the order of importance could be shifted from winning to just participation, everyone

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