

TRYOUTS AND CUTS

Cuts aren't easy on any one, but they are a necessary evil if you have a successful program. Any student can try out, but it will be very difficult to make the team if they don't work hard during the off-season.

If we have to cut players, the player(s) will be told to students face to face after the third practice. Although this is more difficult, there is usually an easing of tensions this way. Some players who are less gifted physically will make the team over more gifted players if the more gifted players refuse to accept their role.

Players who are on the fringe will be told they have made the team, but they may not play a lot. If they believe they can accept that role, then they will be kept on the team. If not, please be honest so that we can keep someone who will be happy with that roll.

We do have a no-cut policy with our freshman team, and if we have enough participation, we will have separate Reserve, Junior Varsity, and Varsity teams.

PRACTICE ETIQUETTE

1. Be on time, at least 10 minutes early, especially on days where we don't have school. During this time period you should be both mentally and physically preparing yourself for practice. Physically, this should include stretching, form shooting, and any other skill development that the coaching staff may have asked you to work on. Mentally, this includes a minimal amount of gossiping and screwing around. Also, your "social life" should not follow you into the gym; when school is out, please get into the gym as soon as possible. Practice on a school day begins with a meeting every day at 3:35 PM sharp; players should be ready to practice at this point.

2. Everyone is to wear a Fort Calhoun Girls Basketball reversible jersey. You may wear any shorts you would like.

3. Players and coaches will not sit down at any time during a practice, unless there is an injury.

4. When not actively involved in a drill, watch and learn from what is going on around you.

5. Listen to the critiques and criticisms of the coaches. It is done so that we can learn from our mistakes and to correct bad habits.

6. Winning doesn't start on game nights; winning begins with good, consistent practice effort and execution. If we want to achieve our goals during game nights, we must make the effort to improve everyday in practice. Improvement in practice is predicated on competition; your teammates are your friends the other 22 hours of the day, but for those 2 hours, in order to make yourself better, you have to compete against one another. If you want to win on Friday nights, you have to hate to lose Monday through Thursday.

PLAYING TIME AND LETTERING REQUIREMENTS

1. **The best players play, regardless of class/age. I cannot emphasize this enough.** We know everyone will not be happy with every decision, but we need to do what is best for the team. Along with this, not all players can be afforded equal playing time.

2. There are three major things that we will consider when it comes to playing time; talent, attitude and work ethic. We will sacrifice talent for attitude and work ethic, but we will not sacrifice work ethic and attitude for talent.

3. Practice is where playing time is decided, and a player's performance at practice is directly related to this.

4. Every year is a new year. Past performances are looked at, but what is being accomplished in the current season is the determining factor for playing time.

5. Know, understand, embrace and excel in your role on the team. We will do our best to communicate this to the players, as we always have. If there is confusion over a player's role, have the player come see their coach.

6. Part of what we teach along with basketball skills is life skills. Part of those life skills is putting the best team out on the floor that we can, very similar to what many of you do with your business. You would want the best employee's you could find for your business, wouldn't you?

7. Younger players who think they should be playing in the Varsity games had better dominate the J.V. games. If you don't stand out in the J.V. games, what do you expect to do in the varsity games?

8. Lettering will be based upon your entire contribution to the team, or participating in at least one quarter of each game.

COMMUNICATION WITH COACHING STAFF

The coaching staff appreciates an outside source wanting to help a player with their skills. Any extra work that they do outside of practice will be beneficial to them. I also realize that there are some parents who have played the game and what to pass on their knowledge to their daughter. Please be careful in this regard and help support us in this area. Many times that advice is not consistent to what we have practiced, and sometimes a conflict of interest arises when players are being taught different techniques at home than at practice. I feel extremely confident in the basketball knowledge of the coaching staff, and they have an outstanding opportunity to pass on their knowledge to your daughter.

My staff and I do not claim to know everything that there is to know about the game of basketball, but we are professionals in what we do, and we work very hard to stay up with the current techniques and mechanics of the game. If the player is getting advice from somewhere other than us, it can create a barrier between the player and the coach. I would appreciate your help and cooperation in this area.

To me, there is really only one major situation that a parent should approach the coaching staff about a player, and that is if there is a belief that a player has been mistreated either physically or verbally; all other matters should be settled between the player and the coach, as they are the ones that have been involved in every aspect of the situation being discussed. If this is the case, we can set up an appointment. Please be polite and professional when discussing the matter. If there is a problem with another coach, please go through me (the head coach) to discuss the problem or concern. Here are some guidelines that will help the situation:

- Do not ask me to discuss another player with you.
- Know that every decision that is made is for the benefit of the team.
- I would like your daughter to be present at the appointment if the concern is about them.

There are certain things that I will talk openly about with parents. This includes:

- How to make your daughter a better player/person
- Upcoming opponents
- Booster information
- Summer programs

There are certain things that I will not talk about with parents. This includes:

- Playing time
- Strategy
- Practice planning

TRAINING GUIDELINES

The guidelines for training are common sense rules and ideals that I hope you try to practice in your own lives. Assume responsibility for your own actions and take self-discipline to avoid putting yourself in a situation that can lead to a suspension or dismissal from the team for being associated with the following situations.

- Tobacco Use
- Use of alcohol or “guilt by association”
- Use of illegal drugs
- Violation of curfew

Any infraction of the above listed items may and if need be, will result in dismissal from the program. **The coaching staff also reserves the right to place additional penalties above and beyond the school discipline policy on players who fail to live up to our standards regarding substance abuse. Also, please remember that cases of breaking the substance abuse policy in the summer months will carry over into the next school year.** Being a member of the program is a privilege and this privilege can and will be taken away from inappropriate behaviors and attitudes.

Along with this, basketball is a very long and demanding season, and it is important that both parents and the coaching staff stress proper nutrition and rest. It is vital that players, when given time off, that they take that time off from athletic activities and get as much rest as possible. Please help us emphasize these principles.

DETENTIONS AND DISCIPLINE

If a player receives a detention, she will be required to go to the detention. She will not use practice as a reason to skip detention. If a player does skip her detention to come to practice or any other reason, that player will be suspended for the first half of the next game. That player will also face other consequences for missing lost practice time.

If there are multiple discipline infractions and/or chemistry issues within the team, the coaching staff will follow a three step plan in order to deal with these issues. Please bear in mind that if we reach this point, these steps will be taken rather quickly and decisively.

1. If there are continuous discipline and/or team chemistry issues with a player, the head coach will sit down with the player and discuss these issues in an effort to get the player to understand why these actions are detrimental to the program.
2. If there is no improvement and/or there is another occurrence of related discipline and/or team chemistry issues, the head coach will sit down with both the player and at least one parent to discuss these issues in an effort to get the player to understand why these actions are detrimental to the program.
3. If there is no improvement and/or there is another occurrence of related discipline and/or team chemistry issues, the head coach will arrange a meeting between the parents, the player and a Fort Calhoun administrator to examine a “behavioral contract” that must be signed by the parent, the player and the coach in order for the player to continue to participate in the program. This contact will most likely consist of a three step process:
 - First violation:** If the infraction occurs during practice, the player will be dismissed from practice. If the infraction occurs during a game, the player will be benched for the remainder of that game.

-Second violation: The player will be suspended for one to two games, and the coaching staff reserves the right to possibly suspend the player from practice while the suspension is being served

-Third violation: Player will be dismissed from the program

TEAM RULES

OFF THE FLOOR

1. Be on time
2. Stay out of trouble
3. Get the best grades you can possibly get

ON THE FLOOR

1. Have fun
2. Be a good teammate at all times
3. Play as hard as you can all the time

GAMEDAY PREPARATIONS

1. We will dress in a uniformed fashion for all games, whether that is travel suits or dress clothes.
2. **We encourage our players to put their cell phones away on bus trips.**
3. When we are on the bus, it is **NOT** a time to recap the day's events of "who did what, he said, she said" stuff. Focus on the game.
4. Under no circumstance will players eat/drink a bunch of food or drink that will not prepare them for the game.
5. Certain games will be designated "All will ride home on the bus". On the games that we aren't riding home together, you **MUST** fill out a permission slip to ride home with **YOUR PARENTS**. This can be acquired from Coach Appel.

BASIC BASKETBALL PHILOSOPHY

1. Hard work=Success. Along with that, you need to allow a kid to be a kid.
2. The best players for the **team** play, regardless of class
3. Systems must be permanent but flexible to match the talent and the player's personalities/abilities
4. I have an Open Door Policy with players; communication is **essential**
5. Players should feel that they have some ownership of the team, and they should be allowed to do small things that fit their personality and preferences

BASIC OFFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY

1. Aggressive offense that will create the most opportunities towards the basket
2. There are two basic ways to give you extra opportunities to score: offensive rebounding and creating offense from defense (turnovers)
3. Value possession of the basketball
4. Good shot selection
5. Everyone must realize their offensive role
6. We want to "flow" this year; I would love for our team to look like a over 40 Y League team. Let's just play ball!
7. Screeners are just as valuable as shooters
8. Do a few things well instead of a lot of things average

BASIC DEFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY

1. Play defense with your feet, not your hands
2. Limit teams to one shot
3. All five players must be in unison as to where they should be
4. Full court pressure should be applied whenever possible, based on personnel, situation and score
5. If you can't guard man to man, you can't play zone
6. Do a few things well instead of a lot of things average

THE DEFINITE DOZEN

1. I believe that trust can be the most valuable teaching tool a coach can convey to his players.
2. I believe in blaming no one else but yourself for mistakes.
3. I believe in sacrificing the good of the individual for the good of the team.
4. I believe a less talented but close-knit team will defeat a divided but talented team every time.
5. I don't believe in sharing the stat sheet. If you are not doing your job, I will let you know it. If you are doing your job, I will let you know. A lot of "non-team" players have had great statistics, and a lot of great players have had terrible statistics.
6. I believe in sharing athletes between programs. Fort Calhoun is too small to have the majority of our athletes "specializing". There needs to be a "spirit of cooperation" and allow kids to be kids.
7. I believe that weight training is essential to any athletic program's success.
8. I believe that from November to March, if you are a basketball player, that is your focus, and those times come first. If you want me to invest my time with you, then you will be expected to invest the time I ask on a 100% basis. If you are going to miss a practice for reasons other than illness or family emergency, there will be some sort of consequences. Each situation will be determined on an individual basis. Along with that, what you do in your free time from March to October is your business. Also realize that our program has developed to the point that if you don't put in some work in the off-season, it will be difficult for you to keep pace or maintain your current position.
9. I believe that you should be a good teammate at all times. Playing a club sport while you are playing basketball makes it tough to be a good teammate. However, I do not mind individual skill development in other sports during basketball as long as it doesn't interfere with mandatory basketball activities. An example of this would be taking batting practice vs. playing in an indoor soccer game. All I ask in return from other sports is the same courtesy towards basketball skill development.
10. I believe that teams are developed from November to March, but players are developed from March to November. Whoever puts the most time in during the off-season usually has the greatest opportunity for improvement. Our program will provide enough opportunity for skill improvement and outside "influences" should not be needed. A perfect summer for the Fort Calhoun girls basketball program would be:
 - One team Fort Calhoun camp
 - 4-5 team camps (3 in Omaha, 1-2 that include overnight stays)
 - One Summer League
 - Morning Open Gyms three days a week for June and the first week of July
11. I believe that playing time is not equal. If we have ten players that my staff and I feel comfortable playing, then I believe in playing ten players. If we have six players that my staff and I feel comfortable playing, then those are the six players that play the most.
12. I believe in closing practices to the public. My administrators are welcome at any time, as well as any guests of the program.

GOALS FOR THE PROGRAM

I believe that there are four acceptable goals for the girl's basketball program at Fort Calhoun High School:

1. The kids participating in the activity feel that they have been treated fairly and with respect, and that they have fun with what they are doing while working hard.
2. The kids participating in the activity become better people and learn lessons about sports and life as a result of their participation in this activity
3. The team "maxes out" its potential; if we have 20-5 talent, then that is the goal that we reach. If we have 5-20 talent, then I want us to reach that goal.
4. Putting our program in the best position possible to win a conference championship; if we win our conference championship, it will put us in a position to win a district and state championship.