



*Handbook  
Updated 2/12*

**The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize both the parents and players with the NorCal Academy Basketball Program, and to provide a better understanding. It is hoped that this handbook will answer many of the questions that may arise during the season. The rules outlined in this handbook must be followed and will be enforced to insure the success of The Academy.**

## Mission Statement

To provide youth girls in the North Bay Area a quality basketball education through skill development, team concepts and game competition —all conducted in an environment that encourages sportsmanship and fosters positive personal growth.

## Core Philosophy

The Academy was formed by Certified Varsity Coaches from Sonoma County High Schools to establish a unified and inclusive girl's basketball organization. The primary focus and direction is to: teach skills first, coach team play second, and compete third. The emphasis and intent of The Academy is clearly to develop ALL youth girl basketball players so they can realize their potential and improve their ability to contribute to their local youth programs. The Academy is committed to creating a safe and productive basketball learning environment.

## Program Objectives

- ◆ To provide excellence in the teaching of fundamental basketball skills, team play and positive, healthy competition
- ◆ To provide each player an opportunity to learn, practice, develop and apply their basketball skills
- ◆ To provide access and increased exposure to a diversified group of certified high school coaches
- ◆ To encourage increased participation across the area regardless of individual talent and skill level
- ◆ To foster the concept of team basketball as paramount to achieving true success
- ◆ To expose players to new styles of teaching and coaching, to new environments and to new experiences through competition
- ◆ To elevate player confidence, self esteem, personal growth and maturity through participation in the Academy
- ◆ To create a sense of community through the game of basketball

## CODE OF CONDUCT

NCA is committed to good sportsmanship at all times. Players must represent themselves, their team and the program in a positive and respectful manner. Parents are expected to set an example of proper conduct for players and those around them. Remember, the contest is only a game. Violations may result in action including reprimand, suspension or dismissal from the program.

## PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

- ◆ Profanity of any kind is not allowed and will not be tolerated before, during or after any activity
- ◆ Verbal and physical abuse is strictly prohibited
- ◆ Parents are not allowed to taunt or conduct themselves in a manner meant to incite a reaction from opposing players, coaches, parents or officials and event staff
- ◆ Parents are asked to cheer **for** the NCA in a positive manner and **not against** opponents in a negative manner
- ◆ Show respect to those around you
- ◆ Support Coaches and Team Managers
- ◆ Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials
- ◆ Stress the values derived from playing the game fairly

## PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

- ◆ Profanity of any kind is not allowed and will not be tolerated
- ◆ Fighting is strictly prohibited
- ◆ Players are not allowed to taunt, trash talk or conduct themselves in a manner meant to incite a reaction from an opposing players, coaches, spectators or officials and event staff
- ◆ Players are required to be in control of themselves during games
- ◆ Players must practice good sportsmanship and maintain a positive attitude at all times
- ◆ Be a team player and always support teammates with encouragement
- ◆ Be aware of team schedule and attend all practices, games or other team events
- ◆ Advise coaches immediately of any injury, however minor
- ◆ Have fun and enjoy the game

## Financial Commitment

Participation in The NorCal Academy requires some financial responsibilities, but for the parent of a player who wants the training and experiences associated with competitive basketball, it is both beneficial and well worth the investment. Please see website for specific pricing. [www.thenorcalacademy.org](http://www.thenorcalacademy.org)

## Time Commitment for Travel Teams

The travel program is designed for players who desire to play at a higher level of competition and who are willing to commit to a twice a week practice schedule and 4-6 tournaments during the season.

**Those who play other sports or have other commitments during this time of year should consider this before trying out for the Academy Travel Teams.** A player and her parents are expected to understand, and be willing to make the time commitment required for program basketball as outlined in this handbook. NCA travel teams will participate mainly within sites around the Bay Area, Sacramento Stockton. NCA plans to travel to Reno in the spring season. Other opportunities may become available, based on tournament and player availability. Every effort will be made to attend trusted tournaments that expose players to quality competition.

## Parent Support/Fundraising

It is expected that each parent will support NCA through the active participation and contribution of time for various tasks at hosted tournaments or fulfilling other time-related tasks that may arise. The season may provide fundraising opportunities and it is expected that all parents and players will support the Academy by actively participating in these fund raising activities.

## Team Operation & Administration

Each team should have two positions to be filled by parents to help with the administration of the program. Each of these positions is extremely important to the success of the team and program. These are volunteer positions that require a considerable dedication of time. All players and parents will be expected to support the efforts of these individuals.

### Team Manager

- ◆ Coordinates team activities with program administrators
- ◆ Along with the coach, may conduct parent meetings
- ◆ Ensures that players and parents are informed of activities, practice times, and games
- ◆ Organizes tournament schedules, assists with related activities such as hotel arrangements, directions, registration at a tournament and travel arrangements for players if needed

### Team Fundraising

- ◆ Organizes and coordinates program fundraising activities
- ◆ Promotes participation of parents and players in fundraising activities organized by the program
- ◆ Encourages parents to help identify and solicit potential corporate sponsorship

## Player, Coach and Parent Relationship

- ◆ Program basketball teaches many positive traits such as cooperation and self-discipline
- ◆ Parents must not issue instructions to the players that are contrary to those of the coach
- ◆ Encourage your child to follow a coach's instructions and leave the instruction to the coach
- ◆ Teach your child how to cope with the frustrations of dealing with challenges and/or the emotion-charged dynamic of a highly competitive team
- ◆ Players must be taught cooperation, how to handle positive as well as negative feedback about their on-court performance with adversity, and how to graciously win or lose

**Under no circumstances may a parent approach a coach with a complaint or an unsolicited evaluation of coaching philosophy. Any issues shall be discussed in a meeting with an NCA rep, the coach and the parent. The results of such a meeting shall not become topic of conversation among other club members. The program will not tolerate any form of verbal or physical abuse of coaches or players by parents, players, or spectators. If the guidelines of the organization are not followed, the player may be asked to leave the program.**

## Uniforms

Players will be provided a uniform as part of their registration fees. Players must supply their own shoes and other gear.

## Program Affiliation

The NorCal Academy is a 501(c) (3). Its coaches and players are members of the AAU (Amateur Athletic Union). The AAU is one of the largest sports organizations in the United States. The difference between AAU basketball and other basketball leagues is based on the use of full high school rules. No developmental limitations are placed on the game such as participation and no-press/fast-break rules. This promotes competitive play and the broadest exposure to fundamentals and advanced techniques of the game.

## AAU Membership

All players will have a current AAU "Added Benefits" membership in order to participate in any NCA tryouts, practice or game. AAU membership runs annually from September 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>. The purchase of the AAU "added benefit" membership is included in your registration fee. The NCA will not refund this fee under any circumstances.

## Age Division

The Age/Grade Divisions for competition for girls shall be in accordance with AAU rules. The date to determine eligibility is July 1<sup>st</sup> for girls of the past year. Example: A player cannot play in the 12U division if they turn 13 before eligibility date. There is a grade exception rule that may apply to a player in a certain grade who may have a birthday before the eligibility date. **It is mandatory that each player provide a copy of their birth certificate in order to play for NCA.**

## Academics

The NorCal Academy strongly encourages that all players strive to maintain a good GPA in school. NCA feels the student athlete's school work should be the player's primary focus.

### Level(s) of participation offered within the NorCal Academy

The NorCal Academy offers two level-of-participation options, the Academy and Travel Team Programs. Each has been created to accommodate players who are new to the sport as well as those who are more advanced.

#### **The Academy:**

The Academy welcomes all dedicated participants, 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grades, regardless of experience. All registered NCA players will participate at this level, with practices occurring twice a week. Coaches provide instructions on fundamental skills; abilities and knowledge players will need to improve their game. Competition will consist of in-county opportunities and play within the NCA program. This is also a good option for multi-sport kids trying to play other sports during the same season.

#### **Travel Team:**

This level is an advanced tournament travel team program for select players who will compete in various contests outside of local trainings and beyond skill-set sessions within The Academy level. Selection will be made through player assessments during the program's first week, coordinated by the NCA coaching committee. Multiple teams within an age group will be considered if there is enough interest.

### Tryouts/Selection Process

Players will be selected for openings on Travel teams based on what the player does during the try out process. Every effort will be made to ensure players have an opportunity to demonstrate their basketball abilities during the tryout period and will be evaluated on as ball handling, shooting, and passing along with demonstrating a positive attitude, work ethic, knowledge of the game and satisfactory academic performance. **If a player does not make one of the teams, she will continue to develop her skills within the Academy program. It is the intention of NCA to have 9-12 players on the travel roster. Roster selection does not guarantee tournament team. 9-10 players are the maximum that will travel to a tournament.**

## Travel Team / Playing Time

The NorCal Academy will play to win. Travel basketball may be competitive and is designed for players who possess more advanced basketball skills and who desire a more challenging playing experience. Over the course of the season each player will get a fair amount of playing time, but there is no promise of minimum playing time. **Playing time is earned, and this is an important consideration for any program basketball player. Playing time will depend on an objective evaluation of a number of factors, such as; practice attendance, attitude and effort, game match-ups, foul trouble, and basketball ability. Coaches have discretion over playing time, and nothing will detract from a tournament experience more than repeated playing time discussions.**

A player will only be chosen to attend a tournament if that player meets the following criteria:

- Attends team practices
- Executes the offense and defense, which the coach has installed and needs at the time of play
- Exhibits to the coaches and teammates positive behavior and sportsmanship during practices and games.

## Travel Conduct & Rules

As mentioned, the NCA teams will be traveling to other cities to compete in tournaments, which will sometimes require an overnight stay. It is strongly recommend that parents travel with players. Additionally, unaccompanied players may have to make arrangements with another family for a ride and to share travel and lodging expenses.

Additional expenses will occur depending upon the number of out-of-town tournaments each team decides to enter. The NorCal Academy will use group buying power to reduce these costs whenever possible. However, parents and players will be responsible for all travel expenses. **It is strongly suggested that potential travel costs be reviewed at the beginning of the season, and that parents begin to plan for these expenditures as early as possible.**

- ◆ Depending on starting time for games the following morning, coached may determine curfews
- ◆ No person other than players, family members, coaches or chaperones is permitted inside a player's hotel room
- ◆ Hotel room phone numbers are not to be given out to anyone except players, family members, coaches or chaperones
- ◆ For players without parents, these players will be supervised by the assigned chaperones
- ◆ Hotel rules must be followed at all times. Any type of loud or disruptive behavior that may disturb other hotel guests will not be tolerated
- ◆ Direction of coaches or assigned chaperones must be followed at all times
- ◆ When sharing a room, players are expected to be respectful and considerate to their teammates at all times
- ◆ Players **MAY NOT** go anywhere alone. Players must receive permission from a parent, coach or chaperone to leave the team group and then must partner with other team members before leaving the group

## Practices

All practices are scheduled in advance and players are expected to attend. Teams will practice at least once per week and each practice will last between 1 and 2 hours. Every effort will be made to follow practice schedules as closely as possible, however, things happen. Please be flexible and cooperative when practice schedules need to be changed. As there are school activities and other commitments, which may conflict with practice from time to time, coaches will work with players and parents individually in those cases. **To emphasize player responsibility, high school team players (and not the parent) are expected to notify the coach or team manager ahead of time that she will miss practice and the reason why.** Program basketball players are expected to commit themselves to a practice schedule, and their team depends on them to do so. **Playing time will be affected by unexcused absences or tardiness.**

## Practice Rules

- ◆ No gum chewing during practice
- ◆ No jewelry may be worn
- ◆ Only water is allowed in the gym
- ◆ Players must arrive on time & be picked up promptly at the end of practice
- ◆ Parents are always welcome to watch practice, however, leave the coaching to the coach
- ◆ Players must be in uniform
- ◆ **No one other than players on the court unless requested by the coach**

## Tournaments (Travel Teams)

Tournaments provide teams the opportunity to play against high-level competition and the games are the payoff for all the hard work at practice. As is common with many of these tournaments, it may not be known until a day or two before the tournament where, when, and against whom NCA will play their first game. Parents and players are asked to be both patient and flexible. Tournament information will be passed along as soon as it is available. Tournaments generally can start on Friday or Saturday and end on Sunday. Typically, the results of games played will determine where, when, and against whom the NCA play next. The team may play from two to four games on average in a tournament.

Players are expected to commit to 3-4 tournaments over the course of the program season. Some tournaments will be local (within the bay area) and others will be out-of-town (Sacramento, Reno, etc.) and may require an overnight stay. The Coach and Team Manager will select the appropriate number and location of tournaments after receiving input from parents as to player availability for tournaments under consideration. Once an NCA team tournament schedule is finalized, it is expected that players will attend all tournaments and be ready to play.



## NORCAL ACADEMY BASKETBALL HANDBOOK ACCEPTANCE

I acknowledge that I have received, read and discussed with my daughter the information in the NCA Basketball Player Parent Handbook. I understand and agree to abide by the policies, rules and requirements as outlined in the handbook including Parent and Player Codes of Conduct; AAU “added benefits” membership and financial commitments. Furthermore, I understand that a player may not begin her season with NCA until all required forms are signed and submitted to the Team Manager.

### **Player Agreement**

*I agree to:*

- ◆ Treat coaches, teammates, opponents, referees and spectators with courtesy and respect
- ◆ Play to win but always fairly and with good sportsmanship
- ◆ Accept the decisions of the referees without gesture or argument
- ◆ Control my temper and not use inappropriate, derogatory or vulgar language
- ◆ Never criticize the play of others and never blame others for my mistakes
- ◆ Follow the instructions of my coach without argument
- ◆ Work hard, concentrate, cooperate and not be disruptive in practice and games
- ◆ Play my part in arriving on time
- ◆ Obey any team rules the coach puts in place

### **Parent/Guardian Agreement**

*I understand that:*

- ◆ NorCal Academy policy is that use of alcohol and tobacco products by parents and other spectators is strongly discouraged at games and practices

*I agree:*

- ◆ Not to coach or give instructions to the players including my own child during games or practices
- ◆ Not to openly express criticism for players of either team
- ◆ Not to openly criticize referees during a game
- ◆ Not to confront the coach or team manager with emotional issues in front of the players
- ◆ Not to use inappropriate, derogatory or vulgar language during a game or practice
- ◆ To ensure my child has the means to arrive and be picked up on time for practices and games
- ◆ To encourage my child to be the best team player she can be!

**I understand any violations of any of the above rules may automatically release me of the NorCal Academy.**

**No refund of fees will be given**