

**Montgomery County Public Schools
Interscholastic High School Athletics**

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD PROGRAM

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) begins the fifteenth year of its Sportsmanship Award Program. The program promotes outstanding sportsmanship by presenting a Sportsmanship Award to varsity teams that demonstrate the greatest degree of sportsmanship in the course of a particular season. Additionally, the school whose teams have won the greatest number of Sportsmanship Awards over the course of the year are declared the winner of the William “Duke” Beattie Sportsmanship Award. Officials, athletic directors, and school administrators are important components in determining the winners of the award. Below is a brief outline of the program.

Basic Plan

An important feature of the Sportsmanship Award Program is an increased awareness of sportsmanship on the part of coaches, players, and spectators. The basic plan includes bringing spectators, coaches, players, athletic administrators, and game officials together in an effort to promote the highest level of sportsmanship at MCPS athletic contests. It is a positive and proactive approach that includes many groups in the selection of school/team Sportsmanship Award recipients. Rating sheets are used at games or contests to evaluate various categories relating to sportsmanship. Game officials, administrators and athletic directors (or designees) are asked to complete and submit the rating sheets. The ratings are summarized and the teams receiving the highest ratings over the course of a season are the “winners” of the Sportsmanship Award for that sport.

Process

1. Schools receive rating sheets that address various aspects relating to the degree of sportsmanship demonstrated at a particular contest. Schools distribute rating forms, with preaddressed/stamped envelopes, to officials and administrators at each contest. Upon completing a rating of a particular event, officials and administrators are asked to send the rating sheet in the preaddressed/stamped envelope to the MCPS director of systemwide athletics.
2. A maximum of three ratings are obtained for each contest: one from the game official, one from an administrative representative from the visiting team, and one from an administrative representative from the host team. If there is more than one official assigned to a contest, one official submits a rating for the entire group.
3. Once completed and submitted to the director of systemwide athletics, the rating sheets are summarized, and the average “sportsmanship rating” for that contest is recorded. If more than one rating is submitted for a contest, the “sportsmanship rating” is the average of the rating sheets submitted for that contest.
4. At the end of a season, the average “sportsmanship rating” is calculated for all teams.
5. The team (or teams) with the highest ratings are the recipients of the Sportsmanship Award(s) for that sport for that season. The school is presented with engravings indicating the teams from that school that won Sportsmanship Awards that season. The engravings are added to a plaque that was purchased previously for each school.

Criteria

For a team to be eligible for a Sportsmanship Award, the following criteria must be met:

- No MPSSAA or MCPS rules violations. A rules violation that would disqualify a team from eligibility would be one that results in sanctions against the school, team, or coach.
- No coach or member of the coaching staff ejected from a contest.
- A rating form from a game official must be received for at least 50% of a team's home regular-season contests.
- Forms must be received within one-week of a contest.

If a player has been ejected from a game, including a "soft red" ejection, the team will receive an automatic sportsmanship rating of "0" for that contest.

William "Duke" Beattie Sportsmanship Award Recipient

The school whose teams have won the greatest number of Sportsmanship Awards over the course of the year are declared the winner of the William "Duke" Beattie Sportsmanship Award. A check for \$2,000 is awarded to the top rated school; \$1,000 to the runner-up; and \$500 for third. The money is awarded to reward those schools for exemplary efforts to promote sportsmanship throughout the school and community.

Features

Some important features of the plan include:

- Sportsmanship, appropriate behavior, and crowd control are addressed and enforced in a positive way. Emphasis is on sportsmanship "winners".
- Students and spectators are actively involved in the process. By exhibiting appropriate behavior and cheering in a positive way, students and spectators have an active role in helping their school win both team awards and cash awards.
- Referees are an important part of the process, and they join school officials in promoting high levels of sportsmanship at athletic contests. The role of the game official is accorded a higher level of respect.
- Schools have equal opportunity to respond and submit ratings.
- While ratings are necessarily subjective, the sportsmanship award is ultimately based on objectivity as point totals determine winners.

I am confident that the Sportsmanship Award Program will continue to be a success and that the program makes clear the MCPS commitment to ethics and positive, time-honored ideals relating to sportsmanship, respect, and fair play. However, the program's success is contingent upon the commitment of many people. Your careful consideration and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Jeffrey K. Sullivan
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