

Navigating The Politics Of Youth Sports by Janis Meredith

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<http://www.JBMThinks.com>

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Navigating The Politics Of Youth Sports by Janis Meredith

About the Author

I am Janis B. Meredith, sports mom and coach's wife.

I was brought up in a family who loved sports, married a man who has coached for 28 years and have had three kids play from age 4 to college.

I see sports a bit differently, with a view from both sides of the bench.

As a communications specialist and freelance writer, my kids are now 27,24, and 21. All three played sports in college: softball, football, and volleyball.

I am also a certified parent life coach.

A few years ago, I started [JBM Thinks Sportsparenting](http://www.jbmthinks.com), a website that is for parents of athletes. I want to help parents guide their children to get the most of their sports experience. Sports should be more than just a game. More than wins and losses. More than stats and scholarships. Competition provides a perfect setting for character growth.

I've seen just about everything in youth sports—good and bad. And I feel strongly about helping parents and young athletes build character through the athletic experience.

Playing sports brings excitement and recognition. It may even help pay for college and open doors for the future. But nothing will ever be more important than the type of person your son or daughter becomes in the process.

In four years of blogging, my audience has grown to include thousands of parents and coaches around the world.



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What is Youth Sports Politics?

The dictionary definition of *politics* includes the idea that someone deals with people in an opportunistic, manipulative or devious way for some kind of advancement.



When you apply the term politics to the youth sports world, you are saying that someone--coach, player, parent, league owner or school administrator--is dealing with people in a manipulative way for some sort of advancement or personal reason. Politicking is an activity not just reserved for politicians; but for those who behave with the motivation of promoting themselves--or in the youth sports world, their children.

So when you accuse someone of playing politics in the youth sports world, you are saying that they are behaving in a way that is solely for some sort of personal advancement or satisfaction. This may translate into a coach who cares only about having a winning team, or into a parent who wants to see their child play on the best team and get the playing time and recognition that child “deserves.”

Youth sports politics include a large list of behaviors perceived by parents to be *political*:

- Coaches choosing kids to play on a team for reasons not based on their skill.
- Coaches choosing kids for their team because they played for a certain club team.
- Coaches favoring kids and giving them more playing time based on who their parents are or how they are connected to someone on the team or in the league, like another coach’s child or an administrator’s child.

But I think we can simplify the definition of “youth sports politics” by saying that it is anything you feel is unfair in youth sports, anything that in your perception is not based on the skill of the athlete, but on other factors having nothing to do with ability or athleticism.

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From what I've been hearing on my Facebook fan page and website, parents are really tired of the politics.

“Coaches get fired over personality conflicts with administrators. Parents run coaches out of town because their system isn't exciting enough. Parents run for office as booster club members to protect their selfish agendas“ (Frustrated Mom)

“So tired of the BS that goes on in youth sports....Ability means nothing anymore!!! So aggravated!! Worst is having to try to explain to the kid why he/she didn't make the team....but Dad, I am better than some of the kids who made the team....what can you tell them? Sorry kid life just isn't fair....what else can you tell them! All depends of who you are and who you know! “ (Angry Dad)

“When parents gang up on a coach: I don't know if it's "political" but one of the things I have seen multiple times is the ganging up by a group of parents against a volunteer coach. And in our town, it was always the

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same group against the same coach. Really sad displays of sportsmanship by adults in front of their kids“ (Fed-up Parent)

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Why is There Politics in Youth Sports?

Youth sports has been taken over by adults who perhaps have a different agenda than the kids do. That's the answer in a nutshell.

But let's look a bit deeper at why politics exist in youth sports. If we start with the fact that youth sports has been kidnapped by the adults who want to control every aspect of it, then we must then ask, what is motivating these adults to do so?

I believe that parents take over--and thus cause the upheaval and "political" maneuvering for these reasons:

- They do it out of love. Love is hopefully the underlying factor behind all parental behavior because we want the best for our children. Perhaps the definition of "best" is skewed, but love is hopefully the driving force.
- They try to recreate the past. Often, Mom or Dad was a star athlete and hopes to see their child have the same success.
- They try to correct the past. Or Mom or Dad may not have been successful in sports and is living vicariously through a child's youth sports experience.
- They let youth sports be an ego booster. Seeing a child do well in sports should make mom or dad proud, but when that pride morphs into an identify for the parent, it's gone awry. Your child's success in sports should not define who you are as a person.
- They want to shield kids from blame. It's the coach's fault, the league's fault, a teammate's fault. Deflecting blame never resolves the issue, it just makes you feel justified for your craziness.
- They want to protect their kids. Being protective is a life-long parental instinct, but just because you feel protective doesn't mean you always have to act on it. As kids mature, the protective bubble around them should evaporate.

I believe that trying to deal with the politics in youth sports starts with a simple step:
Seek to Understand.

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Seeking to understand what motivates parents and coaches to politicize youth sports will not solve the problem, but it will help you learn to deal with it better.

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One Fact You Should Probably Accept

As much as I hate to admit this, there is probably not a lot you can do to stamp out politics in youth sports. Going on a crusade to change the behavior of every parent in your league or town or even on your team is probably going to be a lost cause. For the very simple reason that people will not change unless they see a need or have a desire to change. That's the kind of change that comes from the inside, not from someone pressuring them on the outside.

However, that does not mean that you must participate in it and it does not mean that you can't be a positive voice in the midst of the negativity.

Politics in youth sports is probably not going away any time soon. So the question for you as parents is not how can you eradicate it, but how can you navigate the messiness?

For the rest of this report, I will focus on what you and your child's response needs to be towards youth sports politics. A response that hopefully will be the catalyst for change.

After all, it only takes one spark to get a fire going. You can be the positive spark by responding and reacting to the mess in a way that motivates others to do the same.



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What's a Parent's Best Response Towards Youth Sports Politics?

Find out the coach's expectations before the season starts.

The best way to avoid confrontation/politics is to know rules and expectations ahead of time. If your child misses practice because he's sick or has to go to the doctor, what's the policy on playing? What is the coach's philosophy on playing time? What is his policy for pickup and drop-off at practice? Are there any rules you as the parent are expected to abide by? The more you know in advance about how the season should go the fewer surprises you'll be in for. If they have written down their policies, you can always pull those rules out should they not be following their own guidelines!

Get all the facts.

Accept that there is always another side (or two or three) to every story. Rarely is anything exactly as it seems. It's always hard to sort out the facts from the hurt feelings, jealousy, and opinions on playing ability. Do your homework before you create a scene over a perceived political situation that may or may not even exist.

Don't vent in front of the kids.

If your child hears your frustration about the political situation on the team, he will be affected. It will taint his feelings toward his coach, his teammates, and other parents.

Stay away from sympathy groups.

Sympathy groups are parents who stand around and complain. Misery loves company and if parents feel their kids aren't getting the playing time/recognition they deserve, they will most likely start talking on the sidelines and in the stands. They may look for allies, and other parents will be the first targets. If you don't want to get involved in the politics of youth sports than don't get sucked into another parents' drama. If they have a legitimate concern/complaint, encourage them to take it up with the coach or administrator.

Let it be known that you are for every kid and that you support the coach, even if you don't agree with him. If you vocalize your positive support, parents may leave you out of their drama because they know you will not support the junk.

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What is the best response for your child to have towards youth sports politics?

Unfortunately, youth sports is no different than other areas of life. Politics are played everywhere, so it's a good idea for kids to learn how to deal with the drama. Here's some ways that you can teach your child to deal with the politics.

- Encourage him to give his best for every game and practice so he can fulfill his commitment to his team. When a player thinks that his playing time and position are determined by politics rather than athletic ability, he might lose motivation and not care about giving his best effort.
- Tell your child to play for himself, for his team, for a higher purpose (our kids played to please God), rather than trying to please the coach or get the recognition.
- Let your child know that he needs to speak up for himself. If your child is frustrated with playing time, with the position he is playing, remind him that this is his battle and stay out of the fray. Hopefully the coach will respect your child's initiative and give him a chance to change things. Of course, if your child is being bullied, it's time to step in.
- Both you and your child need to ignore the drama and just focus on the game.
- Help your child focus on the things he can change about his game, the things he can improve upon, and not dwell on the things he cannot change.
- Remind your child that he needs to be a team player, and that he's not on the team to make himself look good. He's on the team to make the TEAM look good, regardless of whether or not he likes every one of his teammates.
- Help your child understand that he has two choices: Adapt to the circumstance you've been given and find a way to add value to the team (find a different position, etc.) or find a way to PROVE, through action, that he makes the team better when he is on the field. We always told our kids: Be the kind of player that your coach wants to keep in the game. Be indispensable. Those choices allow for your child to take control over the circumstance they are faced with and doesn't expect the environment to adapt to their wants.

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Political Troubleshooting:

How can you beat the politics and still have an enjoyable and good season?

Somehow, somehow, you, as a parent must rise above the political garbage that is around you. These are some complaints expressed by parents who follow JBM Thinks. Perhaps you can relate. What should be done if you are facing any of these very specific scenarios?

There are so many cliques in our sports league (or organization)

The longer your child plays sports, the more likely you and he will run into this. Cliques, for some reason make people feel like they are part of something important. It's human nature, I suppose to want to feel like you belong, and are in the "in" crowd.

How do you fight against cliques in youth sports?

First, cliques only have power over you if you let them. And so, my advice is to not let them! Don't get sucked into the thinking that you have to "fit in" or that your child has to play on a certain team to get noticed or that in order to succeed, he must play "elite."



Second, do first and foremost what is best for your child's growth and development. Who cares what other parents are doing or saying? Don't get sucked into an elitist mindset.

Third, ignore the immaturity of cliquish parents and encourage your child to play his best, regardless of the sideline circus. You and your child need to focus on what you can change--skill improvement, attitude--and not what you can't change--the snobbish groups of parents and players who will let you know, perhaps very politely, that you are not really part of "the group."

Fourth, if you run into snobbery when you're traveling on the road and other parents and/or players don't include you in their cliques, then find something else fun for you and your child to do. Let those snobs know that you don't need them to enjoy yourselves.

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Bottom line: When it comes to dealing with cliques in youth sports: ignore them, take the high road, and focus on the game. And maybe next season, ask around about a team's reputation before you sign up.

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When a coach's or administrator's kid gets special treatment

This is more likely to happen at the lower levels in sports. I had one mom write in and tell me what happened to her son when it came time for the all-star team to be chosen:

I had parents come up to me and ask in wonder why my son didn't make the all-star team even though he had the most RBI's, the lowest ERA as a reliever and had hit several home runs. His Dad isn't a coach. In fact, we were both at tryouts at 8am on a Sunday and they already knew who was on the team!

Is this fair? Of course not! But my advice on this one is to hang in there. If your kids are good, they will make the team when they get older. Coaches at higher levels want to win and are highly unlikely to choose players for the team just because they are coaches' kids.

This is not to say it doesn't happen in high school. I remember one player who was shown favoritism in basketball because his dad was one of the coaches and an ex-MLB player on top of that. His kid was selfish, arrogant, lazy on defense, slow on offense, and the best thing going for him was his 3-point shot. Why did he get moved up to the next level above his classmates a year early? Why did he start? Why did he get so much playing time? It certainly wasn't because of his amazing talent.

It frustrated the crap out of us, but we knew that for our son's sake, we had to let it go and just encourage him to play his best, regardless.

Complaining about it sounds petty, and it's highly unlikely that anyone will listen to you anyway.

Bottom line: When it comes to coaches' kids and administrators' kids getting favored treatment: Ignore them, take the high road, and focus on your game.

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When coaches play “favorites” because they seem to like a player better

This type of favoritism may have nothing to do with who the child’s mom or dad is, and in fact, the child may have no influential connections at all.

But it has become obvious to your child and maybe to other players and parents that the coach has picked a pet and may even be blind to his or her mistakes.

All three of my kids played with favored athletes at certain points in their careers. And as a parent it is very frustrating to watch a player get what you perceive as “special” treatment.

The coach may be doing this for any number of reasons:

- He sees something in the athlete that makes him feel the team needs him on the court or field, perhaps more than other players.
- He labeled the kid early on as skilled or a “player” and seems blind to consistent mistakes he is making (if he is indeed making them)
- The athlete has found a way to please the coach, and so the coach likes him. He may just be a coachable kid, or he may be a “suckup”, as his teammates would say.

You may never figure out the coach’s reasoning, but in all honesty, this situation should not affect your child’s play.

Your child needs to play his best, work hard, and seek to understand the coach and what he wants. Let’s face it, you or he cannot change the situation.

Bottom Line: When any athlete gets favored treatment: Ignore it, take the high road, and focus on your game.

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When a coach gives into parental pressure

It's frustrating when a coach reinforces a parent's whiny behavior by giving into the pressure.

I saw this over and over throughout the years. Maybe you can relate:



- Mom and dad corner the high school varsity women's basketball coach after a game in the gym and get into a heated discussion with the coach about their daughter's playing time. Many observe the altercation and they also notice too in the next game how suddenly their daughter is playing a lot more. This happened on my daughter's team.
- Mom complains to the junior varsity volleyball coach because her libero-playing daughter is not getting much playing time behind my daughter who happens to be the starting libero for the team. The coach gives in and decides to give the backup libero a lot more playing time, which results in poor team play the next few games. (However, the girls told the coach they played better with my daughter in the game, so she was reinstated as starting libero once again!)
- A high school varsity basketball dad complains to the coach on my son's team about his kid's playing time in a heated email and even goes to the administration with his complaint. The coach gives in and puts the athlete in the game more often just to placate the dad.

Fortunately, most of the coaches I've known over the years did not give into parental whining. My husband, football coach for 28 years and softball coach for 10, never let a parent's complaint change his coaching philosophy or strategy. But in the rare case when it appears that a loud-mouthed complaining parent bends the coach's ear and manages to influence him to play his kid more, I can only feel sad for the kid. His parents are fighting his battles for him and contrary to what they think, they are not doing him any favors.

My husband and I were not *those* parents. And besides, our kids never ever wanted us to complain to the coach when they were struggling about playing time.

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“I don’t want the only reason that I’m playing more to be because my parents complained,” my youngest daughter once said. Like her two older siblings, she wanted to *earn* her time.

When you see coaches giving in to parental pressure, it may be a good opportunity for you to talk to your kid about *him* fighting his own battles and how much stronger he will be for it. Encourage him to keep working hard, and remind him that any time he plays will be because he has worked hard to earn it.

Beyond that, there’s really nothing you should do. You *can* complain to the coach or the administration, but then you wouldn’t be much better than the whining parent you are complaining about.

Bottom Line: Swallow your frustration, focus on your kid’s play. Ignore it, take the high road, and focus on your game.

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When kids who play for elite or particular teams get preferred treatment

Perhaps you felt that panic. You hear about a team that all the talented players are on or that the school coach is coaching. Or maybe you know of an elite team that your child absolute *must* be on in order to not get “left behind” or even to “get noticed.”

I know I’ve felt pressured as a parent to be sure my kids were on the best teams, the teams that gave them the best opportunity for success. But sometimes it’s just not possible to be on those teams. Maybe your kid doesn’t get asked or doesn’t make the team. Or perhaps you simply can’t afford the ridiculous costs that some travel teams are charging.

So then, what happens? Sadly, sometimes you stand by and watch kids who did play on those “chosen” teams get what you see as preferred treatment.

Perhaps the school coach coached a traveling team and your child was not on it, so when the school team starts up, your child may not be on the coach’s radar like the other players are. Or maybe your school coach knows that certain players played on elite teams and therefore automatically gives them preferential treatment.

This is youth sports “politics” with a capital P. It’s wrong, but unfortunately in many schools and leagues, you simply can’t fight the system. It is what it is. So what do you do?

Your child has a choice when he feels he is being treated like he is not good enough; as New England Patriot’s wide receiver and punt returner Julian Edelman says, “There are only two things you can do when someone says you are not good enough. You can prove ‘em right. Or you can prove ‘em wrong.”

Yes, your child may have to work harder to get noticed. No, it’s not fair.

Don’t let your child use the excuse that he needs to be playing for the elite teams to have a chance. If he’s skilled and determined, he will earn his time.

Don’t feel sorry for your child because he’s not on those teams. Feel sorry for the parents who spend thousands of dollars to have their kids on teams, hoping they will get a D-1 scholarship.

Bottom Line: Don’t buy the line that your child has to play elite to be successful. Tell your child to ignore it, take the high road, and focus on your game.

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When younger players get better playing time than older kids

This is a blow to the ego, your child's *and* yours, plain and simple. No athlete likes to admit that a younger player may be more skilled than he is.

I can't speak for every scenario, but most of the time when a younger player gets more playing time--apart from being a coach's or administrator's kid--it is because he is more skilled or at least a harder worker. *Most* of the time, it probably has nothing to do with politics.

So if that's the case, and the younger child gets more playing time or gets moved up ahead of your child, it's a challenge to your child to keep him on his toes, to keep him working and reaching for his goals.

This happened to my daughter in high school. She was playing catcher on the junior varsity softball team and her backup catcher, who was a year younger than her, got moved up to varsity when one of the catchers on varsity got injured.

This made no sense to me and although I didn't go storming to the varsity coach about it, I did ask him once in a casual conversation, *why?*

He told me it was because he wanted my daughter to get all the playing time she could on JV to prepare her for varsity the next year. He explained that the younger catcher he brought up would not get a lot of playing time and he didn't want to move my daughter up for that very reason.

I knew there was absolutely nothing political about the move because I knew her parents and they were simply not the political type. So I had to believe him. I don't know, maybe he was just trying to placate me, but I accepted his answer and we finished the season with my daughter running the team from behind home plate and getting lots of game time.

So before you go getting all upset that a younger player gets more playing time or gets moved up, try to look at the situation objectively. Is the child really skilled? A real hustler in the game?

And even if you never get the answers to your question, quite honestly, it's really not your problem. It is what it is and political or not, there's nothing you can do about it. Complaining will only lower you to the level of other whining parent.

If your child is frustrated, let him vent, then remind him that his best line of defense is to let his game do his talking.

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Bottom line: Reach out and encourage the younger athlete; it won't be easy for him being younger and having the pressure. Tell your child to ignore it, take the high road, and focus on his game.

When the coach doesn't treat every kid on the team equally (yells more at some)

Although this feeling is often skewed by parental bias, it still can be somewhat true that a coach doesn't seem to be treating all the players on the team equally.

I felt that way when each of my kids played sports. My daughter's softball coach, my son's football and basketball coach, and my youngest daughter's volleyball coach. I often felt that the coach was chewing out my kids more than the other players. I shared my frustration with my husband, coach for 28 years, and he gave me a little different perspective.

He said that often a coach will push certain players because he feels they are capable of more. On the other hand, he may go easier on other players who he feels have already reached their peak.

Another reason a coach may treat players differently, is because he knows that every kid responds to different types of motivation.

Some kids need to be pushed; others need to be simply encouraged. If a coach is in tune to his players, he will know what tactic to use with each athlete.

So you see, the issue of why the coach is treating kids differently on the team may not be a matter of "politics" at all. Think about that before you jump to conclusions.

Bottom line: Tell your child to ignore it, take the high road, and focus on his game.

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When a player doesn't get punished for breaking the rules just because he's a good player

Every coach wants to win. Some live in fear of losing their jobs if they don't win enough, especially in upper levels of sports. So when a coach finds an athlete that proves to be a huge asset to the team, an athlete that can truly make a difference between winning and losing, he will do all he can to be sure that child can play.

I've seen coaches fight for the players' grades by talking to the teachers. I've seen coaches bend the "rules" just a tad so their star athlete doesn't have to miss a game or at least not much of a game. I've seen kids break the rules, yet not get caught by a coach or administrator, even though everyone knows the player was at a party drinking on Saturday night.

This is just plain wrong. No player should be above the rules, I don't care how talented he is. As Coach Wooden learned when he forgot his team uniform and sent a teammate home to get it for him before the game, there are some things more important than winning. Wooden's coach benched him anyway, even though it was evident the team needed him on the court.

If your child is the one who breaks the rules, don't fight it. Let him suffer the consequences of his actions. He's got to learn the fallout from bad choices.

But if it the player in the wrong is your child's teammate, what should you do? Go to the coach and "tattle?" This is a sticky situation. My kids told me several times of things that kids did to break rules and that they didn't get caught. However, I never went and told the coach because I didn't consider myself the Team Policewoman.

It's a different situation altogether when the coach knows about the infraction and chooses to bend the rules for the player, just so he can play in the game. As a parent, what should you do then?

You have several choices:

- Talk to the coach and confront him about his willingness to bend the rules.
- Talk to the administrator about the coach's behavior.
- Start a petition with parent's names who disagree with the coach's decision.
- Talk to the player and his parents about the example they are setting.
- Leave it alone, and talk to your child about the situation.

I've seen all of these happen. And the problem with the first four choices is that they do nothing to help your child. Unless there is a moral or abusive situation, complaining to

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the coach or the administrator or confronting the guilty athlete and his parents is paramount to “tattling”, something we despise in our kids.

And what does your child learn when you “tattle?” He sees it as a way to solve his problems. A lesson that will come back to slap him in the face later in life if he tries it in his workplace.

The best--albeit the hardest--way to deal with this type of situation, is simply to leave it alone and instead talk to your child about what’s going on and what is the right thing that the coach and player *should* be doing. Your child will not become a better player if you start butting in and become the sports parenting police. But he *will* be a better player if he learns right from wrong and the meaning of integrity.

Bottom line: As long as the behavior does not threaten a child’s safety, as long as it is not abusive or immoral, tell your child to ignore it, take the high road, and focus on his game.

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When parents coach just to be sure their child makes the team.

One parent shared this scenario with me: *A travel team from my local little league has 7 coaches! This means that there are only 4 or 5 open spots on the team for deserving players. What are the odds that all 7 coaches having boys that are more deserving than others?*

I'd say the odds are pretty slim. But it will happen and the question is, how should you handle it?

First, I'd say, get some more options for teams. Call around, investigate, and get the information you need to make a list of your options. There's *got* to be more than one for your child. And consider a non-traveling alternative for your child. Travel teams are not the only way for a child to improve his skills and get playing time.

Second, if you decide to go ahead and try out for that team, talk to the coaches and ask for their honest evaluation on

who will make the team.

Third, if you want to get some answers or be an agent of change in this situation, then ask for a meeting with the league leaders and explain to them the situation. This problem needs to be resolved at a higher level. What kind of a league allows this ridiculous scenario? In my humble opinion, no little league team needs 7 coaches!

In your meeting with the league leaders, let your voice be heard as one who wants to do what is best for all kids, not just your own. Offer a few ideas on how to resolve the situation: form more than one team, cut down on coaches, etc.

Bottom line: There's more than one way for your child to play sports. Be open to other options. And most of all, you and your child need to ignore the political maneuvering of these "coaches", take the high road, and focus on the game.

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Politics in Youth Sports: A Coach's Perspective

I'd like to share some words from my friend, author, coach, and dad [Kirk Mango](#).

He says this about youth sports politics:

Bias enters into the decision making process at all levels....and yes....especially with the parents. Let me give an example:

I had a discussion with a parent one time about a head soccer coach at the school where I taught at. The coach was playing a younger player over her son because he played for the supposed "preferred" club. Her belief was that her son was better and should be getting more playing time. Now I know the coach; I know his value system, and one thing is for sure, if he believed that the younger player was better and brought more to the table for the team, he would play that player over the older player on the Varsity level.

Being an outsider looking in, I suspected the bias of the parent kept her from seeing what the coach saw in this situation. AND I should point out that their child had some issues (code violation for marijuana use)....that occurred a while after our conversation. There may have been more to the coach's decision than simply what the parent thought.

Good coaches, at the varsity level, are going to put the best players on the field, regardless of their age. There are reasons for doing this other than simply winning, even though that certainly is a factor at that level. It makes no sense to play players from "one club" over another simply because of the club; there is usually another reason (like they are better) if that is done.

As a parent of athletes, I made it a point to teach that the sporting environment is not always going to seem fair and that if a coach is not playing you than he or she believes (right or wrong) that someone else is better.

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Coach Mango's words may not be what you want to hear, but I believe that what we often perceive as "politics" is merely our skewed understanding of the situation.

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Here are Your Options When You Run into the Politics

If you really want to change things, it might be worth looking into volunteering as a coach for the next season, or maybe even joining the league board. Granted, getting really involved means dealing with more drama, but sometimes it's easier to prevent drama from the inside out!

Kids need to understand that sometimes, life isn't fair.

Parents have a hard time in situations where their kids may be getting unfairly handled, but it is very important we hide our intense feelings about the situation from our kids.

Stop labeling everything as “politics”.

That word gets thrown around so much that it's almost lost its meaning. It's become a catch-all word to explain any perceived slight or a convenient alibi to gloss over an athlete's shortcomings. It's often easier to scream *politics!* than admit that maybe my son or daughter isn't as skilled as I thought. Chances are that when you ask someone what they mean when they complain about the league or team's politics, you will get an ambiguous answer from a parent who is merely unhappy about their child's role in the program.

Don't let the politics beat you and rob you or your child of the fun of playing.

That's really the bottom line. You can choose not to let the politics rob your or your child of the joy of playing sports. It is always going to crop up. You may be lucky to go one season or even a whole year without any political problems, but it will inevitably return to frustrate you.

You will probably never eradicate the problem, so here's only way to successfully navigate the politics in youth sports:

Ignore it, take the high road, and focus on the game.

Navigating The Politics Of Youth Sports by Janis Meredith

How To Work With Janis

Are you or your child struggling with a problem in youth sports right now?

I would love to help you sort through it.

If you sign up for one session of mentor consulting, I will be yours for one hour. I will listen, ask, and offer wisdom learned from 21 years of sports parenting, 28 years of being a coach's wife, and 27 years of being a parent.

For \$97 you will not only get an hour of mentor consulting from me, but you will also get 30 days of followup email coaching!

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