



Shakopee Mat Club

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship begins with the Coaches, Board Members, Team Technicians and Parents. If we provide good examples of sportsmanship, the Team will generally follow. For Coaches, sportsmanship has a deeper meaning. It means prioritizing ethics and honesty over winning, which includes teaching it this way. A “cheat to win” philosophy can never be a good one, no matter how many championships are won. Therefore, this is a fundamental which will never be compromised.

For younger kids lapses in sportsmanship are common. They often derive their sense of self worth solely through victory and defeat, rather than through their ability to rebound, set goals and work hard. They are in the process of developing their own views regarding sportsmanship right before our eyes. With this in mind, we will undoubtedly expect some “learning events” along the way. It is our job to provide them with the necessary tools to resolve these issues in a more constructive manner.

- As in Wrestling *or* life, always follow the rules of the game, even if you have to lose in order to do so. “Winners don’t cheat, cheaters don’t win”.
- Win with dignity, lose with grace. Always shake hands with your opponent and his/her Coach. No matter the outcome, be respectful.
- It is okay and normal to feel upset after a loss, but maintain your composure...keep it together!
- Spend as little time as possible “beating yourself up” after a loss. It really does not help...and makes you feel worse. Rather, redirect these negative thoughts into a *positive* force. Learn from the experience, set new goals and do the things that are necessary, on a daily basis, to achieve them.

Good manners and good sportsmanship are free. Both pay dividends!