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## FCA ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

### ATHLETIC THEME VERSES

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” (Colossians 3:23)

“Do you not know that in a race all runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.” (1 Corinthians 9:24-25)

“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13)

### MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission and purpose of the First Christian Academy (FCA) Athletics Program to serve as partners with students and parents in providing a positive athletic experience consistent with biblical truth, using athletic involvement as a tool to teach lessons for life.

### PURPOSE of ATHLETICS at FCA

The overall purpose of the athletic program at FCA is to do our very best and “work heartily” (Colossians 3:23a) for the Lord (Colossians 3:23b). The first part is our action, and the second is our motivation. The end result will ultimately be to bring honor and glory back upon the Lord Jesus Christ by:

- Promoting the biblical definition of “winning.”
  - To work heartily (action - Colossians 3:23a) for the Lord (motivation -Colossians 3:23b).
  - Physical winning (scoreboard) - “all runners run, but only one receives the prize. So run that you may obtain it” (1 Corinthians 9:24)
  - Give thanks in all circumstances (win or lose); for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:18).
  - Praying for His guidance in striving to be a true winner. I can do all things through Him (Philippians 4:13).
- Involving the student body, parents, faculty and staff in developing school unity and spirit.
- Maintaining a clear Christian testimony to opposing schools, officials and others in the public with whom we make contact through our actions and word.

### OBJECTIVES for INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS

- Development of the physical body through the varied abilities granted to each individual athlete.
- Development of the attributes of God which include integrity (2 Corinthians 8:21), self-control (Proverbs 25:28), obedience (Ephesians 6:5), humility (Luke 18:14), love (Galatians 6:10), dedication (Proverbs 20:6), self-denial (Philippians 2:4), patience (Colossians 3:12-13), forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32), thankfulness (Psalms 100:4-5), contentment (1 Timothy 6:6) and selflessness.
- Application of good sportsmanship by the demonstration of the following:
  - Self-control. The one who humbles himself will be exalted (Proverbs 25:28)
  - Respect for the officials at all times.
  - Knowledge, application and appreciation of the rules of the game.
  - Respect for the opposition at all times.
  - Recognition of an appreciation for skilled performance regardless of affiliation.

### EFFECTIVE PARENT/COACH/PLAYER RELATIONS at FCA

- Love one another. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

- Respect each other. “Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.” (Romans 12:10)
- Pray for each other. “On Him we have set our hope that He will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.” (2 Corinthians 1:10b-11)
- With full recognition of and respect for parental responsibility under God, it must be kept in mind that, for athletic participation, parents have delegated the responsibility and authority for the young person to the coach. “Hands-on” delegation is not acceptable. There will be a direct/indirect impact on the young person if things like the following occur:
  - Parental coaching “from the stands.” This can only be detrimental. A coach needs the full attention and concentration of his/her players. During a practice or game, the athlete needs to demonstrate loyalty to the coach. Uninvited parental intervention during these times is a serious distraction and is detrimental to the team and to the athletic program.
  - Parents negatively approaching the coach or their student athlete on the bench during the game, at half time or immediately after a game prior to the post-game team meeting is unacceptable. A coach should be able to expect full support from both player and parent. If a parent wants to talk to the coach, he should call him/her the next day (cool down period).
- How do parents get their questions answered or give input?  
Those parents desiring to have input should use the proper communication channels and procedures such as found in Matthew 18:15-20. If a parent believes that their concern/input is not heard or sufficiently responded to by the coach first, then they may proceed through proper channels by talking with the head coach of the particular sport, the athletic director, and the FCA headmaster, in that order, until the matter has been handled satisfactorily. Proper deference should be shown toward the coach by scheduling an appointment to discuss concerns in private when he/she can offer you their undivided attention. Unless there are unusual circumstances that dictate immediate attention, the athletic director and headmaster are here for everyone, but they will not be able to entertain matters unless the parent has first gone to the primary coach where the problem lies.
- Support is expected.  
It is reasonable to expect that any parent who has permitted his/her young person to come out for a team should be supportive of the coach. Well-placed constructive criticism given privately to a coach is welcomed, but simply airing negative opinions to others (including children) should not be done.
- Each coach will have the full responsibility and authority to determine when players are entered into the games and for how long. His/her determination in this area will be made on the basis of what will best benefit the team as a whole. This does not mean that there will be absolutely no consideration given to the individual needs of a player, but it does mean that instruction and guidance on making a total team effort is of primary significance in this particular educational experience at First Christian Academy.
- Parents are required to attend a pre-season meeting for each team in which your athlete(s) participates and sign any required paperwork. Team rules will be discussed, along with sizing and ordering of additional athletic apparel.
- Parents must volunteer a minimum of 2 hours per family per sport in which their child participates. The hours may, but do not have to be worked in the sport your child is participating in, but can be served during another sport season. For example, if your child runs cross country and plays volleyball, that is a total of 4 hours which must be served. They can be served during cross country and volleyball, or they could be served during basketball and baseball, etc.) Volunteer hours can be through working the admissions gate for any home event,

- concession stand for any home event, cleaning up the facilities after any home games, or special athletic program projects such as the Awards Banquet or facility/equipment upgrades. You may opt out of this by paying a fee of \$50 per hour or a total of \$100 for 2 hours. If the hours are not completed by the end of the school year, fees will be added to the student's account. Remember that these hours can be completed during any sport during the school year.
- FCA reserves the right to place an athlete on probation, suspend for all or part of a game/match, or dismiss them from the team if the athlete or parent of the athlete are uncooperative or non-supportive of the FCA Athletic Program. This includes, but is not limited to coaches, officials, and volunteers. A parental conference would precede any dismissal.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE FCA ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

- Varsity Level. "Varsity" is the most highly organized and intense level of FCA sports. It is made up of high school students. Occasionally and currently, as FCA athletics continue to grow, exceptional underclassmen may be used to fill out the varsity teams. Players are placed on varsity teams based on merit, ability and potential, not age. At this level, players will learn what it means to fill a role, and sacrifice themselves to make the team better. Individual skill development will be sacrificed at times for the good of the team.

The goals of our varsity level teams are:

- To glorify God
- To win games
- To develop skills.

- Junior Varsity Teams are made up of high school athletes. Typically, JV teams are 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, with possibly a few juniors. However, at FCA, as we build our program we may have 6<sup>th</sup> grade through 11<sup>th</sup> grade players on the junior varsity team. Seniors will only play JV in rare situations such as playing out of conference games against larger school's JV teams.

Junior Varsity level goals are:

- To glorify God
- To develop skills for the varsity team
- To win
- To have fun

- Middle School Teams are the youngest level of teams at FCA. It is comprised of 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Middle school athletes are commonly interested in having fun as well, and accomplishing our team goals will result in having fun. Middle school players are not guaranteed playing time. It is important to remember that practices are just as instrumental in accomplishing team goals as their actual games.

Goals for middle school teams are:

- To glorify God
- To develop skills and learn the game
- To have fun
- To win

#### **ASSOCIATION and LEAGUE AFFILIATIONS of the FCA ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

- FCA is currently a member of the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) as an independent and a member of the Sunshine Christian League (SCL) competing in the North Florida Division. The SCL consists of Florida and Georgia private schools.
- All athletic contests are operated under the rules and regulations governing that sport by the National Federation of High School Athletics, FHSAA and the SCL.

- All officials used in home games for FCA are currently certified by the National Federation of High School Athletics, FHSAA and/or the Sunshine Christian League in that sport. FCA will never knowingly use an official who is uncertified in a sport. If an official who is affiliated with First Christian Academy will be used to officiate a home game, the opposing school will be notified 48 hours or more prior to the contest to provide for an opportunity to object.

#### **Sports that are currently offered at FCA through FHSAA/SCL**

Girls Cross Country	(FHSAA)
Boys Cross Country	(FHSAA)
Girls Volleyball	(FHSAA and the SCL)
Girls Basketball	(FHSAA and the SCL)
Boys Basketball	(FHSAA and the SCL)
Boys Baseball	(FHSAA)
Girls Archery	(OAS)
Boys Archery	(OAS)

#### **ATHLETIC FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT CARE**

- Expectation and Responsibility: God has made us the stewards of fine athletic facilities. It is necessary to keep these facilities in the best possible condition for longer service to our ministry. We ask all who use or enjoy our facilities to help keep them clean and maintained for God's glory. The following will give a description of the facilities and guidelines to follow in their use:

##### Indoor facilities:

- Gymnasiums (FCA and the Family Life Center "FLC")
- Athletic and Physical Education equipment storage
- Multipurpose/Weight Room (Future/coming/equipment is here)

##### Outdoor facilities:

- Multi-purpose outdoor field behind the FCA/FLC gymnasiums
- Progress Park and the High Springs Community Baseball fields
- Athletic equipment storage

- Facilities/field/equipment care:
  - All damage to facilities or equipment should be reported to the headmaster/athletic director or to a coach as soon as possible.
  - No athlete will be allowed in the athletic office or in the equipment storage areas without the consent of the FCA headmaster, athletic director and/or a coach.
  - All equipment/facilities shall be handled with the utmost of respect (no hanging on rims/nets, backboard braces, soccer goals; no sitting on balls, no climbing and jumping from bleachers etc.)
  - Use of equipment should be limited to the sport for which it is intended.
  - All equipment should be returned to the proper storage area after use.
- Uniforms are to receive the utmost care. Any damage to or loss of uniforms will be the responsibility of the athlete to whom it was issued. In order to replace the lost uniform item, the athlete will be required to pay all replacement fees to include screen set-up fees and shipping cost.
  - Uniforms are to be cleaned after each game. The coach will inform both parents and students what method of cleaning should be used in order to protect the quality of the uniform. Also, we all understand that athletes do sweat and uniforms can become odorous. Maintaining proper hygiene is vitally important when it comes to the health, morale, welfare and safety of the team. The coach will approach and or make contact with both parent and student if a hygiene type issue becomes a concern.

- Each Coach will ensure that all team uniforms are returned cleaned after the last game of the season. The student's school account will be billed for any uniform, in whole or in part, that is not properly cleaned or returned in a serviceable condition.
  - Once all uniforms have been returned to the coach, the coach must provide a signed inventory spreadsheet to the athletic director for accountability purposes.
- No student is allowed to play in the gymnasium or on the athletic fields during school or after school hours without adult supervision and approval given by the faculty / staff member, coach, or the athletic director in charge.
  - Students must not use the Family Life Center, except under direction of FCA staff.
  - Any athlete involved in the damaging of athletic equipment purposely or through horseplay will pay for the repairs and may receive a one-game suspension.

### **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

FCA strives to have Christian student athletes! While serving Christ, we stress FCA academics first and FCA athletics second. Initial eligibility for extracurricular activities is based on the previous quarter's work. (Academic eligibility for cross country and volleyball will be determined by the last quarter of the previous school year.) Athletes who fall below the stated requirements will be declared ineligible.

- A student may not be absent for more than 5 days (excused or unexcused) in a 9-week period to be eligible.
- Academic eligibility is checked on a quarterly basis. In order for a student to be eligible and to remain eligible, he/she must have a minimum of 70/C- grade average in each academic class, including academic elective classes and academic online classes average for that quarter.
- The Student Services Director or Athletic Director will check the report cards of athletes at each reporting period. Students who fall below the 70% grade average will be placed on athletic probation and not allowed to participate in practices or games. Grades will be checked every 3 weeks while the student is on athletic probation. If the average is brought up above a 70 and attendance requirements have been maintained, the athlete may be reinstated and able to participate in practices and games.
- The Headmaster has the right to declare any student eligible or ineligible based upon circumstances. Should the Headmaster feel that a student is falling behind in his/her work in the off-season, a review of the student's grades and progress will be conducted. This review could result in ineligibility status for that student if progress is not consistent throughout the course of the school year. This will be determined by the Headmaster.

### Age Limitations

Many of our athletic programs are available beginning in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. For many reasons, including safety and availability, age/grade limits may be enforced for specific sports. A student must be less than 19 years, 9 months old to participate in activities (FHSAA).

### Attitude

If the athletic director and/or coach determine that an athlete is not demonstrating a positive overall attitude, or if that coach receives input from academic teachers that lack of effort or bad attitude is being demonstrated in the classroom, or the student is receiving demerits or detentions, the student may either be put on probation, suspended for all or part of a game/match, or dismissed from the team.

- An athlete may forfeit athletic participation upon receiving his/her second detention. A parental conference would precede any dismissal.
- At a pre-season meeting with the parents, each coach will ask for the parents' cooperation and help in supporting the athletic goals in academics. If a parent has higher academic expectations of his/her child than FCA, FHSAA or SCL requirements, then that parent should let the coach know in advance so that the coach can fully support that parent in his/her efforts. FCA will certainly support parental desires for their student athlete

to succeed in the classroom. However, coaches, teams and individual players should not be held back due to an athlete not meeting *additional* standards. If an athlete misses more than 5 consecutive days or a total of 10 days throughout the entire season in which the team practices and/or plays, such athlete will be dismissed from the team for not meeting their team commitment agreement. The team must be able to depend on every athlete for an entire season. A parental conference would precede any dismissal.

### Athletic Handbook

No athlete will be allowed to participate in a given sport after the first week of practice at FCA until the FCA Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement Form has been signed and returned. It is essential that parents and students read the requirements and guidelines for athletic involvement at FCA.

### Athletic Participation Fees

Participation fees must be paid (\$100.00 per sport, per athlete). All participation fees must be paid at the end of the first week of practice after tryouts. Once team rosters have been announced, no player will be allowed to practice after the first week unless the participation fee has been paid to the FCA Finance Department.

### Athletic Physicals

- A current physical examination must be on file in the athletic director's office. Athletes must have a physical examination every 12 months. No athlete will be allowed to participate in a practice until a physical examination form (EL2) has been returned to FCA. The EL2 must be signed by an Authorized Physician that approves athletic participation. All other required documentation should be returned with the EL2 or by the first day of practice following tryouts. All necessary forms will be handed out at the pre-season team meetings.
- A physical/parent consent form can be obtained through the school or athletic offices.
- The physical form must be properly completed by a licensed doctor of medicine or a nurse practitioner in a written collaboration with a licensed medical doctor or a certified physician's assistant in a written collaboration with a licensed medical doctor.
- These physicals must be completed before the first practice.
- Any athlete who has been restricted by a doctor from participation because of an illness or injury any time before or during the season must secure a doctor's release to be eligible to participate again on a team/squad at FCA.
- No athlete will be allowed to participate in an athletic contest at FCA until a copy of an official birth certificate is on file. The official birth document must meet the following criteria:
  - It must be an original certified document
  - It must be obtained from the state, county, or city government in which the student was born.
  - It must include the given and surnames.
  - It must be legible and unaltered.

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

All athletes are expected to abide by attendance requirements in the FCA Parent/Student Handbook.

- All athletes must be in attendance at least 4 consecutive periods on the day of a game or practice in order to participate that afternoon or evening. A student will be counted absent from first hour after 8:15 a.m. Exceptions may be granted to this policy if the absence was due to a doctor's appointment (doctor's note required) or was pre-arranged with the FCA Office.
- If an athlete is too sick to come to school, then he/she is too sick to practice or play.
- Athletes returning late from a game will not be excused for any tardiness or from assignments or tests given the following day. Under certain circumstances the FCA Headmaster may make exceptions to this policy. Students who are absent 2 or more times on the day following an athletic competition may be suspended for all or part of the following game.
- Each athlete is responsible for assignments missed when athletic travel requires absence from a particular class. (Students should check Renweb and/or speak with their teachers regarding making up any missed assignments due to "away" trips.)

- Any athlete with excessive absences/tardiness (as defined in the Parent/Student Handbook) in a quarter may not miss an academic class to participate athletically. A student with ten or more absences, excused or unexcused, during the current or previous semester may not try out for a team. He/she may also be removed from a team of which he/she is currently a member. Exceptions to these rules must be made by the FCA Headmaster.

## **GUIDELINES for AWAY TRIPS**

### Conduct

All athletes are representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ first, their parents and family, and First Christian Academy and the athletic department. This responsibility should not be taken lightly. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves like Christian ladies and gentlemen at all times, on and off the field or floor.

- There will be no screaming or yelling on the buses or vans. Keep hands and feet inside the windows at all times. Standing and moving around on the buses should be minimal.
- Electronic equipment will be allowed to be used on the vehicles on the way to and from athletic trips at the Coach's discretion. Once the team arrives phones and other electronics must be put away.
- Seating arrangements for away trips, unless otherwise instructed, will be girls in the front of the bus, boys in the back; one seat on each side will remain open for equipment and/or coaches.
- It is policy that teams ride/sit together on the vehicles on the way to a game. If an exception needs to be made, parents should communicate/coordinate a plan with the head coach.
- Teammates must sit together while spectating the game before and/or after their game. It is the desire and expectation that every FCA athlete supports all teams and fellow students.

### Dress

We are representing Christ and FCA. Take pride in your personal appearance and look sharp at all times! The dress code for away trips will be:

- School dress for that day (On occasion, you may be able to wear your jersey with dress code pants/shorts)
- Athletics uniforms
- Athletes may change after athletic competitions, but modesty and neatness should be kept in mind. FCA staff reserves the right to determine clothing as immodest or substandard.
- Student dress at athletic events and banquets should be consistent with school policy. Expected banquet attire will be announced weeks ahead of the banquet date. Failure to meet such expectations will be monitored and addressed with the student and their parent/guardian.

### Vehicles

- Any buses or vans are to be cleaned after every trip. Do not leave trash or belongings on the bus. This is the responsibility of every athlete who rides on these vehicles.
- Always be courteous to the driver.
- Any damage done to vehicles from horseplay or carelessness will be the financial responsibility of the individual(s) who caused the damage.

### Return Trips

It is the strong preference of the school that athletes do not ride home with anyone other than the team and/or the individual athlete's parents/guardian. Although a lot of team building take place on the bus, it is understood if a parent/guardian needs their student athlete to ride home with them.

- If it is necessary to ride with someone other than parents (must be another parent or family member), a written parental note must be given and approved by the athletic director prior to departing from FCA.
- If parents will be transporting their child/children home after an away game, the parent must speak with the head coach in person and sign the child out with the coach before leaving from the sporting event/restaurant.

### Playing Time Policy

It is assumed that parents will instruct and prepare their student athlete/s for a competitive program here at FCA. All students need to understand that they may not make a team, they may not make the starting team, they may not play at all in a game, or they may not be "the star." Success is not synonymous with playing time; success is contributing to the team or squad's benefit with the abilities God has given.

- Varsity Level - the coach will choose a starting team for each game and play the best players. These players are chosen on ability and performance at practices, performance in games and cohesiveness of starting team. Substitutes will be played when an injury occurs, when a player is tired or not performing well, and possibly when there is no question about the outcome of the game. This will always be at the discretion of the coach.
- Junior Varsity Level - the coach will choose a starting team for each game and play the best players. Substitutions will be made as much as possible, while remaining competitive.
- Middle School Level – The coach will choose a starting team for each game and play the best players. Substitutions will be made as much as possible, while remaining competitive. At this level, players are to work hard and to have fun while learning.

Students will not be allowed to quit after the start of the third week of practice without a parent conference with the head coach, unless that athlete suffers from a serious injury or is seriously jeopardizing academic considerations. If a student quits a sport, the student may not participate in another sport for one year until the sport from which he/she quits begins again. The Athletic Department reserves the right to refuse participation in another sport, if the reason for quitting is deemed inappropriate. This decision will be made by the coach and athletic director (with input from the Headmaster). Sports fees will not be refunded after the third week of practice.

Athletes will not be allowed to miss any practices or games in order to participate in a different sport inside or outside of FCA. If an athlete starts a particular sport at FCA, they are expected to be at all team practices, games and meetings. They will not be allowed to start in a different sport until such season is over. Also, keep in mind that academics are first. Playing additional sports during off time requires great time management skills in order to maintain high academic standards.

### Technical Fouls/Cautions/Ejections

- Any athlete receiving an unsportsmanlike conduct in any sport, such as a technical foul in basketball, a caution in volleyball (yellow card) or a verbal caution in any other sport will immediately be removed from the contest and will remain out of the contest for a period deemed necessary by the head coach. Any athlete receiving a caution or conduct technical in two consecutive contests will be removed for the remainder of that contest and be suspended from the next scheduled contest.
- An athlete who is ejected for using personal abusive language, flagrantly or maliciously contacting another person, making obscene gestures to opponents or spectators, shall be ineligible for a minimum of the next contest to the maximum of one year depending on the seriousness of the violation. Any attempt to verbally abuse, make obscene gestures to, threaten or strike an official or member of opposing coaching staff, shall be considered a serious violation making the athlete ineligible for a minimum of the next two contests to the maximum of one year. Any action that warrants a maximum penalty will also require that the school be placed on immediate probation in that sport. The FHSAA Office and the SCL Board of Officials will review any other action(s) that result in an ejection with the possibility of additional penalties.
- Any athlete who leaves the bench area to become involved in a fracas will be disqualified from that game and will be subject to a minimum of a next game suspension depending on his or her involvement. A school whose athletes violate this bench policy will be subject to FHSAA and the SCL disciplinary actions.
- An athlete who is ejected for the second time in the same sport will have his or her athletic eligibility removed the remainder of the season. An athlete who has been ejected from three contests during a school year (all sports) shall become ineligible for the remainder of the school year. Game officials must report all player ejections so that the FHSAA and/or the SCL Office can officially notify the school of each violation. When an athlete is ejected for the second time in the same sport, the school is required to immediately begin the above prescribed penalty.

- If an athlete's play or attitude displays a direction which is contrary to the direction of the athletic program of FCA, if at the discretion of the FCA Headmaster, the Athletic Director or the Head Coach, he/she may be removed from a team or squad. A parent conference will precede this action.
- Any behavior that results in athletic disciplinary action may also result in disciplinary action in the school. This could include a minimum of after school detention to a maximum of expulsion from FCA.

### Practice

- Practices are important to each team's success and attendance will be required.
- A player should not be absent from a practice (except in the case of illness) without prior permission from his/her coach.
- Players will not be excused from practices or team responsibilities for outside jobs or other team sports. Education exceptions may be made in the case of dually-enrolled students and/or mandated tutoring needs.
- The individual coach will handle unexcused absences from a practice. Two unexcused absences may result in decreased playtime, suspension from games, or removal from the team.
- A player who is assigned a time in detention must inform his/her coach of the date of detention and the reason.

### Schedules

At the beginning of each season, game schedules will be distributed to all players and posted on the school website. Schedules will also be posted in the monthly school newsletter. Changes may occur during the season that will affect the schedule, but these will be kept to a minimum. Updates will be sent home and posted on the FCA website. Addresses will be provided for all away games and will be posted along with the game schedules on the FCA website.

### Athletic Spectator Guidelines

- Please be respectful during prayer and the National Anthem.
- Do not "boo" or make degrading remarks to any player, coach or referee/official at any time.
- Only those with official duties will be allowed in the players seating area/sideline. All others are asked to remain in the spectators' area of the field or court.
- Pick up and dispose of your own trash after games (home and away games).
- A modest and proper dress code should be adhered to at all FCA athletic events. Extremes should be avoided. Student dress at athletic events should be consistent with school policy.
- Always be courteous to the official and referees. Please do not approach an official before, during or after a game or match for any reason other than to welcome them or say "thank you" because you may be misunderstood.

Please help in any way possible with cleanup after games/matches with trash, bleacher setup, etc. Your help is greatly needed and appreciated.

### Selection of Teams/Squads

Teams (all levels): Varsity, Junior Varsity and Middle School Teams are selected by the coaching staff at the beginning of each season for each sport.

- After a set tryout period, a selection of players is made, and teams are formed by level.
- Players may be moved up from the Middle School and Junior Varsity teams to Varsity anytime during the season. This decision will be based on ability and performance at practices, performance in games and cohesiveness of the starting team.

As a general policy: Deciding the Varsity or starting team is a critical part of athletics. Coaches will strive to make the best choices they can with the wisdom God has granted them. Teams will be announced either by personal letter or direct communication.

## Awards

Awards are used in FCA athletics for two general purposes:

- a. Recognition of God-given ability and achievement
- b. Motivation

Athletic Awards are issued for Middle School, JV and Varsity sports at the FCA Annual Athletic Awards Banquet that will take place at the end of the school year (around mid-May).

- In order to be eligible for any FCA athletic award, athletes must compete and complete an entire season and school year at FCA. The FCA Headmaster can make special exceptions to this rule. Examples such as unexpected moves/health issues (but not limited to) will be taken into consideration. Each athlete must adhere to FCA Student and Athletic Handbooks and have remained in good standing with such guidelines in order to obtain any FCA Athletic Awards.
- Three of the following four awards may be given by a coach to their team. However, the specific award criteria must be met in order for an athlete to actually receive that award.

The following four awards are:

- Medallion. Each athlete will receive this award at the FCA Annual Athletic Awards Banquet.
- Varsity Letter. The requirements are:
  - 1) Be in good athletic and academic standing, complete the season and be eligible academically.
  - 2) Injured players may receive a letter if in the opinion of the head coach he/she would have participated enough had they not been injured, and also served the team while injured.
  - 3) Showed marked improvement during the season and from the previous season.
  - 4) Be of good character, a teammate, and team player.
  - 5) Attend all practices, games, meets or matches unless excused by the coach, parent, or doctor.
  - 6) Regular member of the Varsity Team.
  - 7) At the discretion of the head coach, only with the approval of the AD or Headmaster.
  - 8) Cross Country requires a runner to have competed in 50% of all Meets at the "Varsity" level
  - 9) Volleyball requires a player to have played in 50% of all matches at the "Varsity" level.
  - 10) Basketball requires that players must have played in 50% of games at the "Varsity" level
  - 11) Baseball/Softball requires that an athlete must played in 50% of games at the "Varsity" level.
  - 12) Archery requires that an archer must compete in 50% of all "Varsity" level competitions.
  - 13) Served as a manager, statistician/bookkeeper for at least two full seasons of a varsity sport.
  - 14) Any additional letters awarded to participants may be at the discretion of the coach, to be approved by the Athletic Director/Headmaster.
- Individual Sports awards - FCA is honoured and privileged to recognize our outstanding athletes for their dedication to FCA athletics and for their efforts on and off the court/field.
  - 1) Lion Pride (Varsity Only) – the winner of this award should be a "top player" who not only had a "huge" impact on the team athletically during the season but one who best "exemplifies" the attributes of Christian character, integrity, and sportsmanship. He/she should be a Christian role model for athletes on your team. This athlete must play on at the varsity level. He or she should be unselfish and committed to the team over individual performance. He or she should be willing to help out in any way that benefits the team and its members. This athlete should have a positive attitude. This athlete should display good sportsmanship and respect towards officials and opposing teams, even in the face of adverse outcomes. Likewise, the athlete should demonstrate cooperation and respect in dealing with his or her coaches and teammates. This athlete should be committed to doing what's right. The use of team statistics should be used to also help determine the winner FCA highest team sport award. Recipients receive an engraved trophy and special recognition at the banquet.
  - 2) Top Player/Top Archer (Middle School, JV and Varsity): The winner of this award will have had the largest "athletic" impact on the team during the season in a positive way. Winning this award should encompass dedication to the team, putting teammates and coaches first, maximum effort at the player's position and contribution to the team being victorious. Official game statistics should be used to

support the coach's decision; such as points per game, free throw percentage, rebounds, assists as steals, digs, aces, blocks, placing during races, batting percentages, runs scored, runs batted in, home runs, strikeouts, fielding, total score (10's), and placing at meets. Recipients receive an engraved trophy and special recognition at the banquet.

3) Coach's Award (Middle School, JV and Varsity): The winner of this award is based on a number of important factors. Among these are leadership, attitude, effort, performance, and attendance. Recipients embody excellence both on and off the field/court; they give 100% at practices, demonstrate great responsibility; and they respect the sport, their fellow athletes, and their coaches. This award provides flexibility to the coach when deciding the recipient (such as, most blocks, most pitching strikeouts, most aces, best run time or top archer individual score). Recipients receive an engraved trophy and special recognition at the banquet.

4) Most Improved (Middle School, JV and Varsity): The winner of this award will have positively increased the impact that they have had on the team from the beginning to the end of the season. This is done by improving their overall skill and level of play. However, other factors, such as dedication and attitude towards teammates and coaches are also taken into account. Recipients receive an engraved trophy and special recognition at the banquet.

- Ultimately, selecting winners for individual team awards is the responsibility of the head coach. If there is an assistant coach, the head coach will seek input from their assistant coach to help determine award recipients. The head coach will forward their nomination list to the Athletic Director.
- The Athletic Director will ensure that the award criteria has been understood and that each athlete has held up their agreement within the FCA Athletic Handbook. The Athletic Director will ensure that each potential recipient is still enrolled at FCA, that he/she is in good standing at FCA in education and character. If the head coach was not aware of an issue with a potential award recipient, the Athletic Director will make contact with the head coach to discuss and determine how to press forward. After a decision has been made through the process, the Athletic Director will forward the nominations to the FCA Headmaster for final approval.
- The FCA Headmaster will ensure that all athletic awards nominations have met FCA criteria set through both the FCA Student and Athletic Handbook and that the awards process has been fair/equal.

➤ Scholar Athlete Award (SAA) – First potential recipient will be in the class of 2018.

1) The FCA Scholar Athlete Awards are open only to the premier male and female athletes in the senior class who meet the criteria for the SAA. The students chosen to receive the Scholar Athlete Award have the highest level of character, participation, enthusiasm, discipline, loyalty, sacrifice, ability and team and individual achievements.

2) The candidate must have excelled academically with a cumulative unweighted grade point average of 3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale. The candidate must demonstrate outstanding citizenship characteristics. These may be illustrated by the candidate's activity in athletic leadership, the holding of a student body office, serving in church programs, or by participating in local community activities that have goals of good citizenship.

3) Candidates shall conduct themselves in a manner that will bring credit to the Lord Jesus Christ, First Baptist Church, FCA, the city of High Springs, his or her family and to the student.

4) Recipient must be a current member of the National Honour Society.

5) The recipient must have participated in at least four (4) seasons of FCA varsity sports. Multi-sport student athletes gain yearly credit for each sport that they participated.

6) If no one meets the above criteria, no award will be given.

7) FCA students competing for the SAA must submit an awards nomination package.

The package must include three strong letters of recommendation on the behalf of the student.

Two of the three letters must be from the FCA faculty, staff or administration that represents different academic divisions (example: Bible, History, English, Science or Mathematics). The final letter should come from a head coach of any sport in which the student athlete participated and competed. This particular letter must include a summary of the nominee's athletic participation records and team and individual recognition/awards.

8) Nomination packages are due to the FCA Athletic Director no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> each year or the last official school day prior to April 1<sup>st</sup>.

9) The SAA screening committee of four (4) people shall consist of the FCA School Board President, FCA Headmaster, FCA Athletic Director, and a core curriculum department chair.

10) Three weighted standards will be used to evaluate awards packages. FCA Transcript and the two letters of recommendation content 40%, the athletic letter of recommendation content 40%, Citizenship (activities that demonstrate good citizenship) 20%

11) The SAA screening committee will select one (1) female and one (1) male as the FCA Scholar Athlete Award winners. Recipients of First Christian Academy's Highest Student Recognition Award receives a \$1,000 Scholarship, an engraved trophy and special recognition during the FCA Annual Athletics Awards Banquet.

12) A Historical FCA Scholar Athlete Honor Roll Awards Plaque is currently being established to recognize all future FCA Scholar Athlete Award winners. This Honor Roll will be kept in a prominent FCA location (hallway/awards wall) and will be updated yearly by the FCA Headmaster and/or the FCA Athletic Director.

NOTE: No awards or letters may be received if a player quits, is dismissed from a team or squad, withdraws or is expelled from FCA.

### **SUMMER CAMPS and/or OPEN GYM**

Athletes are strongly encouraged to develop their skills through summer programs and camps.

First Christian Academy offers the following:

1. On campus – Summer open gym will be scheduled. Day and times will be determined prior to the last day of school for general knowledge and planning purposes. Usually, Tuesday and Thursdays throughout the summer will be scheduled for such activities.

2. Team Camps. As we continue to grow, it is the desire of the FCA Athletics Department to provide team and individual camp opportunities for our athletes. It is our desire to start this piece of FCA Athletic the summer of 2017.

### **DONATIONS**

First Christian Academy (FCA) encourages and appreciates all donations made to the Athletic Department and will use good stewardship with any donations.