

# COPPERAS COVE CRUSADERS HANDBOOK



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## **Copperas Cove Crusaders**

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Dear Parents and Players,

Welcome to the Copperas Cove Crusaders! We are excited about having you participate in our program. Since the spring of 2006, the Copperas Cove Crusaders have provided opportunities for boys and girls to improve their basketball skills; develop character and compete against some of the best athletes in Texas. We are fortunate to have dedicated coaches providing excellent instruction to help every one of our players is the best that they can be at the game of basketball.

My hope is that your experience with the Copperas Cove Crusaders will be positive. Our organization is not just about basketball. Having fun, making new friends, and learning to be good sportspersons are all key elements of our organization. In addition, we highly encourage our players to excel both in the classroom as well as on the court.

The Copperas Cove Crusaders Basketball Board of Directors has assembled this handbook to assist in answering most of your questions about our program. For additional information, please visit our website at [www.leaguelineup.com/covecrusaders](http://www.leaguelineup.com/covecrusaders) or email us at [covecrusaders@hotmail.com](mailto:covecrusaders@hotmail.com).

Best wishes to you and your teammates for a successful year. Feel free to contact your coaches or any member of our Board of Directors if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Inez Faison  
Dir, Business Operations  
Copperas Cove Crusaders

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## Organization

Located in Central Texas, the Copperas Cove Crusaders is a not for profit, 501 (c) 3, tax exempt youth services organization sanctioned by the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) and dedicated to the promotion and improvement of youth basketball.

The Copperas Cove Crusaders organization operated with six teams during its inaugural year, 2006. We expanded to nine teams for the 2007 season and added additional boy's teams in 2008. This is an exciting time as we try to broaden the opportunities for our boys and girls

As a member of the South Texas AAU Association, the Copperas Cove Crusaders will compete in Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), Basketball Conference International (BCI), Primetime Sports (PS), and Mid-America Youth Basketball (MAYB) and other tournaments throughout Texas. .

## Mission

The mission of the Copperas Cove Crusaders Basketball Organization is to assist in the positive development of our young men and women who have displayed a desire to play competitive basketball by providing mentoring, academic enrichment, and a quality competitive basketball program.”

We will help our young players advance their basketball skills while fostering sportsmanship, self sacrifice, determination, dedication and acceptance of responsibility

Discipline, commitment, trust, and strong work ethics are the foundation of Crusader values. The Crusaders motto of “**Education Will Not Be Sacrificed**” reflects our commitment to our youth's education, and its importance as they realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

## Goal

The goal of the Copperas Cove Crusaders is to be one of the premier amateur youth basketball programs within Texas.

## Team Operations

All coaches are responsible for the activities of their team. While the Copperas Cove Crusaders organization provides an umbrella and philosophical direction that its coaches must adhere to, coaches will operate their teams with relative autonomy.

The organization strongly encourages coaches to recruit parental assistance with some of the duties but ultimate responsibility lies with the head coach. Areas of parental assistance include, but are not limited to, scorebook/clock keeping, fund-raising activities, organizing overnight accommodations, organizing refreshments, etc.

All coaches, players, parents, and fans associated with the Copperas Cove Crusaders are expected to respect standards of sportsmanship and to represent their team and organization with pride and respect **AT ALL TIMES**.

The Copperas Cove Crusaders organization does not have a minimum playing time requirement; at the same time no player should find themselves on the bench for an entire tournament.

Copperas Cove Crusader coaches set high expectations for their teams and players. Our athletes will be held accountable for their behavior as a part of our organization, for their efforts at home, and for their academic performance at school. Our players will learn to be disciplined, hard working, and fair

The Copperas Cove Crusaders encourages all of its members to participate in multiple sports. No prospective players will be turned away solely because they participate in other sports. All players should understand that they are making a commitment to the organization and their teammates for the entire playing season. Players are expected to attend practices and games. Parents should let the coaches know at registration, tryouts, or first parent meetings if there are conflicts that could cause their child to miss practices or games. Parents are expected to make arrangements with the coaches to prevent consistent absences due to conflicts. In the event that conflicts do arise that cannot be resolved, and may result in frequent absences from team events, the Copperas Cove Crusaders reserve the right to remove a player from the organization, without refund of fees paid.

## Player Eligibility Requirements

Crusader team rosters will be organized by grade of the current school year; then by age, to meet eligibility criteria for specific organizations that we will be playing under.

The Copperas Cove Crusaders will enforce eligibility requirements of all tournament organizers. Some organizations eligibility rules will be based on grade while others will be based on age. The Copperas Cove Crusaders will ensure that our players are age/grade eligible for the teams they will play on and the tournaments they will participate in.

## **Team Rosters**

The goal of the Copperas Cove Crusaders is to advance Crusader teams to top events such as the national championship tournaments of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), Prime Time Sports (PTS), Mid-America Youth Basketball (MAYB), or Basketball Congress International BCI). In addition, we will showcase our senior teams (grades 9-12) in tournaments where college coaches/recruiters will have the opportunity to see them play. To increase the probability of reaching our goals, coaches may temporarily alter team rosters for tournament qualifiers or similar events. This decision will be made among team coaches with the approval of the Director, Basketball Operations.

The selection process for all Crusaders teams will be the results of a skills assessment/Try-outs conducted by the Crusader coaching staff. The team Head Coach will select his/her team based on results of the skills assessment and the needs of the team.

Crusader players must represent the values of the organization and must retain good academic standing. Coaches shall consult with parents to ensure that participation with the Copperas Cove Crusaders does not jeopardize a member's academic performance. All parents, coaches, and volunteers must represent the values of the organization as well

## Expectations of a Copperas Cove Crusader

Copperas Cove Crusader player slots are reserved for those players with the necessary basketball commitment and coach-able attitude to succeed in a competitive atmosphere. Players are expected to behave properly both on and off the court. Absences from games, practices or other team activities should be pre-arranged with coaches.

Absenteeism may impact player development and game participation. All players will adhere to the general rules listed below. Anyone who repeatedly violates these rules may be suspended or dismissed from the team, without appeal.

The Copperas Cove Crusaders believe that discipline, mental toughness, respect for coaches and teammates, and the development of a "team" attitude are as important as shooting form, ball handling skills and rebounding ability. Becoming a great basketball player requires dedication and sacrifice.

Copperas Cove Crusader players are expected to:

- Not complain or make excuses.
- Treat coaches, teammates, opponents and officials with respect.
- Listen and learn from your coaches.
- Control your emotions.
- Accept responsibility for your actions.
- Support your teammates.
- Attend all possible games and practices and participate in all team fundraisers.
- No cursing or taunting.
- Make good decisions off the court (No use of alcohol, tobacco products or illegal substances.)
- Attend and be on time for all games and practices.
- Notify the coach, prior to a game or practice, if unable to attend. Coaches will determine when repeated lack of attendance will result in suspension or dismissal from the team.
- Stretch and warm up prior to all practices and games.
- Respect and cooperate with coaches and other teammates at all times.
- Respect coach's decision on playing time.
- Display good sportsmanship. Profanity and inappropriate behavior (as determined by the coach) is unacceptable.
- Exhibit unselfishness by being a team player.
- Strive for academic excellence. A grade average of less than a "C" (2.0 GPA) is not acceptable. Transcripts may be requested at any time to verify acceptable progress.

## Expectations of a Copperas Cove Crusader Parent

The Copperas Cove Crusaders values the support of parents. Parents are a key ingredient to the success of the Copperas Cove Crusaders. However, parents must defer all team and basketball decisions to the coaching staff. Mutual trust and respect between coaches and parents enables players to realize a positive team experience.

Parents can demonstrate the importance of discipline and dedication by meeting the following expectations:

Team Coordinators will coordinate with the team coach while taking care of team administrative duties, organizing team transportation and conducting other team related activities while assisting the coaches whenever possible.

Parents will be asked to assist as chaperones, drivers, scorekeepers, statisticians and in other support and administrative duties.

Parents can demonstrate the importance of discipline and dedication by meeting the following expectations:

- Ensure players arrive at games and practices on time and are picked up on time.
- Set a good example at games and practices by having respect for coaches, officials, other parents, and members of other teams.
- Be encouraging, not critical, during and after games.
- Leave the coaching to the coaches. Do not provide instructions to the players from the stands.
- Do not use profanity.
- Respect the decisions of the coach on playing time and game strategy.
- Assist with tournaments sponsored by the Copperas Cove Crusaders. Parents are required to help with concession stand sales, ticket sales, and/or setup/clean-up of the tournament facilities.
- Help organize and participate in team fundraisers such as car washes, bake sales, golf tournaments and other team fundraising events.
- Accompany your child to tournaments. If this is not possible, provide a signed authorization to the person who will be transporting your child to the tournament, authorizing necessary medical treatment, if required.
- Please be courteous and assist the person who will be providing transportation for your player with gas and food expenses.
- Attend scheduled parent meetings.
- Interested parents will be asked to serve on the Executive Board, various committees, club projects, or assist the coaching staff as Team Coordinators.

## Expectations of a Copperas Cove Crusader Coach

The Crusader coaching staff adheres to a positive, constructive instruction style. Our coaching philosophy is to play TOGETHER as a TEAM and to play HARD. We will encourage, not discourage; motivate, not intimidate. Our coaching staff will offer a variety of backgrounds, experiences and approaches to Basketball; we do not espouse a single strategic approach to the game. Whereas, promoting a single approach throughout the club could have some competitive advantages, we believe that the diversity of our coaching approaches broadens the development of our players.

Player development remains our primary objective. However; individual development must occur within the context of team competition. Therefore, the Crusaders basketball program does not adhere to a minimum or guaranteed amount of playing time for any player in a game. Player participation is at the coaches' discretion.

All coaches affiliated with the Copperas Cove Crusaders are volunteers. They are expected to be positive examples and be a tremendous role model for those boys and girls involved with the program. It is not just about winning. This is about skill development. It is about encouragement or consolation, about positive reinforcement, about building pride and self-esteem, and about having fun. It is not about the coach. It is about the players and the responsibility that coaches have to the young players entrusted to their care.

The Copperas Cove Crusaders are committed to having an excellent coaching staff. To meet this commitment, coaches are expected to:

- Treat all players, parents, officials, and the opposing team with respect.
- Provide instruction for individual development as well as team development.
- Begin and end practice on time.
- Attend coaching clinics.
- Be knowledgeable of the rules of the game.
- Set a good example during games. Confrontations with officials that lead to ejection should be avoided.
- Allow time during the year for parent-initiated conferences regarding the performance and participation of their child. Discussion time to be set by the coach upon request by the parent. However, it is **STRONGLY** recommended that discussion about any particular game be held at least 24 hours **AFTER** the game.
- Discussion of playing time is totally up to the discretion of each coach. The club will back each and every coach that chooses **NOT** to discuss a child's playing time, unless it pertains to the health of the child.

## Parent/Player/Coach Relationship

Club basketball can teach many positive traits, such as the spirit of cooperation, self-discipline, and regard for physical fitness. We ask that parents refrain from criticizing opposing players, other parents, other clubs, teammates, or officials.

In our spectator enthusiasm, we are often prone to issue instructions to the players that are contrary to those of the coach; this only causes confusion for the players. Please encourage your child to follow their coach's instructions and leave the coaching to the coach. Parents need to align themselves with the coach in teaching their child how to cope with the natural frustrations of being a member of a team. Sports provide an excellent opportunity to teach young adults about the realities of competitive situations. They must be taught how to be a cooperative team member, how to make use of both positive and negative feedback, how to cope with adversity, how to achieve mental toughness, and how to be a gracious winner or loser.

When a player has a problem with the coach, parents have the responsibility of teaching their child the steps necessary to remedy the situation. The following steps should be taken if a player has a grievance with the coach:

- (1) The player should discuss the problem/concern with the coach and try to arrive at a solution to the problem.
- (2) If no solution is forthcoming, the player should contact the coach and schedule an appointment for the player, parent and coach to meet at an appropriate time.
- (3) If the above steps do not remedy the problem, the parent should contact the Dir, Basketball Operations to schedule a meeting with the player, parent and coach.

**Under no circumstances** is a parent to approach a coach with a complaint or an evaluation of coaching philosophy before the player has followed the steps outlined above. The above procedure must be followed in dealing with any situations that may arise. The Crusaders Board of Directors will not allow coaches or players to be berated by parents or players. If you or your child refuses to follow the guidelines set forth, you will be asked to leave the program without a refund of participation fees.

Parents and families of our COPPERAS COVE CRUSADERS players have been very supportive in the past, and we hope that support will continue to grow each year. We hope that parents will support their children by attending their tournaments and giving positive encouragement. We encourage you to refrain from criticizing your child, her teammates, her coaches, or the officials.

## Playing Time

In the Copperas Cove Crusaders organization, playing time is earned, not guaranteed. Unlike community recreation leagues, players will not always play in every game. Playing time is earned by attendance and performance at practice as well as in games. Coaches determine which team members will play. Who to put into the game is often the most difficult decision a coach has to make, but it is the coach's decision.

Coaches will make decisions they feel are most likely to give the team a chance to win. While you may not always agree with these decisions, please respect the coaches' right to make them. Coaches will make them self available at the appropriate time to discuss a player's development, their future prospects with the team, and their playing time. Please choose an appropriate time and place to have these discussions.

## Practice

The Copperas Cove Crusaders will schedule team practices at specified locations. We will do our best to ensure that all teams have two weekly 2-hour practice slots. We are dependent upon the Copperas Cove Independent School District and the Boys and Girls Club for gym space.

All coaches will conduct weekly practices and team activities that provide a positive learning environment, improve individual skills and understanding of how to play the game as a team, and promote the principles of: attendance, hard work, focus, composure, respect, and communication.

All practices will be open to parents of team members and siblings. Non-family members are not authorized at practices.

## Participation on School Teams and in Other Sports

Players in the grades 7 through 12, who are participating in a basketball program under UIL, **are not permitted to play** for the Copperas Cove Crusaders during basketball season.

Players for the Copperas Cove Crusaders are encouraged to play for their school teams, parks and recreation leagues, and participate in other sporting activities **to the** extent they do not conflict with Crusader practices or games. If your son or daughter plays another sport, please discuss this with the coach prior to team selections, so that the coach can assess the extent of likely conflict and the likely commitment to/attendance at Crusader practices and games.

Copperas Cove Crusaders coaches are available to discuss any potential conflicts between these activities and your commitment to the Crusaders.

## **Financial Commitment**

The Copperas Cove Crusaders, using its 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt status, provides a competitive schedule of tournaments for our players. We estimate the total cost of the season (administrative cost, gym rental, registration card, tournament fees, referees, etc.) and then divided by the number of players on each team. For the upcoming season, junior team (grades 6-8) participation costs will be \$250.00; and senior teams (grades 9-12), the participation cost will be \$350.00.

The organization will seek out sponsors and conduct fund-raising activities to off-set operating expenses. Funds raised from such sources will be used to support the Copperas Cove Crusaders organization as a whole.

Participation costs and payment schedules include:

### **Junior Teams (Grades 6 through 8)**

Team fee is \$250.00 (non-refundable)  
One payment of \$125.00 due at registration  
One payment of \$125 is due 30 days later.

### **Senior Teams (Grades 9 through 12)**

Team fee is \$350.00 (non-refundable)  
One payment of \$175.00 due at registration  
One payment of \$175.00 is due 30 days later.

Participation fees are used for tournament entrance fees, uniforms, equipment, gym rental, AAU memberships and general operating expenses. Each team may require additional funds based on the needs of the team.

Because the Copperas Cove Crusaders is not-for-profit and in order to avoid financial shortfalls, the Copperas Cove Crusaders require, and you agree by signing a contract, that you will pay this full amount. We understand that each family may not have the same financial situation and some other type of payment arrangements may be required. Consideration will be on a case-by-case basis approved by the Crusaders Dir, Business Operations.

All fees are non-refundable. Make all check payable to the Copperas Cove Crusaders.

## Fundraisers

Our player participation fees are the lowest of any area program that we know of. Our entire success is enabled through extensive fundraising, the generosity of our sponsors, and our numerous volunteers. Our desire and our goal is that every player and parent will assist in our fundraising efforts. The Copperas Cove Crusaders will organize fundraisers to offset some of the costs associated with the teams. Some of the fundraising events may include, but are not limited to carwashes, special event booths, raffles, and others.

There are several major fundraising events that we do!

- Bake Sale
- Raffles
- Garage Sale
- Car Wash
- Candles

Club fundraising events are not mandatory; however, all persons connected with the organization need to understand that without fundraising, we will not be able to complete all of our goals. Parent participation is essential.

All funds raised by these events are targeted for the whole organization.

# Sponsorship

The purpose of the Copperas Cove Crusader Sponsorship Program is to raise operating funds so that we can reduce player fees and enhance the overall performance of our organization. The support of the community is needed in this important endeavor. We have two ways to go about this. An individual (i.e. player's family, neighbor or coworker) may donate the money, or a player and/or her parents may solicit a business or benefactor to donate the funds.

Our goal is to build mutually beneficial relationships with businesses in the Copperas Cove community that are willing to help defray our costs while we enhance a sponsor's brand familiarity. Contributions from sponsors ensure that the Crusaders have the resources to buy better equipment, have access to the best facilities, travel to games, and provide players a chance to progress to the highest level and achieve to the best of their abilities. The Crusaders, in turn, can provide exposure for the sponsor in a competitive marketplace.

As a non-profit 501 (c) 3, Tax Exempt 16-1739507, youth services organization sanctioned by the Amateur Athletic Union, all donations made to the Copperas Cove Crusaders are fully tax-deductible as allowed by law. We welcome varying degrees of support and thus provide several sponsorship levels for local businesses, organizations, and individuals as listed below. In addition, use of facilities, equipment, and other non-monetary items of support are also welcomed.

## Levels of Sponsorship

### Platinum Sponsor - \$500 or more

- Sponsor is advertised on website for a period of one year
- Sponsor is advertised on all Crusader marketing materials/promotions
- Sponsor is recognized at the Crusader Appreciation Banquet
- Sponsor receives plaque, signed photo, and Crusader T-shirt

### Gold Sponsor - \$250

- Sponsor is advertised on website for a period of one year
- Sponsor is advertised on all Crusader marketing materials/promotions
- Sponsor is recognized at the Crusader Appreciation Banquet
- Sponsor receives plaque and a T-Shirt

### Silver Sponsor - \$100

- Sponsor is advertised on website for a period of one year
- Sponsor is advertised on all Crusader marketing materials/promotions
- Sponsor receives a Certificate of Appreciation and T-Shirt

### Bronze Sponsor - \$50.00

- Sponsor is advertised on website for a period of one year
- Sponsor receives Certificate of Appreciation

## Uniforms and Dress Code

Each player will be provided two sets of basketball uniforms for games, one light (home) set and one dark (visitor) set.

All uniforms are the property of the Copperas Cove Crusaders. Uniforms will be issued at the beginning of the season and are to be turned in at the end of the season when requested. Players are expected to take care of their uniform by laundering them according to garment instructions and ensuring they stay in quality condition.

All uniforms will be signed for by a parent or guardian, on an Equipment Issue Form. Any item of club issued equipment will be paid for if not returned, or damaged beyond fair wear and tear.

Game uniforms will only be worn during games and as directed by coaches. They **will not** be worn to practice or as leisure wear when not participating in Crusader events.

During downtime between tournament games, players will remain in complete team uniform or may remove the complete uniform with their coach's permission. No partial uniforms will be worn, such as uniform shorts without the jersey. If there is a need to remove the jersey, the Crusader T-shirt **will be** worn with the uniform shorts. Players may remove basketball shoes and socks during downtime and replace them with "flip-flops" or suitable footwear.

The Crusader uniform **will not** be worn with other team colors or logos. We respect your loyalties to other teams and organizations: however, during tournaments and Crusader events, it is important that players, coaches, and parents identify with the Copperas Cove Crusaders.

During practices or games, players are not permitted to wear jewelry of any type. This includes earrings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets and rings. Rubber bands for holding back long hair are recommended.

Many Crusader players have purchased the blue/black Nike bags. These 30" bags are available at local sports stores for about \$30.00.

Players will always pack both sets of uniforms, extra socks, a towel and any necessary hygiene items. Additional items may include "flip-flops", snacks, and leisure items such as radios or DVDs. Parents and players need to be aware that these bags cannot always be secured.

**PARENTS:** Don't forget to wear your COPPERAS COVE CRUSADERS logo shirts to all tournaments and Crusader events. Let's show our pride in our team.

Team T-shirts will be available for purchase throughout the year; to order shirts please contact any of the coaches or Board of directors.

## **Gymnasium Facilities**

We are fortunate to have practice facilities provided at no cost by the Copperas Cove independent School District. Parents, players and family members are asked to take care of all practice facilities; ensuring that the privilege of using them is not lost.

Restrooms and other areas of the gyms should be kept clean by ensuring trash is placed in receptacles.

Due to liability issues, parents and siblings are the only persons allowed at practices.

When attending other facilities, please observe the rules of the facility for bringing food and drinks into the gym.

## **Travel Guidelines**

When traveling overnight, Crusader players will travel as a team. The coaching staff, assisted by individual Team Coordinators, will plan, organize and schedule all trips. Parent volunteer may/ will assist with driving and chaperoning. The Director of Administration, will reserve hotel rooms for players, coaches, and chaperones. In some instances, rooms may also be "blocked out" for parents when requested. However, those parents are financially liable for those rooms.

Players will room together and be chaperoned by parent volunteers approved by the Dir, Business Operations. Final room arrangements will be determined based on the facilities, number of players, and number of chaperones.

Curfews and strict standards of behavior will be adhered to by all. Anyone violating travel guidelines may face disciplinary action as determined by the head coach.

## **Insurance**

Players and coaches will be covered by the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) expanded coverage insurance through their AAU membership. AAU insurance is secondary insurance.

## **General Disclaimer**

The Copperas Cove Crusaders do not receive any public funding from city, county, state or federal government agencies. Any and all decisions related to the operation of this organization or the individual teams will be made as appropriate in the sole discretion of the coaches and the board of directors.

## PLAYERS AND PARENTS HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM

This form must be completed and signed by the Player and Parent/Guardian and returned to the Dir, Registration before the player can participate in any Crusader activities.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, have read the contents of the Copperas Cove Crusaders Handbook, in its entirety. I have paid special attention to the Expectations of a Copperas Cove Crusader Parent listed on Page 6 and agree to abide by them as well as all other provisions stated in the handbook. Questions and concerns can be annotated below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a member of the Copperas Cove Crusaders have read the contents of the Copperas Cove Crusaders Handbook, in its entirety. I have paid special attention to the Expectations of a Copperas Cove Crusader listed on Page 5 and agree to abide by them as well as all other provisions stated in the handbook. Questions and concerns can be annotated below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Player

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Questions and Concerns: