

Dear Parents and Players:

This package will fill you in on the Youth Basketball League(s) sponsored by the Optimist Club of Claremore, Inc. Please read everything very carefully. By signing up to have your child play, you are agreeing to the rules and standards set out in this letter, the Application itself, and the additional materials you may receive if you want to coach or assist in the program. Keep these pages to refer to, and send back only the Application page.

The Optimist Club of Claremore has provided a **recreational basketball league** for Rogers County youth since 1985. Since its inception, the league has continued to grow-last season nearly 250 kids were involved. Because it is recreational, we have unique rules suited to the several age groups we serve. These basic rules are attached.

Because of economic conditions of local school systems, athletics cannot be provided for all young children. Our league is intended to supplement school-based programs by giving more boys and girls the opportunity to learn the game of basketball through an organized, recreational league beginning at age 7. It also gives the children an opportunity to learn friendly competition in a safe and supportive atmosphere at no additional cost to the school system.

The Optimist League is self-supporting in that the coaches, score-keepers, and league officials serve on a volunteer basis. Game Officials in the 9-10 and 11-12 Leagues are certified officials, and paid. The League will play games every Saturday from December through mid February, subject to weather and holiday schedules, and availability of gyms.

The Optimist Club of Claremore enjoys the cooperation of the Claremore Public Schools and City of Claremore Parks and Recreation Department in providing this service to our community. Through the past years this league has gained credibility not only as a youth sports league, but also as a positive influence through our goals. Everyone involved must recognize that the primary goals for this league are:

EVERYONE DESERVES THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE.

FAIR PLAY AND GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN WINNING.

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT IS CRITICAL FOR OUR KIDS TO HAVE FUN.

These goals are of primary importance to us, and we appreciate you for working to help us make them work for these kids. The Optimist Club and City of Claremore Parks and Recreation Department follow the National Standards for Youth Sports as promulgated by the National Alliance for Youth Sports. Toward that end we ask you, as a parent, to consider and abide by the "Parents Code of Ethics" reproduced in our Rules, which are attached.

The Chair of the Optimist Basketball Committee is Larry Rahmeier. You can talk to him if you have questions or problems during the season. He can be reached at 918-341-3303 days, or 918-693-4336 evenings. The Optimist Club President for 2014-15 is Gene Smith.

Thanks for your interest. We look forward to a fun season!

Optimist Club of Claremore, an Oklahoma Corporation
Youth Basketball Committee
September 15, 2014

Tentative schedule for the 2014-2015 Season

October 31, 2014	Application Deadline: Post on-Line, Postmarked, or hand-deliver before 6:00pm to Ann's Cleaner at Will Rogers and Cherokee
November 6, 2014	6:30PM Draw for all teams and NYSCA Clinic, at Community Center, N. Sioux Current Coaches only, please, due to space limitations.
November 10, 2014	Practices start;
December 6, 2014	Games start (except 7-8 year old leagues).
December 27, 2014,	-- <u>no games</u> for Christmas/New Year's Holidays.
January 3, 2015	games resume and start for 7-8 year old leagues.
February 14 or so, 2015	Season ends, subject to adjustment for number of teams/participants/gym space, or ice & snow days

Special Note on League size and formation:

We generally assign a minimum of 7 players per team, but 8 is optimal. We try to keep the 9-10 and 11-12 Leagues at no more than 9 players, but will always allow up to ten players in the 7-8 leagues. So, there will be points in sign-ups where we cross thresholds and need enough additional players to add another team within these parameters. That's a situation which may create a waiting list after the normal deadline for signing up.

Our leagues are recreational, and play solely in Claremore. Numbers in the older groups (11-12) have been declining for several years. Last year, boys and girls in this group played together in a co-ed league. Everyone enjoyed it. Obviously, we don't yet know if this will be necessary this year or not. If any league does not make the needed numbers and we do not provide the league, or if one elects not to play in a co-ed league, a full refund will be made.

For the future!



OPTIMIST CLUB OF CLAREMORE YOUTH BASKETBALL
2014-2015

RULES OF OPERATION

1. The Club reserves the right of approval and selection of all coaches. Prospective Coaches/Volunteers must complete a separate Volunteer Request Form, giving background and so forth.
 - 1.1 Coaches new to the program will be interviewed at least by phone, and we will perform some basic background checks.
 - 1.2 Consistent with the requirements of the Claremore Park Department, coaches must complete a clinic approved by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association, or equivalent. The clinic takes slightly more than 2.5 hours, and you must pass a short quiz. As part of that process, Coaches must agree to the "Coaches Code of Ethics" which is reproduced in this package. Also, there will be a \$20.00 fee for the clinic, which is in addition to the player sign up fee.
 - 1.3 We will contact those selected as a coach by phone about the team draw, and each coach must attend an NYSCA session at that time, or prior to start of practice.

2. Team assignments are made on a random basis.
 - 2.1 The coach is allowed to "protect" his or her own child(ren), so he or she gets to coach him or her. Children in the same home or of the same parent are considered subject to this protection.
 - 2.2 NO CHOICE of coach/team is allowed to any other player; no team switches are made for any reason; *random means random*.
 - 2.3 Draw is done by age in each league.
 - 2.4 Some players, which the committee determines to be "rated" based on past experience, are separately drawn by the coaches (still randomly) in an effort to keep any one team from having too many talented or experienced players.
 - 2.5 All coaches (or their designee) participate in the draw which will be in early November.
 - 2.6 Practice times are determined by space availability and coach's schedule; if a parent needs control of when a child practices, the parent must volunteer and be selected as a coach.

For example, if your child cannot practice on Tuesday because of other activities, you will have to be selected as coach to control the evening your child has practice. You should understand that participation at practice is expected of each child in the program—just showing up for games does not make one part of the team, and would put your child at a great disadvantage in learning the game.

3. TO ENROLL, Complete the attached Signup Form and mail or deliver it as shown. You may download the form to fill in with your computer at our web-site: www.claremoreoptimist.org. There is a link there for on-line signup, as well. We encourage you to sign up on line and pay with a credit/debit card, if possible.
 - 3.1 **Eligibility and league placement is based on the child's age on September 1, 2014.** The only exceptions, WHEN REQUESTED BY PARENT OF CHILD, are: (a) for 7-8 Leagues we allow a player to play IF AND ONLY IF he/she reaches 7 years old by the first day of play for the league (January 4, this season); (b) we may consider and allow a player to play up or down in case of extreme physical differences between his/her league-age group and him/her; or (c) we may consider and allow a player to play up or down in cases of physical or mental impairment.
 - 3.2 **The deadline for sign up is October 31, 2014,** which will establish the basic pool for determining the number of teams in each league. Only a limited number of slots may be available thereafter.

3.3 Applications posted on-line, postmarked or hand-delivered after **October 31, 2014**, will be subject to a late fee of **\$20.00**. **A LATE APPLICATION DOES NOT ASSURE A SPOT ON A TEAM.** (See Special Note on League Formation.)

3.4 If space allows it, late applicants received before the draw will be included in the initial pool. IF there are slots on existing teams following the draw and additional applications are received, they will be held for a supplemental draw to be held no later than one week prior to the start of play. No applications will be accepted after the supplemental draw.

4. 4.1 Please keep in mind that our coaches are committing to help your child learn and enjoy basketball; they are not baby sitters. As parents, you must be prompt in picking up your child from practices and games.
- 4.2 Also, only the player is to be left at practice. We use various school gyms, and the coaches are the only supervision. They are busy with practice and cannot watch other siblings. **Do not leave a non-playing sibling at a gym. It puts them at risk, as well as endangers our use of the facilities.**
5. Updates on leagues status, and Game Schedules will be posted at www.claremoreoptimist.org. If you are willing to have us text schedule updates to your phone, please follow the instructions on the our website.
6. We have received requests for use of our player lists in the past. We do not sell our list or otherwise make it available. However, we may generate mailings of interest to you, such as information regarding basketball camps or other leagues which may be available. By providing an email address you agree to receive e-mail from us about such items. Any such mail will be from us, and no other entity will receive the list or any personal information.

RULES OF PLAY:

- 7.1 Disrespect for an official will not be tolerated. Head coaches are responsible for their actions along with the actions of their players and assistants. Parents, friends and spectators showing disrespect will be asked to leave the gym.
- 7.2 Federation High School Rules will apply except where modified by Optimist Rules.
- 7.3 Teams will be given 4 time-outs per game and one additional for each overtime period. The clock will run continuously except for time-outs, injuries, and at the referees discretion, until the final minutes of the game as the rules stipulate.
8. All leagues shall play man to man defenses! A defensive player is required to go to the edge of the lane to guard an offensive player who is outside the lane.
 - 8.1 A zone defense shall not be permitted. Double teaming the ball is not a zone defense. A zone defense is usually called when a player chooses to guard an area of the court as opposed to guarding an opposing player. This is a judgment call by the official.
 - 8.2 If a team leads by more than 15 points, it shall not press on defense, and the timekeeper/officials have the discretion to allow the clock to run continuously, even in the final 2 minutes of the game. Violation of this paragraph: first offense, warning; second and later, technical foul.
9. Coaches must remain aware that a primary goal of this league is participation. All players must play 1 continuous quarter in the first half and each player must play at least half of each game. Commissioners must be notified if this rule is not being followed. No substitutions in the 1st quarter except for injury or illness.

10. Both personal and team fouls will be recorded. On the seventh team foul per half, a one and one will be in effect for the remainder of the half or game; tenth team foul in half is double bonus. Five personal fouls by a player is a disqualification for the remainder of the game.
11. A center jump will start the game and each overtime, all other jump ball situations will alternate possessions.
12. All leagues will play with a regulation size women's basketball (28.5" circumference) except : (1) boys 11 and 12 years old, which will play with a regulation size men's ball; and (2) all 7 and 8 year olds which will play with junior sized ball (27.5" circumference, Baden junior or equivalent).
13. **11 and 12 Year Old League ONLY**
 - 13.1 Teams will play man to man defenses ONLY in a half court defense. In a full court press situation, zone defenses can be used until mid-court and then defense must drop into man to man.
 - 13.2 The clock will run continuously until the final 2 minutes of the game. In the final 2 minutes and overtime, the clock will stop at each whistle. However, in a one-sided game, the officials have discretion to allow the clock to continue to run.
 - 13.3 Only one overtime will be played; Overtime period will last 2 minutes.
 - 13.4 3-point rule is in effect.
14. **9 and 10 Year Old League ONLY**
 - 14.1 In the first half only, the teams can play defense to the top of the key only. In the second half, defense can be played to the mid-court line. This rule shall not be interpreted to allow a free outlet pass starting a fast break.
 - 14.2 In the final 2 minutes of the game and overtime, full court man to man defense is allowed.
 - 14.3 The clock will run continuously until the final 2 minutes of the game and in the overtime, the clock will stop at each whistle. However, in a one-sided game, the officials have discretion to allow the clock to continue to run.
 - 14.4 Only one overtime will be played; the overtime period will last 2 minutes and full court man to man defense will be allowed.
 - 14.5 Free throws will be shot from a line 3 feet in front of the regulation free throw line. (12 feet from the face of the backboard.)
 - 14.6 No 3 point shot awarded.
 - 14.7 Before the start of each game, each player will shoot a free throw which will count towards the team total. If one team has more players than the other team, players from the small team, who did not make a free throw on their first try, will be chosen by the coach to shoot a second free throw until each team has shot the same number of times. Only the players who missed their first shot can shoot again, unless all players made their first chance, at which time any player can be chosen.
 - 14.8 Only players on court at the beginning of the free throw shooting will be able to participate. Late players may play in the game, but not participate in free throws.
15. **7 and 8 Year Old League ONLY**
 - 15.1 Man to man defense required at all times. Defense allowed only to top of key, or inside 3-point circle, at all times. This does not prohibit chasing a loose ball at any point on the court. Free throws, if any, will be shot from a point about ten feet from the lowered backboard.
 - 15.2 Goals lowered to 9 feet.
 - 15.3 No score is kept; clock runs continuously for each 6-minute quarter.

15.4 Fouls are called when flagrant or tone of game is descending to soccer, or rougher. Individual and team fouls will not be tallied, so no one fouls out. However, this may change as the season progresses, if the committee determines individual players are taking advantage of the rule.

15.5 Before the start of each game, each player will shoot a free throw. Only players on court at the beginning of the free throw shooting will be able to participate. Late players may play in the game, but not participate in free throws.

15.6 This is the league that is most fun. It sometimes seems to be “organized chaos.” The official(s) serve as on-court coaches as much as officials. Very little is called as a turn-over: no traveling, double dribbling, carrying, and such; the general practice is to stop play, remind them of what is the rule, then let the kids play on! Of course, as the season progresses, the officials may start making more calls, or treating the violation differently, as the kids gain experience.

16.1

Coaches Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to live up to my certification as a NYSCA Coach by following the NYSCA Coaches Code of Ethics: I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win. I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group. I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players. I will promise to review and practice basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players. I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players. I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players. I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events. I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players. I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for all of the skills that I teach. I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults. ©National Alliance For Youth Sports.

16.2

Parents' Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics: I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event. I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment. I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics. I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events. I will remember that the game is for youth - not adults. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability. I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation. I will read the National Standards For Youth Sports and do what I can to help all youth sports organizations implement and enforce them. ©National Alliance For Youth Sports