

The APA of North Alabama wants all players and teams to have FUN on their night(s) out. We have "borrowed" some tips on how to have a GREAT team and STILL have fun. Please, ask yourself, and your team members, if you can achieve these standards AND have fun. Accreditation to Jon Roberts who wrote this to his team when he was the Team Captain TWO YEARS AGO! I saved it, have "tweaked" it but I was SO IMPRESSED with his effort and insight.

1) EVERY member, REGARDLESS of Skill Level, is IMPORTANT to the team.

- By being a part of a team, you have made a commitment, please plan accordingly. They depend on you.
- This is a social event, and we all know and have friends on other teams. It's completely understandable the need to socialize with those friends, but please, make sure you won't be playing a match or keeping score before or afterwards.
- Keeping score is part of being on a team. It is expected of each and every member on the team. Either keep score before your match or after. It is not fair for only 1 member of the team to be "stuck" doing all the scorekeeping every week. Please watch the YouTube video on HOW to keep score and HOW to recognize a defensive shot. Two good rules of thumb for marking a defense shot are 1 - did the player TRY to make the shot AND get shape on the next ball and 2 - A shot NOT indicative of the player's skill level.
- All players want to warm up/practice before their matches. Try to get to your hosting location BEFORE team matches start, to do that. If that's not possible due to work or family obligations that is understandable BUT let your team know. "Communication is the key to Success".
- Sometimes players have to play early and leave and sometimes players have to be late. Again, "Communication is the key to Success!" Unless it is a "Work Thing" or a "Family Thing" AND you were UPFRONT BEFORE JOINING THE TEAM - Don't be "that player" - Don't make it a regular thing. It creates hard feelings and disrupts the harmony of the team.
- For a Single Format team - there will be numerous times when you will have more people available to play than matches to shoot. However, scorekeeping, coaching, and cheering for the team are just as important as playing a match. In Double Jeopardy, the above does not happen as often but the same holds true.

2) Give 100% Effort 100% of the time.

- When it comes to your match, you should give it your all, each & every time.
- Giving effort takes no ability, EVERYONE is capable of giving effort.
- People who give 100% effort with the RIGHT ATTITUDE have a better opportunity of defeating an opponent with a higher skill level who is not giving 100% and/or has a negative attitude.
- Don't "feel sorry" for your opponent and throw a match. That will not help ANY player.

3) Focus **ONLY** on yourself.

- In a match, only **your** shots and strategy are important. Don't think or worry about what your fellow team mates are thinking or chatting about - Chances are they are **NOT** thinking or talking about you.
- Do not buy in to your opponent's skill level. The APA Equalizer Handicap System is in place for a reason. If everyone would play to their ability each and every match AND keep score accurately, it would be the PERFECT system. Anyone can win any match at any time. Trust YOUR skill level.
- Do not fall in to the trap of listening to your opponent's sharking techniques or bad attitude. We all know there's some bad apples (just like in ANY sport) but don't be dragged down to their level.

4) Don't **FOCUS** on winning but rather giving your personal best.

- Sure, we all want to win, but the focus should be towards doing what is necessary TO win. Being **ONLY** results-oriented will never bring you the results you want.
- Treat EVERY shot like it has a history & life of its own. Whether it was a good or bad shot, you'll be able to live & learn FROM the results, REGARDLESS of what the results were.

5) Be **RESPONSIBLE**, question yourself, create **PERSONAL** goals.

- Personal Goals such as "I want to win X matches this session" and "I really want to defeat so and so" are NOT acceptable goals. Try goals like "I want to improve my safety play" or " I want to increase my ball runs in 9 Ball".
- When you've set your goals, decide on a path on how to achieve your goals. "A Goal Without A Plan is Just a Dream!" For example, if your goal is to improve your safety play, make a plan, an effort to look at each rack for the opportunity to play a safety that results in Ball in Hand. Examine each rack for Balls in your category (if 8 Ball) that are tied up or later sequential balls tied up (if 9 Ball) where a Ball in Hand would be beneficial in breaking those out. Yes, you COULD make that ball BUT if you were able to just make a good hit & hide the cue ball so your opponent ended up giving Ball in Hand, which is preferable?
- The best time to improve and accomplish your goals is through practice - not in the middle of a match.

We, as **your League Operators**, hope that these written & outlined observations/expectations assist your players in having Fun and Strong teams in the APA. We, as **the APA of North Alabama**, strive to maintain a fair, fun playing league environment. If even ONE of these points resonate with you, we will consider that a WIN!

Have Fun, Make Friends, Play Pool!

Sincerely,

Lee Zeiher/Cyndi Harbin

APA of North Alabama League Operators.