



## JULY, 2011 BCAM MONTHLY REPORT

**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK:** As basketball coaches and players across the state keep busy this summer with camps and scrimmages, you should make sure that you take time to enjoy your own family. While summer is an important time for your athletes to work on improving their skills, it is also a time to relax and be a kid. Many of our athletes are pulled in many directions with coaches from different sports vying for their time. Hopefully these athletes will have some time away from their coaches and sport so they can enjoy their time away from school and refresh.

**This will be the last Monthly Report for coaches who have not rejoined BCAM for 2011-12.** Website login privileges will be turned off on July 15 for those who have not re-registered. Make sure you register before fall so you don't miss out on all the BCAM events and news for the upcoming season. With 325 schools signing up for the School Special (15 coaches from a school) for \$80, you should make an effort to convince your school that this is money well spent. (Single-Gender schools/college staffs may sign up for \$40—email Amy [amy@bcam.org](mailto:amy@bcam.org) ).

The next 40 days are very busy for BCAM. We start with the **Girls' Reaching Higher Showcase on July 23<sup>rd</sup> at South Lyon HS.** This is followed by the **Boys' Reaching Higher Showcase on July 31<sup>st</sup> at South Lyon HS.** BCAM wants to thank South Lyon AD, Mike Teagan, for his efforts in hosting these two great events. August 1, 2, 3 will see the BCAM Board of Directors taking part in their annual summer meeting. **The 32<sup>nd</sup> BCAM All-Star Festival will be held for the first time at the Palace of Auburn Hills. The date is Saturday, August 6.** \*\*\*See the All Star Festival information article below\*\*\*. **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual BCAM Coaches vs Cancer Golf Scramble (presented by Two Men and a Truck) will be held on Monday, August 8 at the Walnut Hills Golf Club in East Lansing.** There are still spots available for foursomes and individuals. Support BCAM's fight against cancer by taking part in this fun event. For details, registration and donations go to [www.cvcgolf.org](http://www.cvcgolf.org) .



I just want to give you a heads up about our **Fall Coaches Clinic:** Ed Dutcher has another great line-up coming to our clinic on **September 30, October 1 & 2 at the Causeway Bay Hotel in Lansing. Committed to speak are John Beilein (Michigan), Greg Kampe (Oakland), Brad Stevens (Butler), Travis Ford (Oklahoma State), and Steve Alford (New Mexico).** You will definitely want to bring your entire staff to this great weekend event. You will be receiving more information about the clinic in August.



Finally, Dan Young (Assistant Ex. Director) and I will be spending four days in Indianapolis at the National High School Basketball Coaches Association annual meeting. We will be involved with putting the finishing touches on forming this association and becoming the voice of high school basketball across the country. Many states don't have a basketball coaches association and the NHSBCA is committed to helping these states form their own association. As a member of BCAM you will automatically be a member of the NHSBCA. More details will follow in the future.

### **ALL-STAR FESTIVAL AT THE PALACE – "\$5 off" Vouchers Available**

The Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan and the Detroit Pistons are pleased to offer \$5 ticket vouchers (see details below) to the **BCAM All-Star Festival at The Palace.** The event takes place on Saturday, August 6 and includes four Women's and Men's all-star games as well as a 3 point shooting competition and a slam dunk competition. Mr. and Miss Basketball will be featured along with the top senior players in the state.

These vouchers are perfect for distribution to:

- High school players
- Middle school players
- Youth camp participants
- Friends of your program

- Your coaching staff and support personnel

The event schedule for August 6 is as follows:

1:00 Palace Doors Open  
 2:00 Women's Class C/D Game  
 3:30 Women's Class A/B Game  
 4:45 Three Point Shooting Competition  
 5:40 Men's Class C/D Game  
 6:50 Slam Dunk Competition  
 7:50 Men's Class A/B Game



BCAM Executive Director, Tom Hursey points out: "These games and competitions serve as an example, to both players and parents, of the high level of talent that we have here in Michigan. Attending these games can really motivate younger players to work harder to attain their goals and can demonstrate to parents just how good a student athlete has to be to become an all-state level player."

These \$5 ticket vouchers are redeemable at The Palace box office for \$5 off one general admission seat (regular price \$10), a Reserved seat (regular price \$15) or a Courtside seat (regular price \$20).

To order your vouchers, please send a letter stating the number of vouchers that you would like AND a return, stamped envelope to:

Dan Christner  
 11784 Burgoyne  
 Brighton, Michigan 48116



**TEAM SPORTS/JOHNNY MAC'S:** As you prepare for next season, make sure you keep in mind our two new sponsors. Team Sports and Johnny Mac's offer all the products you need for your basketball program. Rawlings basketballs, uniforms, practice gear, etc. all at competitive prices, all with actual sales people. Go to [www.bcam.org](http://www.bcam.org) and click on BCAM'S SPONSORS to find a salesperson in your area.

**RAWLINGS BASKETBALLS:** Two years ago the Rawlings basketball had some problems. The company has worked hard to make corrections to the MHSAA ball and it is now a much better basketball. Some of you might have bought basketballs last year that were still from the bad batch of balls. But BCAM has been notified that all those bad balls are now gone and you will be happy with the new ball. Give it a try. It will be used throughout the state tournament so you need to have Rawlings balls on your rack.



**GOLF OUTING BENEFIT FOR A FELLOW BCAM MEMBER:**

Our junior varsity basketball coach, Dave Barns (he's only 28), learned in March that he has cancer (squamous cell carcinoma). He is currently undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments at the University of Michigan. To try and help offset his expenses, we are holding a golf outing fundraiser on Sunday, August 7 at Goodrich Country Club. In conjunction with the golf outing, that night we will be holding an auction. We are hoping to auction off basketball memorabilia, because basketball is such a huge part of Dave's and his family's lives. Dave played at Goodrich High School for his father, Gary, who has been with the varsity program for 30-plus years and is currently. **For more information about this event, please call me at the number below.** Thanks, Wayne Wilson, Goodrich High School Boys Basketball, (810) 280-9484 (cell)

**HALL OF FAMER, DICK SHILTS, RETIRES AFTER 46 YEARS:** Longtime coach at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Dick Shilts, has decided to “hang it up” after an outstanding career coaching basketball. Dick’s head coaching record stands at 700 wins and 391 losses (64.2%) with 37 years at the high school, D1 and community college level. Add to this his non-head coaching jobs, and Coach Shilts has been at it for 46 years. He has always been a credit to our profession. BCAM congratulates Dick on a stellar career and wishes him a long, healthy and happy retirement.

**BCAM MEMBER NAMED MICHIGAN’S TEACHER OF THE YEAR:** Many of you know Paul Galbenski as that guy that is always demonstrating the NOAH Shooting device. Now you can recognize him as Michigan’s Teacher of the Year. What a great honor. Way to go Paul. Click on the following to read more about the award: <http://www.freep.com/article/20110526/NEWS06/110526027/In-first-Michigan-teacher-year-from-tech-school>

## Championships are Founded in Program-Wide Trust

--Larry Lauer, Ph.D, Michigan State University and Rob Smith, East Lansing High School

Within every team and program there is the opportunity for success and also for self-breakdowns and total collapse.

Think about the above statement for a moment? Is it true?

Any athletic program has the potential to be successful, even if there is not much talent. At the same time, every program has a number of stakeholders with different interests. Athletes want to play, win and be on a team with their friends while representing their school and being recognized for their efforts. Coaches want to develop young people, win, compete and build a program. Parents want their children to be successful, have fun, and of course, win too. Administrators want successful programs with few problems that also cast a light on the school.

### **All programs have powder kegs**

There are many similar interests across the above stakeholders. However, their primary interests often create conflict. What is the primary interest of the coach? It is his or her team. What is the primary interest of the athlete or the parent? Hopefully it is the team, but sometimes it may be their own self-interest (playing time, points, or glory). Every program has powder kegs or people, situations and decisions.

Frequently coaches complain about the issues they have with others in the program. Some coaches feel that athletes are not willing to work hard; that they seem entitled; and/or they can’t be pushed to the extent necessary. When things do not go well, the athlete may take home a message that deflects the blame from themselves to the coach. This creates drama, makes the child feel important and gets the parent’s attention. So, often parents hear the negative message massaged by the athlete to place themselves in a positive light.

Coaches are concerned that administrators feel the pressure to succumb to the politics of parents. Sometimes, parents create rumors about coaches in an attempt to make changes in programs by exerting political power and second guess coaches. This makes it difficult to create team cohesion.

So, how do we overcome this inherent conflict of interest and get back to building great programs?

### **Championship teams develop over time and with trust-building**

In the 2008-09 season, the Pittsburgh Penguins were struggling to make the playoffs. They fired the coach, Michel Therrien and hired Dan Bylsma from their American Hockey League club. The Pens went on to defeat the Red Wings in seven games and compiled an astonishing record of 34-11-4 (including playoffs) after Bylsma’s hire. This is the rare minority however, it does not usually work this way – changing the coach and the team succeeds. Bylsma was the second coach in NHL history to be hired midseason and win the Cup.

Why do quick turnarounds not happen very often? When a new coach comes to a high school program with a new philosophy or system, there are often different expectations. For adolescents this is a lot of change to deal with when they do not have the life experiences and coping skills to always handle it well. We would argue that high school administrators should hire coaches for the long haul and then provide the resources needed to build a program founded on trust among the stakeholders. When there is a culture created and a tradition where trust exists, great things are possible.

Program-wide trust is the foundation of championship teams. Programs must facilitate coach-athlete-parent-administrator trust and communication to be successful. Instead of coaches walking on egg shells afraid to make tough decisions because of parent reactions, offending players and worrying if the administration will have their back, coaches must have the trust within the organization to make tough decisions and have those around them follow. All program members must understand their role, accept it and recognize how their current behavior/attitude is adding or taking away from the solution.

Winning and coaching are very complex things that are the result of thousands of hours, decisions, communications and the efforts of many. It is difficult to attribute a championship season to one key move or decision. However, there are tipping points in every season that influence the course of the season.



1. **Enhance Staff Credibility:** If you have a trust issue, then the coaches must enhance their perceived credibility. Players and parents must know that the coach is competent, their interests are genuine and they are not there just to set themselves up for the next job. They truly care about the student and want the best for them as people and athletes. Caring can be expressed in many ways from a pat on the back, listening to a player when they are down and giving a player a chance based on practice efforts while showing passion for teaching all players on the roster and creating a connection between coaches and players.
2. **Set and Clarify Program Expectations:** It is important for everyone to understand their roles and the responsibilities that come with those roles. Coaches need to understand from administration what objectives need to be fulfilled. At the same time, coaches must also educate parents as they educate the athletes about appropriate conduct, but more importantly why trust is so important to the development of these young people and the way that parents build it up or break it down. Furthermore, coaches must establish clear lines of communication. Trust is destroyed when parents jump the chain of command and go to the principal or superintendent to voice complaints. Coaches need to transparently handle all concerns at the coach-athlete or coach-parent-athlete level.
3. **Establish a Culture and a Mission:** One of the best ways to motivate youth is to give them some power. Assisting the coaching staff develop a mission for the season is instrumental. Things like doing well in the classroom, treating teammates with respect, etc. will be voiced as players talk about the daily things it takes to be a champion. This will facilitate the establishment of a positive culture. In a high performance culture, playing time is based on practice and game performance, not on who you are or the past. Not everyone will play all of the time or get the number of shots that they want, but everyone will play a valued role that contributes to the team's success.
4. **Continue to Clarify Roles and Establish Team Chemistry:** In some situations, there are many new faces. In many ways, that makes it easier because the pecking order is pretty clear. However, it may make it difficult because the veterans have to make the new girls on the team feel like they belong. Having team dinners, camps and meetings with team building activities help to establish this chemistry and creates a feeling of success. This process is helped when coaches clearly establish roles and assist players in seeing how their role is valuable and contributes to everyone's success.
5. **Foster Mental Toughness and Discipline:** To be a champion requires mental and physical toughness. You have to be willing to do the training to be great. Challenging a team to go to the next level includes having them think about their self-limiting beliefs and counter them. At the tipping point, the team must decide to trust. That is why getting parent support is paramount to success. If parents undermine the coaches, it only creates a lack of belief and trust. If you can create a team motto that has a very meaningful message, then you can bond a team and get them to go where they have not gone before. Ultimately, trust can only occur if the team has done the necessary hard work. If you do not have the conditioning, how can you trust that your team can last in a playoff tournament? Further, mentally you have to be willing to prepare for the pressure and have strategies that you have trained and prepared for the big moments.
6. **Communicate Always:** It will be important for the coaching staff to prioritize the importance of transparent communication. Let the team and the program know why you are doing things. The team may not always agree, but you are more likely to get their acceptance. Further, communication is not a one-way street. Coaches must listen and lead by example and must ask for feedback and make players and parents feel that they are approachable and want their input. It may be helpful for each team member to list three things that the coaches could do to help them personally and/or the team.

In addition, within your coaching staff, it is helpful to have coaches that play different roles. The head coach cannot be everything to everyone.
7. **Handle Conflict Quickly and Wisely:** Again, every program has powder kegs. Commit to preventing crisis and dealing with festering issues. Avoiding conflict only allows things to get worse behind the scenes and certainly breaks down program trust. Make it clear that players should feel comfortable coming to you with concerns. When they do respectfully approach you with critical feedback, avoid becoming defensive by punishing them for communicating something you may not want to hear. If you reinforce open communication and problem-solving, then trust can be strengthened. Educate your team on the best ways to approach the coach and also learn how each player handles feedback.

### Conclusion

Developing program-wide trust is a difficult thing and can be a long process. You should not expect turnaround in the first or second month or possibly even the first or second season. Instead, be patient and work diligently to develop the foundation of trust. Communicate transparently with all stakeholders in your program. Create a structure and a culture that facilitates trust and minimizes selfishness and politics. Be true to your philosophy; make it clear what your vision is and how everyone can play a role to get there while inspiring the team daily to follow through.