



Fair Play Policy

The Dartmouth Lakers Basketball Club (DLBC) is a Fair Play club. We believe that all players deserve to be treated fairly, and have the right to play basketball fairly in every game.

Fair Play means that when all players behave properly, show up to all practices on time, are healthy, exhibit good attitude, and try their best, then they all deserve to play in every game.

Fair Play is not necessarily the same as Equal Play. Equal Play means that no matter what, all players receive the same amount of play time every game. The Metro Basketball Association (MBA) has a policy of Equal Play at the Junior Mini and Mini levels for all games during the regular and playoff season. Basketball Nova Scotia (BNS) has the same policy of Fair Play at the Junior Mini and Mini levels during their Provincial tournaments. This Fair Play policy means there can be no difference greater than one shift differential between all players on the same team during any one game. The DLBC supports this policy.

The Dartmouth Lakers agree with Equal Play at the Junior Mini and Mini levels, and we promote Fair Play at all other levels. Sometimes Equal Play and Fair Play mean the same, and sometimes they do not mean the same.

There are several situations where Equal Play and Fair Play are not the same. For example, if a player skips practice without a reason, is it fair to play this player equal time next game? If a player is injured, is it fair to play this player equal time, or even at all in a game? If during a game, a player displays obvious poor attitude, shows lack of respect to others, uses inappropriate language or actions, or uses excessive force, is it fair to play that player equal time compared to another player who is not acting in this way? The DLBC thinks not! Players should always be allowed to play their fair share, which may be different from an equal amount of play.

At the Bantam level and up, many coaches follow the flow of the game, and substitute players into the game as necessary. If the game has a nice rhythm, a coach may keep certain players in a little longer; if the flow of the game is not working well, a coach may shorten play time and sub in fresh players to change the nature of the game. This is part of the game; this is part of the art of coaching.

Some coaches will play fair as in equal time for most of the game, and use the last few minutes of the game as "coach's time" when a coach can play whomever to finish the game. Many coaches will use Fair Play during the regular season, and then reward those players who made a determined commitment and worked hard to improve their skills all season long with some extra playing time during playoffs.

In playoffs, sometimes a coach will play fewer players ("shorten the bench") if a win in that game guarantees the team will advance and play another game, whereby all players may get another chance for more play time.

The Dartmouth Lakers will continue to advance Fair Play as a club philosophy. If you are disappointed with how a coach is playing their players during game time in regards to Fair Play, please contact any member of the DLBC Board of Directors so that we may address the situation.

All coaches are encouraged to share their playing and substitution philosophy with players and parents during the initial Parent's Meeting held at the beginning of the season. Thank you.