



Competitive Philosophy

Elemental, Developmental and Cadet Divisions

As detailed in CYO bylaw 8-2-1, instruction is the main focus of the elemental, developmental and cadet divisions. The coach's focus should be on developing the fundamentals of the sport and teaching the rules of the game. CYO does not maintain conference standings nor does a playoff system exist at these levels.

In the event that more than one LCA team is formed in any particular division in any particular sport, these teams are to be divided evenly in regard to the talent level and sport specific knowledge of the student-athletes. Parent requests to have their child play/not play with another child will not be entertained. Within the elemental, developmental and cadet divisions, if a coach is also a parent of an LCA student-athlete in the division in which he/she is coaching, that coach reserves the right to request that student-athlete be placed on his/her team without regard for talent level or sport specific knowledge.

"Playing-up" (the placement of a student-athlete in a competitive division higher than that associated with his/her grade level) is strongly discouraged. Provided there are enough student-athletes to adequately compose teams and allow appropriate playing time at a given competitive level, student-athletes from the next lowest competitive level will be prohibited from "playing-up" to the higher grade level. In the event that student-athletes are needed for a higher grade level, an optional evaluation open to all student-athletes at the next lowest grade level will take place. At no time will a student-athlete be required to "play-up" against his/her own will.

Junior Varsity and Varsity Divisions

As detailed in CYO bylaw 8-2-2, competitive play is both expected and encouraged in the junior varsity and varsity divisions. The coach's focus should be on developing the fundamentals of the sport and teaching the rules of the game while at the same time fielding the most competitive team. CYO does maintain conference standings, a playoff system does exist, and conference champions are recognized at these levels.

In the event that more than one LCA team is formed in any particular division in any particular sport, objective evaluations should be held to assess the talent level and sport specific knowledge of the student-athletes in that division. Student-athletes will then be divided into A, B and C teams, with the total number of teams necessary within a division to be determined by the number of eligible student-athletes within that division. All student-athletes who wish to participate in a particular sport are assured placement on a team provided they meet all CYO and LCA eligibility requirements. Team assignments within a particular division should be such that the "A" team provides the greatest opportunity to compete, the "B" team offers the next best opportunity to compete, and so on. If the competitive abilities of two or more LCA teams within the same division are not clearly discernible, the participation of more than one LCA team within a competitive

division (i.e. fielding multiple junior varsity “B” teams) is permissible, provided such participation is not in violation of any CYO regulations.

Parent requests to have their child play/not play with another child will not be entertained. Within the junior varsity and varsity divisions, if a coach is also a parent of an LCA student-athlete in the division in which he/she is coaching, that fact is to have no impact on the team assignment for that student-athlete. A student-athlete’s team assignment will not be based on the fact that his/her parent is coaching a particular team.

“Playing-up” (the placement of a student-athlete in a competitive division higher than that associated with his/her grade level) is strongly discouraged. Provided there are enough student-athletes to adequately compose teams and allow appropriate playing time at the varsity level, student-athletes from the junior varsity level will be prohibited from “playing-up.” In the event that a lack of varsity student-athletes necessitates that junior varsity student-athletes “play-up,” an optional evaluation open to all junior varsity student-athletes will be used to determine which junior varsity student-athletes are capable of playing at the varsity level. Evaluations will be conducted using the programs already in place for each sport. Following the evaluation, the minimum number of junior varsity student-athletes needed to complete the varsity team(s) will be invited to do so. These student-athletes will then be placed on the varsity team deemed appropriate for their skill level. If a student-athlete opts not to “play up,” the next capable junior varsity student-athlete as determined by the evaluation will be offered the opportunity. At no time will a student-athlete be required to “play-up” against his/her own will. Special or extraordinary circumstances influencing a student-athlete’s ability to “play-up” will be considered on an individual basis.

The need for objective coaching in the junior varsity and varsity divisions is even greater than that same need in the lower divisions. The junior varsity and varsity divisions are not only more competitive, but allow for more freedom as far as a coach’s determination of each student-athlete’s playing time. Qualified coaches having no relationship, be it familial or by acquaintance, with any of the student-athletes or their families are preferred in the junior varsity and varsity divisions.

Factors such as the number of eligible student-athletes and the availability of coaches vary from year to year and from sport to sport, meaning that each situation must be dealt with on an individual basis. The Competitive Philosophy is not intended to serve as an end-all to every question concerning LCA athletics. The Competitive Philosophy of Lakewood Catholic Academy is intended to guide the development of athletic teams and determination of coaches in a manner that best serves the LCA community while making sure all decisions remain in accordance with the principles and philosophy of CYO.