



2024 AAU SPRING BASKETBALL SEASON PROGRAM HANDBOOK



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Overview: LTB offers AAU travel teams for boys in grades 2nd-12th that compete in local tournaments around northeast Ohio. LTB Eastside will offer teams for boys in grades 4th-10th in 2024. We will also have a 4-10th grade girls Westside program. This handbook will provide the details and information regarding your son or daughter participating on one of our travel teams. Our teams focus on individual basketball development, basketball knowledge, and team skills. The goals are to develop our players, have them learn more about the game, play against good and challenging competition, and most importantly, have fun playing the game. We also focus on using basketball as a vehicle to help student-athletes become better people.

History: LTB travel teams started in 2018 by lead director and coach Luke Toth. In 2018, LTB started with 3 travel teams. In 2019, LTB grew to 11 travel teams in one season. In 2020, LTB grew to 22 travel teams, right before the Covid-19 pandemic. The program had 23 teams in the spring of 2022. In 2023, we had 31 teams, and this season 2024 we will have 36 teams.

Purpose: Our main purpose is to develop the knowledge and skills of young players. We teach kids how to practice, and show them effective ways to become better players. We introduce new drills and workouts players can use to develop their game. One of our main goals is to get every player ready for high school basketball. Many players are unaware of the time and dedication that is needed to not only make a high school team, but to be a good player at the high school level. In the process of preparing our players for high school, our main purpose is to develop players and have them learn about the game. Winning is important, but it is not the main goal of our basketball club. Our main goal is to develop players and teach the game of basketball.

Mentorship: We also provide our players with mentorship. We try our best to help every player improve in some way. Whether that be on the court, or in the classroom. We are really big on teaching players life lessons that they can take with them, and apply them to multiple aspects of their life. The main aspects we focus on are...

Work Ethic
Consistency
Competitiveness



Practices: Each team will practice two times per week. Practices will be 60 minutes. Practices will take place at the following facilities...

WESTSIDE LOCATIONS:

Lutheran West High School - Rocky River
Messiah Lutheran - Fairview Park
St. Angela Merici - Fairview Park
Valley Forge High School - Parma
St. Anthony of Padua - Parma
Brunswick Rec Center - Brunswick

EASTSIDE LOCATIONS:

NEO Sports Plant - Euclid
David E. Anderson Center - Willoughby
Force Sports - Eastlake

Each team will practice two times per week. Everything we do at LTB has a greater purpose. Practicing more than three times per week at the youth level will not only wear down players, but discourages character education values such as good sportsmanship, and focuses on a “winning over everything” philosophy, rather than an individual players’ strengths and opportunity for improvement. If players are over-practicing each week, in addition to tournaments, there is a greater chance of players getting worn out, over-pressured, and tired of basketball. When players are more developed at the high school level, and want to focus further on basketball skills, that is the age when they should start intensive practice. At the youth level, players are still in the development stage, and need a good balance.



LUTHERAN WEST HIGH SCHOOL
(ONE OF MANY GREAT PARTNER FACILITIES WITHIN OUR PROGRAM)

2024 COACHING STAFF
(FULL BIOS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE)

RETURNING COACHES



**LUKE TOTH ♦ JAMES COOPER ♦ JOE DAHER ♦ MATT BALINT ♦ DERIC NICHOLS ♦ DINO DAGIASIS ♦
GARY LINN ♦ CHARLES CALDWELL ♦ JOEY SCHAEGLER
JACQUELYN THOMPSON ♦ RAKAYLA IWAIIS ♦ JAMEE GERRICK ♦ BRIAN KLYPCHAK ♦ LARRY
HUFSTETLER ♦ JOSH BERRY ♦ CHAD PARTRIDGE ♦ JAKE LANTZ ♦ SAM KOULOSEK ♦ DAVE
SANFORD ♦ TONY GETTHER ♦ AND MORE TBA**

USA BASKETBALL CERTIFIED



All coaches will follow our coaching guidelines and philosophies. Bios and information will be updated on our website. All coaches in the LTB program this spring season, and moving forward, will be USA Basketball Certified. Being certified by USA Basketball will enable our coaches to establish credibility by joining the national standard in coach education and safety. USA Basketball is the national governing body for the sport in the United States. LTB coaches will benefit from annual resources, coaching and safety education, and a background screening.



Coaching Staff: Coach Luke is the director and lead coach for the LTB travel club. Along with Coach Luke, we have a very great coaching staff, made up of former high school and college players. All of our coaches have high school or college playing experience. Our coaches are very knowledgeable, and they all come with plenty of experience that they will share with our players to prepare them for their future basketball careers. Overall, our coaches love working with kids and helping them become better players. Their biographies can be found on our website. Full biographies of new coaches will be added within the next few weeks.

Tournaments: Our program will only have players participate in four - six tournaments per season. The players need a healthy combination of practices and games for proper development. We are strongly against exhausting players in excessive tournaments. We like to space out tournaments as much as possible to hone in on where players are struggling, and work with them weekly in practice to help them develop their skills and game. Our program takes an individualized approach, focusing on overall player development. Each team has the tournaments they are participating in listed on their roster sheet.

2024 SPRING TOURNAMENT LIST

April 13th-14th	Ohio Basketball Battle of the Land	Cleveland
April 20th-21st	NorthCoast Cleveland Showdown	Cleveland
April 27th-28th	NorthCoast Showtime Vacationland	Fremont
May 18th-19th	Ohio Basketball Cedar Point Classic	Cleveland & Sandusky



VARSITY ATHLETIC CLUB



OHIOBASKETBALL.COM



NORTH COAST SHOWTIME



LUKE TOTH BASKETBALL



Plays: The biggest misunderstanding in youth basketball is in running plays. All teams younger than 7th grade will NOT LEARN PLAYS. We teach our kids how to play, and not how to run a play, or run a pattern. We teach players skills and concepts that will benefit them in the long run. MEMORIZING A PLAY HAS ZERO LONG TERM BENEFIT. Some coaches spend the entirety of practices going over plays at the youth level- this is a huge disservice for these young players. The plays they are being taught have no long term benefit for their development as a player. At the older levels, we will incorporate a few plays. However all levels engaging in plays will do so at a minimum level, as the main purpose of our program is to develop players.

How To Play: Teaching players how to play is what youth basketball is all about. This includes teaching players proper spacing, how to cut, how to get past a defender, how to defend, how to run the lanes, etc. Our program teaches players universal skills and concepts that can be applied to any team or program they play on in the future. We will also teach players concepts and skills to beat a press, and handle pressure. Some teams, based on numbers of players and skill level, will be taught how to press. Pressing players at the youth level teaches aggressiveness.

Pressure / Handling the Press: This is the one aspect of the game many youth players, even high school players, struggle with. Handling pressure is a process. Many teams we play will be very quick and athletic, and will press almost the entire game. We as coaches will teach our players how to handle pressure... but it takes time and it is a process. We have a few "press breaker" plays, but the biggest thing we teach is universal press-breaker concepts, that will work for any press-breaker. Here are the most important aspects of handling the press:

- Being strong with the ball
- Using effective rip throughs
- Making strong, solid passes
- Having a reverse man, a middle man, and a sideline man
- Being confident - do not panic
- Reading the press - when to dribble and when to press

Playing Time: This season all teams will have eight to eleven players. This will allow for coaches to establish a good rotation. With twelve players or more, it is hard to get every player a good amount of playing time. Coach Luke is a firm believer that no player should be sitting on the bench for an entire game or tournament. We stress to all our coaches, our program is all about development. Yes we want to win, but winning is not the main goal of our program. Each kid needs a fair chance at developing his or her game. With that being said, some players will play more than others. This could be based on skill level, attitude, level of play, etc. If a player is not playing as much as he or she wants to, they are to talk with the coach. The coach will then inform him or her on what they need to work on in order to get more playing time.

Winning: We want to win, but winning is not the main goal of our program. Too many coaches, parents, and programs put a heavy emphasis on winning at the youth level. Longterm, winning a 5th grade championship doesn't mean a whole lot. We want our teams to win; we want the kids to have fun; we want them to make friendships and memories; but the more important 'win' for our program is to help their development, help them become better players and people, and prepare them for their futures. The best feeling is when a parent or player reaches out to our program and informs us that they made their high school team. Knowing we helped that player on their journey is what it is all about.

Uniforms: We order new, customized uniforms every season. Every player will have a customized reversible LTB jersey and black athletic shorts. Players will have the option to order a LTB shooting shirt or a LTB warm-up hoodie. Shooting shirts and hoodies are not included in the fee and need to be ordered separately. Players are not required to order a shooting shirt or hoodie, but they are not permitted to wear any other hoodie or shirt for warm-ups.

Warm-Ups: Players are not allowed to wear any other gear besides LTB apparel during warm-ups. For example, players are not allowed to wear Cavs gear or gear from another AAU club. All players have a few options for warm-up apparel:

LTB Hoodie

LTB Shooting Shirt

LTB Uniform



Health & Safety Guidelines: The health and safety of our players and families is the utmost importance of our program. We ask that players stay home if they are feeling sick in any way. If any player or family is dealing with health issues, please reach out to Coach Luke.

The LTB Difference: We use the game of basketball as a vehicle to help reach kids and young adolescents. We focus on development. Our main purpose is to help players grow, on and off the court.

VAC, Ohio Basketball, North Coast Showtime - Mobile Apps: To get game and schedule updates, location of venues, directions, and updated changes, we encourage all families to download the mobile apps for all tournaments. This season, all players and parents will have to look up their game date, time, and location. We will not send out individual schedules this season.

Dropping Players Off: Parents, please make sure that a coach is in the gym when you drop your child off. Players are not allowed to be in the gymnasiums we use without one of our coaches. This is a liability issue. Please don't drop your child off at practice without knowing if the coach is in the gym or not. Spectators are allowed at every gym this spring season.

Playing For Other Teams: Players may play for other AAU teams in the spring. All we ask is that this is communicated to the coaching staff. If your child is also playing for another program during the spring, please let us know.

Parent Expectations: We thank all parents for their support and their flexibility. Please see below a few parent expectations:

- Communicate with us anytime your child will miss a game or tournament.
- Support the team and coaching staff.
- Cheer for the team and players in a positive manner.
- Set up a scheduled time with the coaching staff, if needed, to discuss any questions or concerns.

Coach Expectations:

- Encourage growth of each player on the team as a basketball player and as an individual
- Teach each player principles and lessons they will take with them throughout life
 - *i.e. Work ethic, being on time, being a good teammate, showing sportsmanship and respect, etc.*
- Ensure a positive basketball experience for each team
- Serve as a positive role model for the young players you oversee
- Come on time and prepared to each game and practice

Player Expectations:

- Be coachable and willing to learn.
- Be a good teammate, and play with respect and discipline.
- Give effort, hustle, and energy on the court.
- Support your team while on the bench.
- Display good sportsmanship at all times.
- Wear a reversible LTB jersey to all practices and skill sessions.
- Be ready and prepared before each practice and game.
- Respect your coaches, the officials, and all spectators.



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