

YOUTH BASKETBALL IN GUANGZHOU

By Rodd Patten, Commissioner of Guangzhou Youth Basketball League

THREE YEARS AGO the Guangzhou Youth Basketball League (GYBL) was created by a few Expat Dad's to give the kids of our community the opportunity to participate in the global game of Basketball. At that time the kids could only participate in our sister league, the Guangzhou Youth Soccer League (GYSL), which was also established by some Expat parents, to give the kids an opportunity to participate in sports out side of school. While GYSL just celebrated its 10th year in 2010, the basketball league (GYBL) is in the middle of its 3rd year. Our former Commissioner Mr. Bob Jones was the driving force to get the league up and running along with Barry Naone, Mike Teter, Henry Karamanoukian, Bruno Forcione and myself (Rodd Patten).



Our league is a non-profit organization and is funded by donations from companies within the Guangzhou area. All donations made to our league go towards the kids' uniforms, basketball balls and basketball nets, court rentals, end of the year gifts and an end of the year party for players and coaches.

Our Mission statement: To introduce our youth to basketball teaching Integrity, Discipline, Character, and Leadership in a non-competitive environment.

We have **4 Values** that we also follow:

Character- GYBL is looking to teach our athletes to respect and enjoy the game of basketball.



Dylan McKenna

Commitment-GYBL asks that kids show up ready to participate, and be ready to have FUN...

Competition- GYBL promotes friendly competition between youth. We won't keep track of wins or losses.

Community- GYBL is a league created by

volunteers who are looking to help teach our kids the game.

As you can see our league is designed to teach the kids the basic fundamentals of Basketball while promoting good sportsmanship. We stress a non-competitive environment so we do not discourage the kids from playing. We have many children from different nationalities with different skill levels. We keep score during the game but do not keep a record of wins and losses.

When the league first started in 2009 we were hoping to have at least 200 kids sign up; we ended up having 190 kids. In 2010 we saw our league grow to 220 kids and this year (2011) we had a record 258 kid's sign up. With this growth come challenges. The biggest challenge was making sure we had enough room on the teams for all the kids. We normally want about 7 kids per team so all kids can get an even amount of time to play. With 258 kids we were going to have a problem accommodating them all.

Our first two years we had 4 age groups: 6-7, 8-9, 10-12 and 13+. This year we expanded our league due to the number of kids and added two 10-12 age groups. With the addition of this extra age group we were able to accommodate all the kids who signed up this year.

All our games are played on either Saturday or Sunday from early January to end of March at the American International School (AISG) at the Science Park Campus. This venue has suited us well because they have two full basketball courts. For the 6-7, 8-9 and 10-12 age groups we play sideline to side line so we have 4 games playing simultaneously.

The first week of our season is called Skills Drill Day. On this day all kids that have signed up will run through a series of basketball

drills at 8 different stations. Each player will be evaluated on their dribbling, shooting and passing skills and giving a grade. Once all the kids have been assessed, the committee populates the results from the Skills Day and creates the rosters breaking the kids into teams. Each age group has 1 hour and 30 minutes allocated to them. The first 30 minutes before the games are for practice and warming up. The next hour is the game. Each game is broken into six 6 minute qtrs. This allows each kid the chance to play 3 quarters each. Most of the coaches for our league are parents of the kids playing and some are people from the community that want to help tech the kids.



L-R: Nehal Bagri, Aymeric Jolibois, Benedikt Trinn, Kieran McKenna

During the last day of the season we shorten the games so we can present the children with a gift bag (usually consists of a basketball, wristband or water bottle) and hand out gifts to the coaches. We have one of our sponsors (last year and this year it's Fine Foods) provide the a boxed lunch for the players and coaches.

As mentioned above our league would not function if it was not for our sponsors. A special thank you to the 2011 sponsors: AMCHAM, American International School (AISG), Fine Foods, Institute for Western Surgery, EurAm, The Brew, Moheir Industries, Fresco, Bene (China Commercial Services Limited), Diamond International Services Limited, Guangdong Industrial Design and Allsmile – Dr. Lu Dentist.

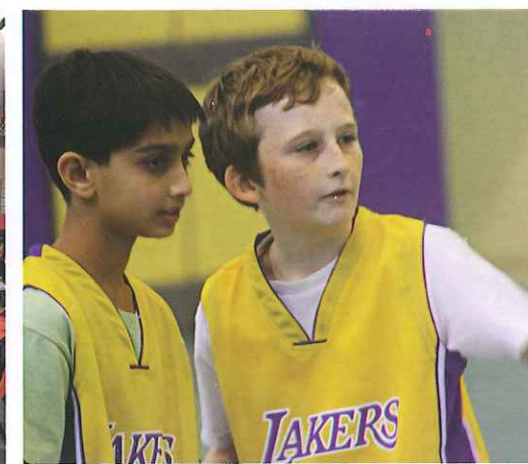


Committee Members L-R: Scott Mohr, Rodd Patten, Kevin McKenna, Bill Balaam. Not pictured: Bruno Forcione

The 2011 GYBL committee is:

- Rodd Patten: Commissioner
- Kevin McKenna: Finances
- Scott Mohr: End of the year party and gifts
- Bill Balaam: Uniforms and Sponsors
- Bruno Forcione: Webmaster

Special thanks to Angelika Schlautmann who provided the artwork for the flyers we distributed to the community as well as the GYBL banner for sign up day.



(L-R): Karan Mohan and Dylan McKenna