



THE HOOP SCOOP

Strengthening Community Through Sport



COACHES

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Larry Zmuda: Making a Difference

This month, we're proud to highlight one of our long-standing and dedicated coaches: Larry Zmuda. Currently coaching Boys 3 and Boys 5, Larry has been a cornerstone of GF Hoops for over 20 years and has held a variety of leadership roles, including commissioner. Despite his children being grown, Larry continues to dedicate his time and energy to overseeing tryouts, organizing team drafts, leading special events like skills challenges. Larry is the dependable go-to person who steps in, without hesitation, when needed.

Larry's commitment to youth sports extends beyond basketball as he has served on baseball boards as well. His leadership, problem-solving abilities, and energetic personality have made him an invaluable asset to both organizations. One of his favorite roles is on scholarship and awards committees, where he enjoys reading applications, selecting winners, and presenting awards to deserving recipients.

We thank Larry for his unwavering commitment to GF Hoops and for making a lasting impact on the lives of so many young athletes

As a coach, Larry makes an extraordinary effort to include players with special needs. He creates memorable experiences for every player by ensuring everyone gets a chance to touch the ball, participate in key plays, and score throughout the season. Larry's passion for the game, dedication to his players, and leadership in the community make him a true role model.

Let the Games Begin!

The season is finally here, and we're thrilled to welcome players, coaches, and families back on the court for an exciting year of basketball, teamwork, and fun!

With our league now at its largest in over a decade, gym space is tighter than ever due to local school renovations. Scheduling has become a challenge, so we appreciate your patience as game times or locations may shift. To ensure a great season for everyone, remember:

- **Have Fun:** Enjoy learning, making friends, and embracing the experience.
- **Practice Good Sportsmanship:** Cheer for all players and show kindness on and off the court.
- **Respect Our Youth Referees:** Support their efforts to ensure fair and safe play.
- **Take Care of Our Gyms:** Help keep our spaces clean and welcoming for all.

We're excited for an incredible season filled with energy, heart, and unforgettable moments. Let's make it a season to remember—game on!

The Season – By the

NUMBERS

110
Referees

130+
Teams

1,800+
PARENTS

650
HOUSE GAMES

2,500
REF ASSIGNMENTS

8
GYMS

1,000+
PLAYERS

As We Begin this Season, Let's Celebrate Our Select Success in 2024

The Fairfax County Youth Basketball League (FCYBL), provides competitive basketball for boys and girls in grades 5–8 and Great Falls Select Teams proudly participate in this cornerstone of youth sports.

FCYBL Champions and Runner-Ups: Great Falls Select achieved remarkable success in the 2023–24 season:



League Champions / Tournament Champions

Girls 6th Grade Div 1 Rewalt

(Undefeated Season 15–0)

Tournament MVP: Payton Rewalt



League Champions / Tournament Champions

Girls 8th Grade Div 1 Willson

Tournament MVP: Alice Allen



Tournament Champions

Boys 5th Grade Div 1 Harper

Tournament MVP: Sammy Clark



Tournament Runner-Up/League Runner-Up

Girls 5th Grade Div 1 Baig

Individual and Coaching Honors: Great Falls celebrated **26** award winners across divisions, recognizing exceptional players and coaches for their contributions to an unforgettable season:

Girls Divisions

Girls 5th Grade Div 1: All-League: Sophie

Baig, Abby Hankins, Afsaneh Ali

Girls 6th Grade Div 1: Most Valuable Coach:

Karen Rewalt; MVP: Charlotte McKee; All-

League: Payton Rewalt, Zoey Blair

Girls 8th Grade Div 1: Most Valuable Coach:

Sean Willson

All-League: Mariah Amrah, Alice Allen

Girls 8th Grade Div 2: All-League: Jocelyn

Dzierzak, Addison Kiser

Boys Divisions

Boys 5th Grade Div 1: All-League: Sammy Clark, TJ Harper,

Everett Sabrick

Boys 5th Grade Div 2: All-League: Zan Hasan

Boys 6th Grade Div 1: All-League: Mickey Wilson, Daniel

Mooney

Boys 7th Grade Div 1: All-League: Dominic Laws, Aram

Mehmetoglu

Boys 7th Grade Div 3: Most Valuable Coach: Christian Rees

All-League: Phineas Rees

Boys 8th Grade Div 2: Most Valuable Coach: Joey O'Connor

All-League: Campbell Tyler, Trent O'Mally, Bennett Blair

Congratulations to all the athletes, coaches, and teams for an incredible season that showcased the best of youth basketball in Fairfax County, proudly representing Great Falls and **Best of Luck in 2024–2025!**

Fun Fact: Layups are the most practiced shot in youth basketball—and the most successful!

Player Highlights: TJ Harper & Sammy Clark



In 2022, TJ Harper and Sammy Clark wrapped up their 3rd grade house league season playing in the GF Hoops All-Star game. Little did they know that just 2.5 years later, they would be flying to Singapore to represent the USA in the Starlight International Youth Basketball Open (SIYBO).

Rewinding the Journey. After their 3rd-grade season, GF Hoops Select Coach Adam Harper began preparing the rising 4th graders for the GF Hoops 5th Grade Select tryouts. That summer, TJ and Sammy, like many other GF Hoopers, trained diligently. Their hard work paid off in the fall of 2022 when they made the 5th Grade Select B Team as 4th graders. Despite their determination, the team finished the

season with a 3-11 record, leaving the boys hungry to improve and ready to tackle the next challenge. The following season, TJ and Sammy worked hard with their teammates, coaches and GF Hoops Trainer Coach Jess, committing to extra practices and improving their skills. Their hard work and team spirit led to an unforgettable season, culminating in a playoff run full of energy and a championship win over Dulles! That season, **TJ, Sammy, Sully Thompson, Eddie Grinnon, Brooks Bagin, Everett Sabrick, Carter Martin, Sam Howard, Matteo Clemente and Jaxon Palmer** became the first-ever Boys 5th Grade Division 1 FCYBL champions in GF Hoops history, cementing their legacy as a team to remember.



Singapore Bound. TJ and Sammy's dedication didn't stop there. Their offseason training and passion for the game led to an unexpected and incredible opportunity: an invitation to play for the USA in the SIYBO 12U Championship in Singapore. Their families were thrilled, and the boys eagerly accepted the chance to represent their country on the international stage.

In August 2024, TJ, Sammy, and their moms flew to Singapore, where the boys joined six other players on Team USA. Over five days, they played six games at Bukit Canberra Sport Hall against teams from countries like Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Germany, and Canada. Beyond the court, they embraced the tournament's theme, "Where friendships and sportsmanship cross borders."

The boys enjoyed exchanging gifts with opposing teams, learning about different cultures, and experiencing a variety of playing styles. Between games, they explored Singapore, tried local cuisines, and soaked in the unforgettable atmosphere of an international tournament. Their efforts paid off when they won the gold medal, proudly wearing the USA jersey and standing as champions.

A Journey Rooted in GF Hoops.

From the GF Hoops 3rd Grade All-Star game to an international gold medal, TJ and Sammy's journey highlights their dedication, resilience, and love for basketball. Along the way, they've built lifelong memories and friendships, all rooted in the opportunities and foundation provided by GF Hoops. Their story is a testament to what hard work and commitment can achieve—on and off the court.



Did You Know? The term "slam dunk" wasn't used until the 1970s. Before that, it was simply called a "dunk shot."

High School Boys' House League

Great Falls Basketball offers high school boys an opportunity to play competitive basketball in a fun and organized environment. The 9th/10th-grade and 11th/12th-grade leagues have grown tremendously over last year. The season captures and posts weekly standings with official stats and offers a post-season tournament.

This year, we're excited to host **Senior Night** to honor our 12th-grade players for their commitment and contribution to Great Falls Basketball. Stay tuned for more information!



Team Coblenz – HS 11/12 Tourney Winners '24

Boys 11/12 Leaders 2023–24: Points: Zayd Elbash 146; Rebounds: Matthew Nakamoto 90; Assists: Dylan Aryavand 17; Steals: Ethan Cash 15; 3 PTers: Zayd Elbash 18; FTs: Ben Gulian 10; Blocks: Sinjin Bhatia 15

Boys 9/10 Leaders 2023–24: Points: Chase Langpaul 153; Rebounds: Chase Langpaul 145; Assists: Trey Kelly 14; Steals: Cole Samburg 29; 3 PTers: Krish Talwar 22; FTs: Chase Langpaul 9; Blocks: Chase Langpaul 10

Hey Basketball Family! A Special Shout Out to Our Youth Referees!

As we hit the courts and enjoy the game we all love, let's take a moment to give a big shout-out to our young referees! These kids from our own community are stepping up, doing their best, and working hard to keep the game fair and fun for everyone. We all know mistakes happen—whether you're playing, coaching, or refereeing—and that's part of learning and growing. Our young refs are no different. They're giving it their all, making calls with the best intentions, and striving to improve each game. And let's not forget, refereeing is a tough job! Half the time, no matter what call they make, someone in the gym will disagree. It takes real confidence to make quick decisions and handle the pressure in the heat of the moment.

Let's show them the same respect, kindness, and support we give to any player or coach. It's not easy being in their shoes, so let's appreciate the effort and courage it takes to be out there. Together, we can create a positive and encouraging environment where everyone, including our referees, feels valued and motivated to keep improving. Thanks to everyone for making this community so great. Keep up the amazing work!

Let's celebrate our high school senior trainer refs that will be playing collegiate level sports



Sophie Stoltz
(UNC Lacrosse)



Peyton West
(Florida State Lacrosse)



Toby Haire
(Hood College Basketball)

3-Seconds – A Commonly Misunderstood Basketball Rule

The intent of the **three-second rule** is to prevent an offensive player from gaining an unfair advantage by staying in the lane for too long. Here are some key points to understand:

- There is **no three-second count** between the release of a shot and the control of an offensive rebound. A new count starts once the rebound is secured.
- There is **no three-second count** during a throw-in or while the ball is in the backcourt.
- The **count continues during an interrupted dribble** (e.g. ball is paused but the player hasn't gained full control).
- A player **must have both feet completely outside** the lane to reset the count; lifting one foot doesn't stop it.
- Intentionally **stepping out of bounds** to avoid the three-second rule is a violation.
- A player in the lane for **less than three seconds** can dribble or attempt a shot without violating the rule.

Fun Fact: Dribbling wasn't allowed when basketball was invented; passing was the only way to move the ball.