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| Wiregrass Kings Athletic Handbook | 2022 - 2023  |
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**Who We Are**

Wiregrass Kings is a Christian, non-profit athletic organization founded in 2011. Wiregrass Kings is a member of the Alabama Christian Sports Conference (ACSC) and the Wiregrass Kings are compliant with ACSC by-laws.

**Our Mission**

Our mission is to provide a competitive, interscholastic sports experience for home school and private school student-athletes in the Wiregrass region of southeastern Alabama.

**Our Principles**

 Wiregrass Kings seeks to provide and promote Christian values among student-athletes through athletic competition in a Christian environment. Our desire is to help develop the Christian community through wholesome competition and sportsmanship.

**What We Offer**

* ***Fall:***
	+ Girls’ Volleyball
	+ Cross Country
* ***Winter:***
	+ Boys’ Basketball
	+ Girls’:
		- Basketball
		- Cheer
* ***Spring:***
	+ Boys’ Baseball
	+ Girls’ Softball

**Who Can Participate**

Wiregrass Kings is for student-athletes in grades 6-12. Student-athletes may try-out or play for the Wiregrass Kings only if they are homeschooled or their current school of enrollment does not offer the sport in which they are seeking to participate.

**Eligibility Requirements**

* ***Age Requirements (ACSC rule)***
	+ Any student-athlete that becomes 19 years of age prior to August 1 of the upcoming sports year may NOT participate in any athletic activity.
	+ Any student-athlete who becomes 16 years of age prior to August 1 of the upcoming sports year shall be eligible for varsity participation only.

***“Sports year” goes from August 1st through the end of the spring sports season.***

* ***Grade Level Requirements***
	+ Volleyball is for female students in grades 6-12. Participants must be 11 years old by August 1 of the upcoming sports year.
	+ Cross Country is for male and female students in grades 6-12. Participants must be 11 years old by August 1 of the upcoming sports year.
	+ Basketball is for male and female students in grades 6-12. Participants must be 11 years old by August 1 of the upcoming sports year.
	+ Baseball is for male students in grade 6-12. Participants must be 11 years old by August 1 of the upcoming sports year.
	+ Softball is for female students in grades 6-12. Participants must be 11 years old by August 1 of the upcoming sports year.
	+ Cheer is for female students in grades 6-12. Participants must be 11 years old by August 1 of the upcoming sports year.
* ***Academic Requirements (ACSC rule)***
	+ Must maintain a 2.0 grade point average, on a 4.0 scale at the end of each grading period throughout the season.
	+ Current eligibility is determined from the grades at the end of the most recent grading period.
* ***Eligibility Length (ACSC rule)***
	+ Eligibility is limited to four consecutive years starting upon the student athlete’s entry into the ninth grade, regardless of age.
* ***Transfer Eligibility (ACSC rule)***
	+ Transferring from Non-ACSC Institutions.
* Transferring athletes are subject to a continuance of any disciplinary action (e.g. academic or behavioral probations, suspensions, etc.) initiated by the previous institution/league regarding athletics.
* If the athlete transferred in good standing from the previous institution, the athlete is immediately eligible for the Wiregrass Kings, if all other eligibility requirements are met.
	+ Transferring from ACSC Member Institution.
* Any athlete transferring from an ACSC member institution to another ACSC member institution must receive approval from the ACSC Governing Board prior to participating in any sport.

**Sports Roster Policy**

 In order to comply with ACSC policy, the Wiregrass Kings complies with the ACSC rules for bench limits. For practical reasons, the Wiregrass Kings allows coaches to limit the number of players on a team. Placement on a roster does not guarantee playing time for any player. The roster limits are listed below by sport.

* ***Volleyball****:* Maximum roster size is unlimited. Bench is limited to 15 players. (ACSC rule)
* ***Cross Country:***
* ***Basketball****:* Maximum roster size is unlimited. Bench is limited to 15 players for JV and Varsity. (ACSC rule)
* ***Baseball & Softball****:* Maximum roster size is unlimited. Bench is limited to 25 players. (ACSC Rule)
* ***Cheer:*** The decision of the cheer roster is at the discretion of the cheer sponsor.

***“Roster” is defined as the Official Roster with the names of eligible student-athletes that is submitted to the ACSC by the Wiregrass Kings.***

***“Bench” is defined as those eligible student-athletes who are listed on the scorebook for a particular game.***

**Protocols**

 Wiregrass Kings abides by the most recent rule books issued by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the ACSC.

 In the event that Wiregrass Kings participates in a contest hosted by a school of another athletic conference (Alabama Christian Education Association, AISA, etc.), the Wiregrass Kings will abide by the rules of the host team’s conference/governing body.

 All written policies covered in the Wiregrass Kings Athletic Handbook are subject to clarification and/or change by the NFHS, the ACSC, or the Wiregrass Kings Board.

**Administrative Requirements**

* Registration Form
* Release of Liability Form *(**ACSC Rule)*
* Concussion Form *(ACSC Rule)*
* Copy of Birth Certificate *(ACSC Rule)*
* Copy of grades from most recent grading period *(ACSC Rule)*.
* Pre-participation Sports Physical Form

*Players must have a physical exam by a physician prior to participating in a sport. Good for one year from date of physical.*

**Fees**

* All required fees shall be paid by check or money order, payable to the Wiregrass Kings.
* Participants have the option of raising the whole amount for all player participation fees through sponsorships.
* All Sports
	+ Player Participation Fee ($375) - due for each sport in which a player participates

***Refund Policy***

* All fees are non-refundable. Participants who have not paid their final payment within two weeks of the first game may be removed from the roster.
* If a family has an issue meeting the payment deadline, the board of directors may grant an extension, at their discretion.
* Each sport may offer the players and parents other purchase options such as shoes, warm-up jerseys, pictures, etc. These will be coordinated by the individual teams. These purchases are not required for participation.

**Communication**

The Wiregrass Kings is a decentralized organization consisting of many families spread out across the Wiregrass Area. Our student-athletes do not attend the traditional brick-and-mortar school with their team mates each day. Therefore communication methods must be efficient. Since most information such as forms and schedules will be sent out by email, it is imperative that your correct email address is available.

Coaches may also choose to use other communication methods such as text messages, GroupMe, or other broad communication tools. The choice of communication method shall be made by the coach or other individuals responsible for communicating team information. Please ensure that the coach has your contact information to allow timely communication of schedule changes, cancellations, etc.

If possible, please email any questions instead of calling. We will be prompt in answering your emails.

Email address: wiregrasskings@yahoo.com

Mailing address: Wiregrass Kings

 PO Box 5675

 Dothan, AL 36302

**Uniforms**

Each participant must dress in appropriate practice gear and assigned game apparel when participating in the Wiregrass Kings athletic program. Team uniforms are to be worn neatly, and the coaches will determine the uniform requirements for practices and games. All participants must follow these guidelines. For safety purposes, no jewelry should be worn during practices or games.

Student-athletes are responsible for cleaning and care of all practice and game uniforms.  Care must be taken when laundering the uniforms. Wash according to product instructions and hang to dry.  Do not put uniforms in the dryer. The costs of replacing uniforms that are lost, stolen, damaged, or have unusual wear are the responsibility of the student-athlete. Student-athletes will wear only those practice and game uniforms designated by their coach.  Uniform items that are owned by the Wiregrass Kings are to be turned in at the end of each season. Student-athletes may only wear their Wiregrass uniform as game attire.

**Transportation**

It is the participant’s responsibility to provide their own transportation to and from games and practices, as well as their own food.

Coaches will be present at all practices, games, and events. Please promptly pick your child up at the appointed time. Contact the coach in case of emergency.

**Attendance**

Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and games. Some examples of acceptable reasons for missing practice or games are:

* Injury/illness
* Doctor’s appointment
* Family emergency
* School conflict

Athletes should notify their coaches as soon as possible if they are going to miss a practice or game. If a player is going to miss a practice, he should make every effort to notify the coach at least 48 hours prior to the practice. Repeated absences and/or unexcused absences may result in decreased playing time, suspensions, and/or removal from the team.

**Parent/Coach Interaction**

Parents and coaches must have an understanding of the expectations and philosophies of one another. Clear communication is important.

 ***Communication you may expect from the coach:***

* Philosophy of the coach
* Expectations the coach has for the team members.
* Locations and times of all games and practices.
* Approximate return times for all away games.
* Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
* Procedure to follow for injuries.
* Discipline that would affect playing time.

### *Communication coaches expect from parents:*

* Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
* Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
* Medical or physical limitations of the child

### *Appropriate issues to discuss with a coach:*

* The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
* Ways to help your child improve.
* Concerns about your child's behavior.

### *Issues not appropriate to discuss with a coach:*

* Playing time
* Team strategy
* Play calling
* Other student-athletes

***Procedures to Follow When a Player/Parent has a Concern with the Coach***

There are some situations that may require a conference between the player and the coach and the parent and the coach. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other’s position. To allow for clear minds and level emotions the Wiregrass Kings enforces a 24 hour rule of communication. In the case of conflict, participants (players, parents, etc.) must wait for 24 hours before addressing a conflict with the coach, athletic director, or board members. When these times of conflict arise, the established Chain of Communication to follow is:

*Step 1 – Athlete to Head Coach*

* We believe that student athletes should be able to approach his/her coach with regards to conflicts that arise on athletic teams. Parents are asked to encourage their child to deal directly with the team’s head coach.

*Step 2 – Parent to Head Coach*

* Once your child has met with his/her head coach, parents are welcome to set up meetings with the head coach of their child’s teams. Such discussions should be done with a professional demeanor. Parents are not allowed to approach coaches immediately before or after contests and must follow the 24 hour rule. Failing to comply can result in your child’s loss of privilege to participate.

*Step 3 – Parent to Athletic Director*

* If the proper channels of communication have been followed and the conflict is still not resolved, parents are encouraged to set up a meeting with the athletic director. Please contact the athletic director to schedule this meeting. This will allow the proper allotment of time to be scheduled for the meeting. A follow-up meeting with parent, student-athlete, head coach and athletic director will take place if necessary.

*Step 4 – Parent to Wiregrass Kings Board*

* If steps 1-3 have been followed and the conflict is not resolved, a meeting with the Wiregrass Kings Board may be requested through contacting the president of the board.

\*If at any point during an athletic season, behavior of a Wiregrass Kings coaching staff member is observed that would be considered unethical in regards to the Christian morals, values, and standards of our organization, please notify the athletic director directly.

**Participant Behavior**

 Wiregrass Kings athletic programs promote a wholesome family atmosphere for participants and their families. The following sections address behavior expectations for players, parents, and event attendees.

* **The following behaviors are not tolerated:**
	+ Vulgar or abusive language
	+ Unsportsmanlike conduct
	+ Fighting
	+ Vandalism
	+ Destruction of equipment or property
	+ Harassment of game officials/coaches/players
	+ Verbal or physical threats to game officials/coaches/players
	+ Racism
	+ Sexism
	+ Misuse of social media
		- Players, families, and faculty of Wiregrass Kings must remember that their social media interactions reflect on the entire Wiregrass Kings community, as well as themselves and Christ. Please remember who you represent before you post.
	+ Bullying
		- Bullying is an act of repeated aggressive behavior (including ridicule) in order to intentionally hurt another person physically or emotionally. Bullying is characterized by an individual behaving in a certain way to gain power or control over another person.

Code of conduct infractions may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including suspension or removal from a team/sport. Should a serious matter occur that could result in suspension or removal, the coach and student athlete, along with his/her parents, may request or be requested to meet with the Board of Directors.

*The Wiregrass Kings Board of Directors and Athletic Director have the authority to place athletes on disciplinary suspension as a result of inappropriate actions. The Wiregrass Kings Board of Directors and Athletic Director have the authority to limit or revoke the participation of family members, friends, or game attendees who violate these behavior expectations.*

***The following qualities are expected and encouraged****:*

* ***Discipline***: Discipline is a necessary part of any athletic endeavor. Discipline builds character and creates a unified team.
* ***Respect***: Players will show respect to others at all times. Titles (Mr., Mrs., Coach, etc.) should be used when addressing an adult. Team members must also treat each other with respect, kindness, empathy, and compassion.
* ***Punctuality***: All participants are expected to be on time for each practice, game, and team activity.
* ***Attendance***: Attendance is necessary for proper preparation for games. It is expected that members be on time for practice and to depart for games. In the case an athlete may not be present; a parent should contact the coach to let them know of the situation.
* ***Attention***: Players should be listening when instructions are given and pay close attention to the coaches when they are addressing players or teams. Coaches expect a wholehearted effort from players. Eating, socializing, or leaving practice areas without permission are not allowed.
* ***Proper Conduct***: Wiregrass Kings athletes are expected to maintain a positive attitude and behave in a Christ-like manner. Although we may encounter other athletes, parents, coaches, or officials who do not behave properly, we must determine to keep our standards high. Set the example for those around you.
	+ *Participants will respect the authorities of every game and practice (Officials, Coaches, Athletic Directors, etc.)*

**Prayer and Devotions**

As a Christian organization, all practices should begin with prayer. If desired, it is acceptable to conduct devotionals.

**Sexual Ethics Policy**

Wiregrass Kings affirms the biblical understanding of sexuality as a gift from God (Genesis 2:24) as defined in His Word. In concert with biblical teaching, we support the principle and practice of purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage, which is the union of one man and one woman. In addition, the Wiregrass Kings recognize that the gift of gender is part of the goodness of God’s creation, is predetermined by God, and is revealed at conception. Lifestyles or practices inconsistent with these biblical teachings are also inconsistent with the mission of the Wiregrass Kings. The Wiregrass Kings affirms the biblical teaching that all sexual conduct outside the sanctity of marriage, including both hetero and homosexuality, is a sin, a turning away from God’s ideal as outlined in Scripture. We understand that while we all fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), the grace of God poured out through the blood of His Son calls us to repentance, forgiveness and a new life in Christ (2 Corinthians 7:10, 12:21; 2 Timothy 2:25; 2 Peter 3:9). We understand that these issues are very personal in nature, and great discretion will be given in dealing with such matters. Our purpose is not to bring shame or discomfort to an individual or family. Consequently, our policy for all Wiregrass Kings’ athletes, staff, parents/guardians, and board members calls for devotion to a biblical standard of purity. In addition to personal behavior, board members, staff, athletes, and parents/guardians are expected not to participate in advocacy groups that promote sexuality contrary to biblical teaching. The Wiregrass Kings may determine the consequence for the individual that is appropriate for the act committed. If a continued relationship with the Wiregrass Kings is deemed to be damaging to (or a distraction from) the mission of the Wiregrass Kings, appropriate action, which could include dismissal, may be necessary.