

# Welcome to Small Fry Basketball

While not restricted to newcomers, this presentation is intended to provide a guide to essentials and recommendations when starting a ***Small Fry Basketball*** franchise. It is understood that franchises will come from different regions and demographic backgrounds, while also knowing that availability of resources will vary in different areas.

***Small Fry Basketball*** will have several REQUIREMENTS for those seeking a franchise, but in some cases, this presentation will merely suggest guidelines and recommendations.

Most of the figures and recommendations will be based on a typical franchise: one varsity team and one junior varsity team with the anticipation of sending the varsity team to the International Tournament in Orlando, Fla.



# Small Fry Basketball Contacts

## Small Fry Basketball

This presentation serves simply as a “getting started” guide for *Small Fry Basketball*. Please consult our website at [www.smallfrybasketball.com](http://www.smallfrybasketball.com) as a full reference for By-Laws, history, necessary forms, schedules, links and a wealth of further information.

For those interested in getting involved with *Small Fry Basketball* as a participant or sponsor, please contact :

**JEFF MILKIE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**E-mail: [jmilkie@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jmilkie@sbcglobal.net)**



# History

Founded in 1968, *Small Fry Basketball* is intended to provide an opportunity for shorter athletes, with a height limit of 5-foot-1 and a game played on 8-foot-6 baskets. The International organization branches to several regions, currently highlighted by multiple teams in the Midwest, Chicago, East Coast, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands.

Regional play occurs early in the calendar year with qualifying tournaments leading to the annual International Tournament held at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando, Fla.

Teams are offered at the varsity and junior varsity (developmental) level.



Small Fry alums include NBA standouts Derrick Rose (Chicago Bulls), Will Bynum (Washington Wizards) and J.J. Barea (Dallas Mavericks); former NFL quarterbacks Donovan McNabb and Mike Tomczak; and current Kentucky University guard Tyler Ulis.



# Unique for Kids



Highlights (clockwise, from top left: \* Small Fry measuring; \* Photos with Derrick Rose; \* Second-generation Small Fry; \* Parents enjoy fun in Orlando.



The season highlight is the visit to ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando for International play.

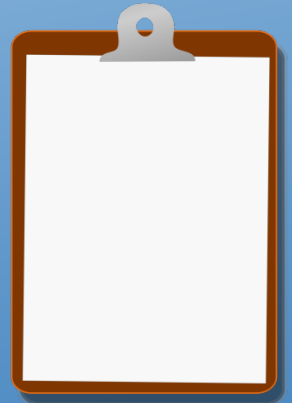
Small Fry Basketball was founded with ideas of fairness for all and to emphasis development that will allow smaller athletes to compete at the next level. High School coaches often applaud Small Fry alums for their outstanding fundamentals and understanding of the game of basketball.

# Getting Started

Begin by researching the *Small Fry Basketball* web site and by contacting Executive Director Jeff Milkie to seek more information.

Essentials will include, but are not be limited to:

- A pool of eligible athletes.
- Gym availability (with compatible 8'6" baskets or clip-ons).
- Uniforms.
- Administrators and coaches.
- A budget, to include fund-raising, to cover expenses.
- Plan, organization for travel to competition, tournaments.



Some Small Fry franchises operate under the guidance of park district, Boys & Girls Club or other community organization. However, many franchises are simply independent organizations that operate with a board of directors and seek support through communities, sponsors and fund-raising efforts.

# Expenses

Costs begin with the following:

## Start-up, Local

- Franchise fee (varsity, rookie)
- Insurance (required)
- Uniforms
- Equipment and balls
- Gym rental
- Officials' fees
- Travel expenses
- Meals

## Florida Trip

- Disney entry fee
- Air fare or bus rental
- Hotel
- Theme Park tickets (required)
- Ground transportation
- Meals
- Programs (optional)
- Gifts for opponent (required)



Budgets will vary based on location, number of teams and “extras.” To operate a single team with plans to travel to Florida, a required budget will probably run toward a minimum of \$20,000. Communities often have a big heart in supporting young athletes, and all resources should be explored.



# Fundraising

Fundraising ideas:

## Major Ideas

- Seek a significant sponsor
- Fees collected from parents
- Yearbook advertising
- Hosting tournaments
- Golf outings
- Candlelight bowls

## Other ideas

- Raffles
- Candy sales
- Small Fry gear sales
- 50 / 50 raffles at games
- Tag day on street corners
- Coordinated efforts with schools
- Restaurant % of sales sponsor

It's best to offer fund-raising options that minimize the amount of funds that must come directly out of parents' pockets.

Franchises seek out funds to meet their budget needs in a variety of ways. While Small Fry Basketball is always seeking sponsorships and ways to help keep down costs for franchises, the ultimate responsibility for funding teams falls on the individual franchises.



# Team Gear

Many teams will add (sometime very extensive) gear to their franchise budgets. While Small Fry is typified by its “first-class” image, franchises should be careful when going well beyond the essentials of uniforms.

Teams will often include in fees or offer to parents the “frills” of team shoes, team bags, shooting shirts, jackets, T-shirts, hats, swim wear, etc. While many of these items are nice, franchises should be responsible when developing budgets and maintaining participation fees that are manageable for parents and all athletes with a desire to participate in Small Fry Basketball.

The best option is to get the “extras” sponsored by a business or individual.

Small Fry tradition calls for plenty of enthusiasm at games, particularly at the International Tournament. This includes team colors and a lot of them, which adds to the excitement and overall fantastic experience.





# Florida Checklist

Here's a list of some things to put on your travel checklist:

## Team Arrangements

- Travel (ground or air)
- Ground transportation
- Hotel listing and payment
- Funds for meals
- Airport transportation
- Communication with parents

## Required

- Tournament entry fee
- Disney waiver forms
- Team stays in host hotel
- Theme park ticket payment
- Gifts for first opponent
- Coaches in dress code



Small Fry is fortunate to have a great host in the Walt Disney World Resort, with all teams required to stay in the same host hotel. Commissioners will be in touch with reminders, but travel plans are responsibility of the teams. Parents will also receive some great offers, but are on their own for planning.

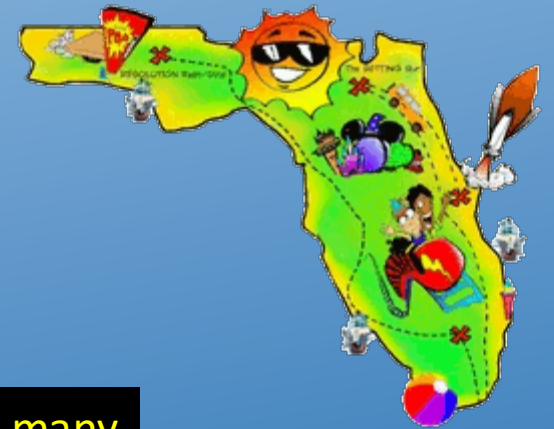
# Sportsmanship

Each coach who occupies the bench in ***Small Fry*** is required to sign an official Code of Conduct, most of which deals with Sportsmanship.

Sportsmanship applies to dealings with players, opponents, game officials and tournament workers. ***Small Fry*** also takes great pride in hearing compliments from restaurants and hotels about Small Fry teams and players when they visit.

While coaches sign the Code of Conduct, it's important that anybody representing a franchise explain the importance of ***Small Fry*** Sportsmanship to players, parents and fans!

Small Fry plays in some of the finest facilities and uses referees who in many cases have worked at the collegiate level or are considered among the best in their high school state associations. Consequently, we take the spirit of sportsmanship very seriously.



# Small Fry Tips for Teams

With nearly 50 years of *Small Fry Basketball*, experience has taught many of us some of the best ways to build a respectful, successful franchise. Good and bad ideas have been tested. What is most important is that we never put kids, parents or the organization in an embarrassing situation.

While there's certainly more than a single way to do things right, the following pages will document some tips for getting your franchise running in the right direction. This will not address all components of running a franchise, merely some areas that clearly warrant some additional attention.

Small Fry has had many great teams and contributors since Mr. Small Fry, the late Bob Lueder, and three others founded the organization in 1968. We've learned from the good and bad, and want to offer some of that experience to new Friends of Small Fry Basketball.



# Staff

The best policy is to recruit a staff that allows the coaches to coach and the administrators to organize. While functions like fund-raising will always overlap, the development of sound teams requires coaches to spend their time with the athletes.

Having a separate administrative staff or board of directors will help break up much of the paperwork, budget and parental relations from the on-court requirements of a coach.

There's never a case of having too much help. . . Just be sure everybody knows their roles and their importance to the overall cause.

The most successful organizations in Small Fry tend to be ones that are deep, including people who possess years of experience, as well as some enthusiastic youth with new and fresh ideas.





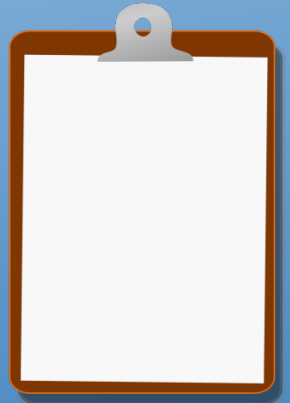
# Tryouts

Especially when offering more than one team (varsity, rookie), be very clear about the rules of ***Small Fry*** (age, 5-foot-1 height limit) and the number of teams offered when families first arrive in the gym. Be very clear about expectations.

Since many tryouts conflict with other teams, be sensitive about schedules. Make future tryout dates very clear and give a sense of when final decisions will be made on cuts. Be clear if factors beyond sheer talent (attitude, work ethic, height, ability to take instruction) will factor into decisions.

While coaches have a good idea on some kids from the first hour, make it clear that everyone in the gym is getting an equal opportunity to showcase talents. All coaches should be on their feet and taking an active interest at all times.

Tryouts are one of the least fun components of coaching. That's why it's important to be organized, make a great first impression and be as classy as possible when cuts are made. Keepers or not, families will talk about the quality of your tryouts in the community.



# Height Limit

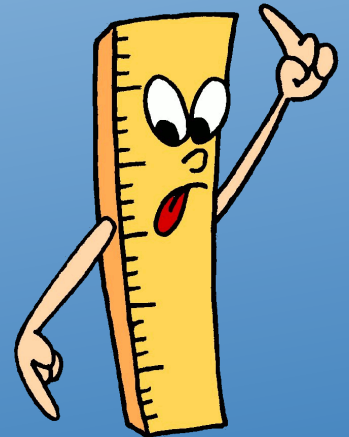
Each level of ***Small Fry Basketball*** will conduct an official “Measure-In” prior to athletes playing in actual competition. The measure-in is final and binding for the entire season.

While there is a precedent for kids ever-so slightly taller than 5-foot-1 successfully measuring in, there are also examples each year of coaches trying to “sneak in” much taller kids (which also carries a financial penalty). This leads to extreme disappointment for families and taints Small Fry’s reputation.

Be honest with yourselves and families when talking about their height. Trying to measure in tall kids damages a franchise’s reputation and is blatant cheating.

If a franchise insists on the risk of measuring several players close to 5-foot-1, it’s vital to plan to measure 17 to 20 kids per team roster.

Small Fry is unique in its height limit, but the rule is steadfast at 5-foot-1 for varsity play, 5-foot-3 for girls International play and lower height limits for developmental play. It’s important to not set up youngsters for disappointment with unrealistic height expectations.



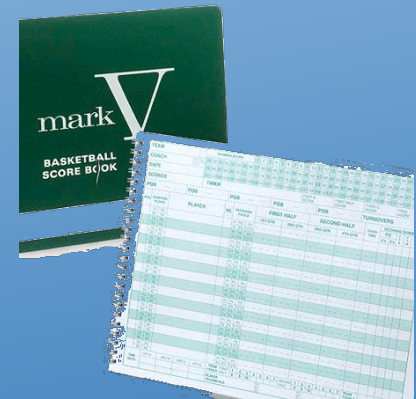
# Official Roster

**Small Fry** rules require teams to have at least 10 dressed players for an official game. International contests allow teams to dress as many as 14 players. However, official Small Fry rosters allow up to 20 players.

Teams experience many conflicts during a season, including height disqualification, injury, vacations, family conflicts and decisions, games with other teams, etc. It is ALWAYS a good policy to roster close to the maximum of 20 players to ensure all teams have at least 10 players for every game. This can be accomplished through alternates or listing a rookie player on a varsity roster.

Forfeits are not fun for families that have made a financial commitment to Small Fry. Take advantage of 20 roster spots and don't live on the edge!

An official Small Fry varsity or rookie roster may list up to 20 athletes. While kids may not PLAY on both the varsity and rookie teams at the same time, it is legal to list rookie-caliber players on the official varsity roster.



# Boundaries

Before a ***Small Fry*** player is allowed to measure, the athlete must present a birth certificate (age) and an official school form (to prove residency and adhere to any boundary rules). Players not in compliance are **NOT ALLOWED** to measure.

Each franchise should follow school form rules and thoroughly inspect documents prior to measure-in to ensure all athletes are legally on a roster.

Franchises should also have a copy of boundary rules any time a tryout is being conducted. If an athlete does not live within your own boundary area, they should be directed to the proper area (include a name, phone number) immediately. While some “grandfather” rules exist for siblings, etc., each local commissioner should be consulted to clear an athlete outside of boundary.

In order to maintain some parity and avoid “super” all-star teams, most regions have developed boundaries. This also gives new franchises a chance when they try to get off the ground. A handful of teams have been tempted to test the boundary rules.





# Parent Meetings

Parent support is critical to any ***Small Fry*** franchise. However, that support is only achieved if parents are well informed. Some potential meeting topics:

## Discussion items:

- Intro to Small Fry rules, staff
- Program history, expectations
- Explanation of height limit, measuring
- Program fees, fund-raising
- Practice schedule, expectations
- Game schedule
- Request for birth certificate
- Explanation of forms
- Planning for Florida trip
- Gameplan for communication
- Deadlines
- Solicit help for tournament hosting

## Materials, handouts:

- General informational letter
- Phone contact list
- Small Fry Medical form
- Small Fry school form
- Disney waiver form
- Fund-raising materials
- Florida info (maybe at later date)
- Sheet to solicit parent contact info
- Examples of uniforms, etc.

This may be your best or only audience with the entire group, so make a parent meeting mandatory and take full advantage of needed communication.



The key to a well-run organization is getting all parties on the same page, including players, parents, coaches and staff. Communication is critical, and an early-season organizational meeting will result in fewer problems during the season.

# Games

Because most **Small Fry** regions work with a Master Scheduler and with an Officials' Chairperson(s), tournaments typically run smoothly. However, teams can help to keep the overall operation as a classy one:

1. **Arrive** at games well in advance of scheduled start time.
2. **Have lineups** (numbers and names) available 10 minutes prior to start.
3. **Display** respect for opponents, game workers and officials at all times.
4. **Restrict** benches to eligible players and qualified coaches.
5. **Be responsible** to clean up bench area after completion of games.
6. **Communicate** any conflicts, issues with host, commissioners ASAP.
7. **Educate** all players and parents/fans about Small Fry Sportsmanship.
8. **Be aware** of future schedules before leaving gym.
9. **Patronize** local concession stands or team sponsors, advertisers.



Small Fry has a strong reputation for publishing schedules early, running tournaments on time, and presenting an organized production for parents and fans. Hosts often deserve the credit for this, but it takes cooperation of all participants to make it work.

# Hosting Tournaments

Some essentials and options for local tournament hosts:

## Essential checklist:

- *Reserve gym facility*
- *Proof of insurance supplied*
- *Coordinate with master scheduler*
- *Coordinate Small Fry officials (required)*
- *Assign gate, scorer's table workers (adult)*
- *Produce necessary signage*
- *Factor necessary set-up time*
- *Provide locker rooms or equivalent*
- *Provide official scorebook*
- *Provide warm-up balls*
- *Schedule clean-up*
- *Administrator always on-hand*

## Optional checklist:

- *Tournament program*
- *Announcer*
- *Warm-up music*
- *Team signage*
- *Concession stand*
- *Coupons from vendors, advertisers*
- *T-shirt sales*
- *Halftime entertainment*

Note that mandatory gate admission prices are established and must be used in some regional areas.

Tournament hosting on the local level is usually a shared responsibility and many franchises turn hosting into a fund-raising opportunity. Hosts take pride in showing off their facilities and often put their own twist into holding a tournament.





# Enjoy the Small Fry Experience!



*... Memories that will last a lifetime!*