

ON TOP OF THE KEY TO SUCCESS



With a deep breath, 13-year-old Bill Brandsma steps up to the free throw line. His last basket tied him with the finalist who shot right before him, scoring 24 out of 25 free throws. Brandsma knows the Getty Powell Award is riding on this final shot. He focuses on the basket, releases the ball, and swoosh—he scores! With a perfect 25 out of 25 shots, Brandsma claims the Getty Powell Award!

Though this was 20 years ago, Brandsma remembers the 1991 Elks National Hoop Shoot Free Throw Contest like it was yesterday. He was thrilled to have the opportunity to compete in the National Finals, be a part of the 100th anniversary of basketball by visiting the Basketball Hall of Fame, and even meet Getty Powell.

“I still have unbelievable memories of the Hoop Shoot,” says Brandsma. “The Elks were so supportive of me, and instilled confidence in me as both an athlete and a person.”

LESSONS FROM BEHIND THE LINE

Today, Brandsma, a graduate of Harding University in Searcy, Ark., is the Vice President of Finance at Vicon, has two young daughters, and coaches his local high school basketball team. Even now, Brandsma uses the three key lessons he learned as a 13-year-old competing in the Elks Hoop Shoot.

The contest taught him to set his goals high, and to work hard to accomplish them. After winning regionals, Brandsma first learned about the Getty Powell Award, an honor given to one male and one female finalist with the highest overall score in the National Finals. He knew he wanted this award. Between regionals and the finals, he practiced diligently, always keeping the goal of winning the Getty Powell Award in mind.

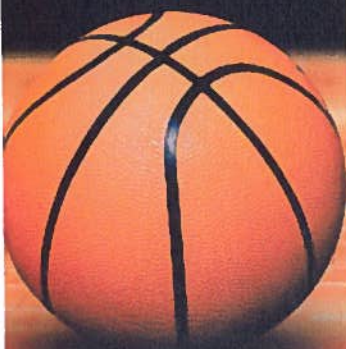
He also learned how to be mentally tough in the face of adversity. Growing up in Colorado, Brandsma was used to shooting at a high elevation. When he arrived in Springfield, the ball felt heavier and the net seemed higher.

“I had to learn to be comfortable in an uncomfortable situation,” explains Brandsma. “I couldn’t let the difference in elevation affect my performance, so I focused on adjusting my shot.”

Finally, Brandsma learned the true meaning of success. He recognized that his family, the Elks, and his fellow finalists all played a huge part in his success by being supportive every step of the way, and he was sure to handle his success with humility.

“Don’t base success on whether you win or lose,” says Brandsma. “Base it on what matters—whether or not you gave your best.”

In 2011-12, the Elks National Foundation allocated \$809,275 to fund the Elks National Hoop Shoot Free Throw Program. For more information on the Hoop Shoot, visit www.elks.org/hoopshoot.



BE A WINNER

The goal of competing is to win, but winning doesn't always mean having the best overall score. **In every competition, you are a winner if you give it your all while respecting your teammates and opponents.** Part of doing your best means practicing good sportsmanship.

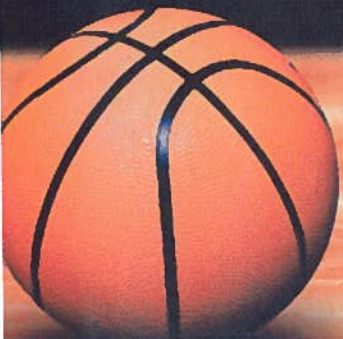
Here are ten rules to guarantee that you will be a winner:

1. Be polite to everyone you're playing with and against. No trash talking.
2. Don't show off. Just play your best. If you're good, people will notice.
3. Whether you've won or lost, tell your opponents "good game!"
4. Learn the rules of the game. Show up for practices and games on time.
5. Listen to your coaches and follow their directions.
6. Don't argue with an official if you don't agree with a call. If you don't understand a certain call, wait until after the game to ask your coach or the official to explain it to you.
7. Don't make up excuses or blame a teammate when you lose. Try to learn from what happened.
8. Be willing to sit out so other team members can get in the game.
9. Play fair and don't cheat.
10. Cheer for your teammates even if the score is 1,000 to 1! You could inspire a big comeback!

The Hoop Shoot teaches participants many life lessons. At the top of this list are good sportsmanship and integrity. Kids who compete learn about respect, dedication, loyalty and self-esteem. Through each level of competition, participants support one another while learning from their unique strengths and meeting new friends at the same time. Most important, contestants learn the importance of hard work.

Remember, if you practice good sportsmanship, you are always a winner!

Can't make it to Springfield to see the National Finals in person? Check out our new online shot-tracker, and cheer on your favorite finalists from home! Visit www.elks.org/hoopshoot or April 30, to get up-to-the-minute Hoop Shoot results and commentary.



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