

# Positive Coaching Alliance's Bottom 10 Moments and Top 10 Moments in Sports, 2008

PCA annually releases this list of the worst and best behavior in sports from pee-wees to the pros to stimulate discussion among parents, coaches, players and educators. And, in an excerpt from his book, *Positive Sports Parenting*, PCA Founder and Executive Director Jim Thompson explains how coaches and parents can help youth and high school athletes process the life lessons contained in the Bottom 10 and Top 10 Moments. For links to media coverage of these moments, visit [www.positivecoach.org/bottom10.aspx](http://www.positivecoach.org/bottom10.aspx).

## Bottom 10 Moments in Sports, 2008

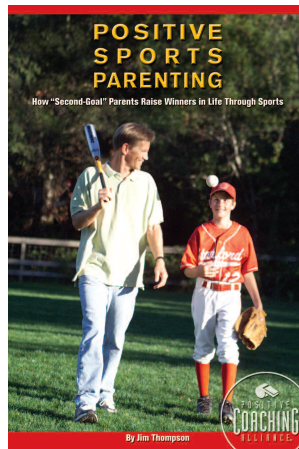
- 10** Former Philadelphia Phillies and Chicago Cubs pitcher Mitch "Wild Thing" Williams lives up to his nickname by cursing officials at his daughter's fifth-grade CYO basketball game, leading the director of officials to say that if Williams "enters the gym...we will stop officiating."
- 9** Suburban Portland, OR sheriff's deputies rush to a sixth-grade girls basketball game that nearly turns into a riot after a coach is ejected, slams his clipboard, cutting a player and threatens a 17-year-old referee.
- 8** A minor league baseball brawl between the Peoria Chiefs and Dayton Dragons is lowlighted by a player attempting to throw a ball into the opposing team's dugout, instead striking a fan, who was taken to the hospital.
- 7** On the same court that hosted the infamous Pistons-Pacers brawl, the highest-profile women's sports brawl in U.S. history breaks out between the WNBA's Detroit Shock and Los Angeles Sparks.
- 6** A 7-on-7 summer exhibition football game between two of South Florida's top high school teams, Pahokee and Miami's Booker T. Washington, devolves into a brawl, resulting in the hospitalization of a coach.
- 5** A Georgia high school baseball catcher is caught on video ducking under a pitch so that it smacks the mask of the umpire with whom the catcher was arguing.
- 4** In a post-game handshake line, a St. Louis-area youth football coach is caught on video violently shoving the face mask of an 11-year-old opponent.
- 3** Angered by an official's call in an Olympic-medal taekwondo match, Angel Matos demonstrates his superior skill by kicking the official in the face.
- 2** In a dispute over playing time at a game for seven- and eight-year-olds, a Lubbock, TX soccer dad aims his gun at his daughter's coach's husband.
- 1** A Chicago high school volleyball coach is caught on video paddling players in practice for their on-court mistakes.

## Top 10 Moments in Sports, 2008

- 10** A little-known basketball player parlays the life lessons he learned while playing for PCA Trainer Chris McLachlin at Hawaii's Punahou High School into a successful U.S. Presidential campaign.
- 9** With the USC football team facing an NCAA-mandated loss of a timeout for restoring the tradition of wearing home jerseys at the rivalry game with UCLA, UCLA Coach Rick Neuheisel volunteers to burn a timeout to even the playing field.
- 8** At the expense of a potential playoff berth, Kirtland Central (NM) High School girls soccer coach Danene Sherwood blows the whistle on her own team, which officials erroneously deemed victorious after granting Kirtland extra attempts in sudden-death penalty kicks.
- 7** Fans of the NHL's Minnesota Wild flood the team with e-mails of protest after the team signs Chris Simon, suspended eight times in his career for such deeds as stepping with his skate upon the prone leg of an opponent, taking his stick to the head of another and uttering on-ice racial slurs against a third.
- 6** Olympic swimmer Dara Torres asks officials to delay the start of a 50-meter race to give a competing swimmer time to change out of a ripped swimsuit.
- 5** Myron Rolle, a starting safety for the Florida State University football team, earns a Rhodes Scholarship, choosing to attend a final interview for the honor even at the expense of missing the first half of a critical conference game against Maryland.
- 4** Green Hope (NC) High School cross country coach Michael Miragliuolo leads the state's third-ranked boys team and second-ranked girls team, while keeping 205 runners in his program, including a hearing-impaired runner with cerebral palsy, who has cut five minutes off his time.
- 3** Tip-off of the NBA Finals between Phil Jackson's Lakers and Doc Rivers' Celtics, a championship series featuring teams coached by PCA National Advisory Board Members.
- 2** Despite his status as a starter on the Washington State University basketball team, Taylor Rochestie gives up his scholarship so the Cougars can award it to a needier player.
- 1** When Western Oregon softball player Sara Tucholsky is injured rounding the bases after her hit clears the fences, opponents from Central Washington University, Mallory Holtman and Liz Wallace, carry Tucholsky around the bases, to complete her home run at the possible expense of Central Washington's playoff hopes.

# Capitalizing on “Teachable Moments” in Televised Sports

An excerpt from the new book, *Positive Sports Parenting*  
by Jim Thompson, Founder and Executive Director, Positive Coaching Alliance  
Available at [www.positivecoach.org/store](http://www.positivecoach.org/store)



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**Case Study 8:** Watching a game on television with your child, a player taunts an opponent after making a great play. The taunted player retaliates. As a Second-Goal Parent, what should you do?

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Your objective here is to reinforce character traits and life lessons you’d like your child to embrace. Televised sporting events provide a wonderful source of “teachable moments.”

There are two ways to handle these conversations. One is for you to assert what you think of the situation. “I think both of the players blew it. Player A made a great play and then acted like a jerk. But Player B would have done better to have ignored Player A’s taunt rather than letting it take him out of his game.”

This is fine and is necessary sometimes, but an even more effective way would be to ask rather than tell. “What do you think about Player A’s behavior after he made that great play?” It is more powerful and lasting when a young person comes to a conclusion himself rather than simply nodding his head along with something his parent or coach said.

Starting the conversation with a question doesn’t mean you can’t add your thoughts later and even push back if your child says something that you disagree with. “I agree Player B may have been justified in retaliating, but I would have liked to have seen him control himself and Honor the Game. Even if Player A acted like a jerk, Player B could rise above it. I’d certainly like to see you rise above your opponent’s behavior if he dishonors the game.”

Of course, the other opportunity watching sports together on TV is to point out positive examples of players respecting their teammates, opponents, the officials, and the rules.

