



AN ABLE FOOTBALL COACH

Rick and his wife, Melanie, have been Carmel members since 2009. Some of Rick's favorite hours each week are those he spends in his role of volunteer coach - building relationships and sharing Christ with the next generation.

by Rick Johnston • October 6, 2020

For the last six years, I have had the privilege of coaching kids in flag football through sports programs put on by two of our neighbor churches – Calvary Church's CHAMP Sports Outreach and First Baptist Indian Trail's 316 Sports.

Through these programs, I am able to be a servant of the gospel, serving boys and girls (yes, it's not just a boy's club) from 8 to 11 years old. I teach them what I call "actual football," running plays that they will see watching (or playing) in high school, college, and the NFL.

We practice hard, we play hard and we compete. While the leagues are recreational at their core, the score is kept, so the kids want to play hard and play to win. It's my job to help them learn and maintain that balance of wanting to win and wanting to win at all costs.



Coaching in these leagues allows me to be a part of the child's spiritual growth... and uplift parents.



*Be diligent
in these matters;
give yourself
wholly to them,
so that everyone
may see your progress.*

1 Timothy 4:15

While helping these kids learn the difference between a slant and a curl is great, coaching in these leagues allows me to be a part of the child's spiritual growth - displayed in coaching and playing as a believer should. Through both leagues we also have dedicated time for devotions.

I have been lucky to coach many players over multiple seasons, allowing me to build great relationships with both players and parents. Whenever possible, I try to uplift the parents as well - to encourage and to drive home a key principle at Carmel: they are their child's primary disciple maker.

For me, these ministries have allowed me to live out a dream of being a football coach. The added bonus is that I have made friends and cultivated relationships with other believers through our neighbor churches. Like Pastor Alex often says, we are, in fact, better together.

If you have any sort of desire to reach the coming generation through the ministry of sport, I encourage you to reach out to either organization and get involved. It truly is a wonderful opportunity to proclaim the gospel through word and deed, and the leadership will, like any good coach, place you in a position to succeed. Plus, you might win a big game and get a Gatorade bath. That's a pretty cool - and cold - feeling.

And if you have a kid that can throw a picture-perfect post route that can hit a receiver in stride, well, come find me one day at church. Like the college coaches say, you never stop recruiting!



Carmel is committed to making disciples of those Nearest, our Neighbors and the Nations.

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