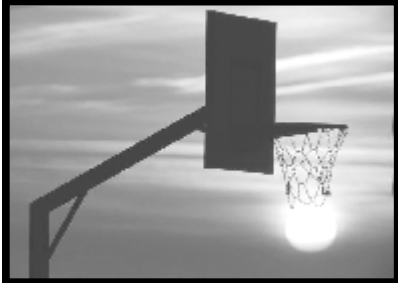


## BASKETBALL



Basketball has always been a lot of fun to play and often exciting to watch. You may remember when we use to play at the half court in our home in Lawrenceville. Much to his dismay, Matthew was the likely victim of my amateur training regiment. The basic intention was to encourage you all to exercise and teach you some ball handling and game skills at the same time.

It is March and that is the time for the NCAA tournament. In this week, both Alabama and Alabama-Birmingham posted upsets by beating Stanford and Kentucky. Kentucky was rated as the best team in the nation. “Upsets”, or unlikely outcomes, continue to make the game exciting by adding the unknown element of victory – the will.

With little experience actually playing the game, here are some general rules and guidelines.

1. Each team plays five people at a time with the usual positions being two guards, two forwards, and a center
2. The defense can play a zone where each position is responsible for an area or man-to-man where each covers a single player
3. The offense generally runs plays but can adjust as needed with some creativity of individual talent and team familiarity
4. A foul is committed when one player interferes with another by grabbing him, blocking him {with contact} or reaching-in with a similar outcome
5. A free-through is a shot taken from the foul line and is usually the result of a foul, penalty, or something similar
6. Other shots include a lay-up, jump shot, set shot, fad-away, hook, dunk and granny
7. The game has four periods and, if a tie occurs, goes into overtime
8. Other penalties include double-dribble, traveling, palming, goal-tending, lane violation, etc.
9. Speed, height, accuracy, and court and team smarts are common requirements for good play

Learn the game, play the game, enjoy the game and remember: if you want to score, you must shoot; if you want to shoot, you must get set; to get set, you must get position; to get position, you must be quick. The same conditions prevail even if you miss the first shot as the rebound is equally important. If you lack one or some of these conditions, a foul can work but only up to five times per game – after that, you foul out and can no longer play. Now, crash those boards and give me a bucket!

**In a** **WORD**