

#### **4 Kinds of Cheering**

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We attend a lot of high school sporting events. When you are coaching, you really don't notice anything except the game on the court or the field. But as a spectator, you realize that there is a lot going on. We have noticed at these games there are several types of cheering.

**First... there is *Negative Cheering*** – It usually involves making fun of or taunting the opponents or the opposing crowd. I have seen a lot of this at schools where there is little focus or effort on crowd control or where the administration is not respected. Negative cheering might be effective and even intimidating against weak minded opponents (your team would probably win the game without it), but when it is done to mentally tough, well prepared opponents, it only motivates, focuses and makes them more determined to beat your team. Sometimes negative cheering begins as fairly innocent teasing but it can quickly cross the line and become mean spirited. As has been proven, this escalation can lead to altercations between schools and communities.

**Second... there is *Positive Cheering*** – This is when cheers are organized and rehearsed. It is when the crowd is following cheerleaders and sincerely trying to help the team. It can be a positive energy source for players and fun for the students.

**Third... there is *Look at Me Cheering*** – This can happen just about anywhere. It usually is done by immature people who come to the games to get attention. They really don't care about the game as much as being seen and heard. I believe the game would be better served if they let all of these "fans" go into the side gym where there is no game and let them entertain each other.

**Fourth... there is *Spontaneous Cheering*** – This is usually brought about by great plays on the field or court. It is heartfelt, exciting, explosive, loud and extremely energizing to the players and the fans.

Next time you attend a game, watch to see how easily each of these can be seen. What does your school, athletic department and community represent?