

Mr. Snow, Director
City of Racine Park and Cultural Services

October 27, 2010

Dr Mr. Snow,

The Wisconsin Thunder Wheelchair basketball team is a member of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association. During the 2009-2010 season, we played a fundraiser game against the Racine Raiders and hosted a successful Lake Michigan Conference Tournament at the Chavez Center. These events were held because of the generosity of the Park and Recreation Dept. as you allowed us to play these games at no cost for the gym rental.

The Wisconsin Thunder has established a program that is recognized nationally as a consistent winner and advancing the sport of wheelchair basketball. Our season runs from Oct to April and we play in tournaments across the country. During the 2009 season we finished as national runner-up in the Division 3 Championships held in Denver Colorado, which has 80 teams nationally. We did not play one home game because of the gym rental costs for hosting a game.

The Thunder is a team that follows the 30 year history of wheelchair basketball in Racine. The Dr John Bryant Center was the home of the Southshore Breakers and Headley's Hotshots from 1979 until 2003. The main reason those teams could play was because the Park and Recreation Dept let us use the facility to practice at and play home games at minimal cost.

Wheelchair basketball is an opportunity for these players to channel their energy and rekindle the flame of competition against teams that are just as dedicated. These players come to the NWBA sometimes as young kids and find the joy of team sports. And in spite of their disabled condition succeed and become productive members of society because of this experience. We promote and encourage wheelchair athletes to become independent, not only in sports but life. The challenge of coaching wheelchair basketball is not just the x's and o's and multiple defenses, it sometimes involves finding a affordable place to play the games.

The many obstacles that these players must navigate both physically and mentally is daunting. I admire the courage each one of these dedicated players demonstrates when they make the commitment to play on our team. During my 31 years as a coach I have seen first hand the competitive spirit and commitment needed to be successful. We would like to get a Park and Recreation facility for 4 home dates depending on the availability of the gyms. Thanks for helping wheelchair sports.

Sincerely,



Carlos Mireles

Coach

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& CULTURAL SERVICES

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