

# **Guide to Selecting a Junior Club**

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Club volleyball is a serious commitment of time and money. It is our hope that this guide will help the volleyball family make an informed decision.*

## **Why Club Volleyball**

At a minimal level, club volleyball provides the opportunity to learn and improve volleyball skills through hours of additional practice and competition. Club volleyball gives players the opportunity to enhance athletic, social and leadership skills, making new friends from other schools and areas. In addition, since players regularly officiate matches when they are not playing, leadership skills and knowledge and understanding of the game is enhanced. Many players have gone on to be successful college players (at all levels), some are on partial to full athletic scholarships. Others have gone on to coach or officiate at the high school or college level or returned to coach at the club level.

## **Club Travel Commitments**

Some teams will only travel to tournaments in region, while others will also travel to other parts of the country. While there is no guarantee that you will be seen by a college coach, the chances are better if they play club volleyball. The high school season coincides with the college season, making it difficult for college coaches to go out to watch players very often. In many cases the high school matches start around 5:00 pm or 6:00 pm making it difficult for a coach to even get to local matches without having to miss their team's practice. The heaviest recruiting time is during the club season. A majority of college coaches search for prospective players at USAV National Qualifiers and USAV Junior National Championships due to the high level of competition and how well the tournaments are organized. Larger tournaments involving teams from several regions attract a lot of interest from college coaches.

## **Club Time Commitment**

The club season generally begins October or November with tryouts and can run through the end of April for in region play and can run through early July for team competing at the USAV National Championships. Teams generally practice two hours at a time and practice one -three times per week. Teams will generally play in at least six tournaments (some will play 12 or more). Tournament formats can be one day or be as long as four days.

## **Financial Commitment**

The cost can run as low as \$300 for a season and over \$7000 for a season depending on the level of competition, number of tournaments, practice facility costs, coaches'

travel costs, coaching expenses, supplies, equipment, balls, etc... Costs should be used for comparison between clubs to make sure you know what is and is not covered in the club fees. Costs may vary depending on uniforms, tournament registration fees, travel included/not included, responsibility of the parents, customer service, and club philosophy.

## Know Why You Want to Play Club

No matter what your objective (recreation, make varsity for high school, improve), you should be playing because you have fun, love the game and want to play. The willingness to work hard and take responsibility for your improvement rests with you. Your coach is there to help you work toward your goals so let the coach know what you hope to learn and improve on throughout the club season. The most important factor is the kind of coaching you will receive. Coaches at each club have a wide range of coaching experience, from very successful high school and college coaches to those with little experience. It is recommended that each parent check the credentials of the coach who will be coaching your child.

## Coaching Philosophy & Methodology

A coach has great influence on a player's life. This is the adult in the club with whom your child will spend the most time. The coach, if possible, should have some experience in either coaching, teaching, or at least playing volleyball. The best coaches are students of the game and continue to grow regardless of experience or previous success. It is recommended that all coaches understand the basics of first aid, because injuries do occur.

The club director as well as the coach should be able to provide a bio or resume with their specific experience and/or credentials to coach. It is okay to ask for this information; your child will be spending a lot of time in practice and on competition days with the coaching staff.

USA Volleyball and Southern Region Volleyball require each coach who works with juniors to meet these minimum standards:

- IMPACT trained (foundation coaching course)
- SSCI Background Screen (must be passed and it is monitored by USAV and each region in which a coach has a current USAV membership)
- completion of SafeSport training (monitored by USAV and each region in which a coach has a current USAV membership)
- Officiating - junior coaches are required to know volleyball rules and be able to officiate a match as this is often a requirement at tournaments.

## Parents of Club Player: Shared Responsibility

A few of the biggest responsibilities are encouraging good sportsmanship and responsible behavior, support and encourage your child win or lose, providing support financially and assist with transportation. Parents also have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a reasonable, responsible manner. **Parents must be aware that they have as much, if not more, influence on the chemistry of their team than the coach.** How can a player be a good team member

when they must listen to a parent bad mouth their teammates or coach? How can the team have good chemistry when parents sit in the stands and make disparaging comments about players or coaches to other parents?

## **Ask Questions - Due Diligence of Research**

- How many practices per week, the duration of each practice and start time?
- Where are the practices held and on what days?
- Do they have to practice during the holidays and on days following tournaments?
- How many tournaments will they attend, when and where?
- Is the club a non-profit organization?
- Does each team in the club fund itself or are the monies shared between the teams?
- What is the coaching experience of each coach?
- Do they have the following Federally required [MAAPP](#) policies in place?
  - One-on-One Interactions, including meetings and individual training sessions (Covered Organizations/LAOs are required to establish reasonable procedures to limit one-on one interactions, as set forth in federal law).
  - Massages and rubdowns/athletic training modalities
  - Locker rooms and changing areas
  - Social media and electronic communications
  - Local travel
  - Team travel
- Are coaches required to travel with the team when the traveling out of state?
- Will tournament information such as when, where and how be given to each player as soon as possible before each tournament? Many times this information is not available until the last minute due to the late arrival of information from tournament directors.
- Are the requirements of fund-raisers clearly spelled out as to participation, distribution (to all on the team or to those who work) and accountability for funds, etc.?
- Do they have an itemization of what is being paid by your fees?
- Some clubs charge one fee for the season or charge an initial fee with periodic or monthly fees. Some teams use a fund-raiser to fund their teams and some teams use a combination of the above.
- If a club is unwilling to disclose their financial policies, it is okay to seek another club
- Every Club must post the SRVA tryout policy or a link to the policy on their website where tryout information is posted.

## **Agreements between players and clubs:**

- The Southern Region of USA Volleyball (SRVA) is not a party to any of the agreements between players and clubs. We do not determine the fee structure of the clubs. We do not tell players which clubs to join. We do not tell clubs what they have to offer and at what cost. We do not collect fees for the clubs. We do not interfere if players decide to quit and want a refund.
- Make sure you read all details before you sign any agreement. It is probably wise to make sure you have copies of any agreements for your own use.