



# MVA TEAM HANDBOOK

## TEAM INFORMATION FOR PRACTICES AND TOURNAMENTS

### GENERAL CULTURE

All MVA team players are expected to show respect towards ALL coaches, teammates, other teams, officials, and other parents at ALL times.

### PLAYING TIME POLICY

We believe that each player deserves the opportunity to earn playing time. Because of this, roles for players may change throughout the season. Coaches will weigh several variables when deciding playing time, including attendance and adhering to club policies, effort, skill development, attitude, and how players might match up best versus that of the opponent. Due to the nature of the sport and the competitiveness of our club, playing time will not be equal.

Playing time will also be contingent on the various program levels that player is a part of, such as: Elite Teams and Select Teams. These teams are committed to competing at a higher level locally and at the national level. Efforts will be made to offer playing time to all players on these teams, but there will be circumstances when playing time considerations will be secondary to achieving team goals. Playing time for these teams is not guaranteed and often not equal. It is only because of the positional requirements specific to the game of volleyball. Each player should be fighting for position and playing time as it will be earned week to week.

We recognize that participating during competition is a critical part in the development of each player. We also understand that players are going to be at different developmental levels and that they need to be trained at a level that will allow for continued improvement. Developing a role for each player that will enable them to contribute to the success of the team is a top priority for our coaching staff.

However, it is our goal that all players have some on-court role every tournament. Players and parents are asked to be understanding of playing time distributions and any concerns should be brought up to the coaches, following the 24 hours rule, after practice or tournament by the player with the concern.

**Playing time is a sensitive subject on any high-level volleyball team. I want you to be clear about our expectations and how we make decisions.**

- ✓ You must demonstrate a commitment to team guidelines.
- ✓ You must demonstrate a commitment to improving your speed, agility, core strength, nutrition, solid sleep and rest habits.
- ✓ You must demonstrate a competitive attitude during practice and in competition.
- ✓ You must demonstrate strong interpersonal skill, be an energy producer, resolve conflicts, and be a giver, not a taker.
- ✓ You must learn to play one or all of the following roles: Stud, winner, stabilizer.
- ✓ You must strive to develop a strong skill base as measured by our statistical evaluation system.
- ✓ You will also be evaluated according to several "intangibles," such as your ability to inspire others, your ability to play well during critical moments, your ability to make big plays, and so forth.

## CLARIFICATIONS

- If you are not on the court during a match, you might decide that you have read our minds and know our reasons for playing-time decisions without hearing them from us. Do not assume that you know. Many factors may be operating, such as limited substitution patterns, preferred match-ups, or the quality of your practice performance leading up to the match. If you want clarification regarding your playing time status, select a time apart from practice or competition and talk to us about our decisions.
- It is likely that at some point you will disagree with our decisions. This is to be expected at this level of competition. Your job is to control your emotions and contribute to team chemistry.
- Understand that above all, playing-time decisions are motivated by our obligation to produce a team that will defeat our opponent. We will always put the players on the floor who we think have the best chance to win.
- Whenever possible, we will attempt to provide playing time for every athlete on the roster. But these opportunities cannot be guaranteed. And when they do or do not occur, our perception of when they should occur may not coincide with your perception.

## CLEAR COMMUNICATION ON THE COURT

- Blocking communication.
- Cover, Cover, Cover
- Discuss who has the seams during serve receive
- If you are not the one passing the ball, you say your teammates name and go.
- Mine, Mine, Mine & the name of the player who you want to have the second contact \*Not "I got it"
- Out, Out, Out.
- Setters are responsible for designing serve receive plays and calling free ball plays before the serve.
- The second ball will always be the setters, unless she calls for help (a player's name), or digs the ball.

## PLAYER EXPECTATION ON THE COURT

- All effort is done because you **WANT** to, not because you are forced to.
- Be coachable, listen to what we ask you to do, and do your best to mentally focus on doing what is asked of you.
- Be positive and encouraging toward your teammates. Allow the coaches to do what they do best, coach.
- **COMPETE, COMPETE, COMPETE!**
- Do the things that you have control over very well and do not be afraid to make mistakes.
- Do not let the volleyball hit the floor without making an attempt to play it. We will pursue the ball as a team and get into position to attack the ball. If for some reason you forget this rule during practice, you will likely be off the court for a few minutes to think about how important it is to go for the ball. **DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN!**
- Every team we play against will want to win as badly as we do. If you believe in yourself and do all of the above to uphold our MVA culture, we will improve as a team, have success, and beat many of the teams we play.
- Go game speed during every drill and communicate with your teammates on the court.
- Once a play is over, begin to mentally focus on the next play and what your job is.
- Pay attention to the explanation of drills and ask questions if necessary.
- You are expected to hustle when transitioning from one drill to the next, shagging balls, or getting water.
- Water breaks will be given as a team when permitted by the coach. Huddle every time before breaking.

## PLAYER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

**As a Minnesota Volleyball Academy Player, I acknowledge and agree that I will...**

- ✓ Accept the decisions of the coaching staff regarding playing time. I will accept and understand my current role on the team and always strive to achieve a larger role.
- ✓ Be accountable for all team requirements (e.g., completing tasks on time, being dependable, being on time, etc.) and I will do all of this with a sense of pride.
- ✓ Be loyal to my teammates, to my coaches, and to MVA.
- ✓ Become an ambassador of our program, going out of my way to let family, friends, and fans know that I appreciate their support.
- ✓ Comply with the acknowledgement rule (using good listening, verbalization, and eye-contact skills)
- ✓ Eliminate the use of obscenities during practice and competition.
- ✓ Learn how to set goals, live by them, and develop a lifestyle that will produce success on and off the court.
- ✓ Learn the principles of positive reinforcement and apply them in practice and competition.
- ✓ Learn to anticipate upcoming responsibilities. I will not fall into the disappointing trap of hiding from issues or being the last to raise my voice when something needs to be taken care of.
- ✓ Learn to be aware of the effect of my mood swings on people around me and to keep these swings within a reasonable variance.
- ✓ Maintain my academic life on a solid foundation.
- ✓ Overcome the urge to complain, think negatively, backstab, start rumors, take part in cliques, act selfishly, or engage in any other unnecessary behavior that disrupts the team chemistry.
- ✓ Show frequent and genuine appreciation to those who work on our behalf (club administrators, team representatives, support staff, etc.)
- ✓ Support my teammates when I am not playing during a match and stay focused because I may be needed to go in and make a play at any point in the match.
- ✓ Work hard to tell the truth in my interactions with teammates and coaches.

## TEAM RULES AND EXPECTATIONS DURING PRACTICE

- ✚ Be respectful of teammates, coaches, managers and other staff.
- ✚ Come to the gym everyday with your necessary equipment, **NO JEWELRY**.
- ✚ Come to practice and matches physically and mentally prepared.
- ✚ Communicate to teammates and coaches. There is no way to resolve an issue if we don't know it exists.
- ✚ Discuss any potential conflicts with coaches. This allows the coaching staff to plan accordingly.
- ✚ It's the responsibility of the entire team to help us achieve our goals, both on and off the court.
- ✚ Look like a team and wear MVA apparel. I.e. practice T-Shirts.
- ✚ Practice good time management and schedule time to study and get your homework done.
- ✚ Players should be at practice 15 minutes before their scheduled start time to get physically and mentally prepared for practice.
- ✚ Strive to excel academically and make the honor roll.
- ✚ Take care of **ALL** personal and training/treatment needs before and after every practice.
- ✚ Team members are responsible for the information in the handbook and information presented at practices and team meetings.
- ✚ Team members must attend and be on time to all team events unless otherwise discussed with the coaching staff. This includes, but is not limited to practice, tournaments, meetings, and potlucks.

## TEAM RULES AND EXPECTATIONS DURING TOURNAMENTS

- ✚ Always be prepared to enter the game and do something positive for your team.
- ✚ Always display good sportsmanship and have respect for the other team. No profanity or putting down others.
- ✚ Captains go and shake the up ref's hand following each match.
- ✚ Captains need to inform their coach of the refereeing responsibilities they have designated. Players need to stay close to their court if they have refereeing duties. **DO NOT BE LATE FOR A REFEREEING ASSIGNMENT!!!**

- ✚ Everyone is expected to fulfill their role to the best of their ability both on and off the court.
- ✚ If a player is unable to attend a practice or tournament, it is her responsibility to inform the coach.
- ✚ If you are watching another MVA team play, you need to periodically check your court to see how much time there is before your next match or refereeing assignment. **DO NOT BE LATE FOR YOUR MATCH!!!** We usually only have a few minutes to warm-up, so we need to start on time.
- ✚ Look like a team and wear MVA apparel.
- ✚ Maintain a positive attitude and support your teammates when you come out of the game. If you are selfish and pout on the sidelines instead of supporting your teammates, you will likely not get back on the court.
- ✚ Pay attention and make eye contact with your coach during timeouts.
- ✚ Players need to inform their coach if they plan on leaving the court regardless of whether they are playing, refereeing, or off.
- ✚ Players should get a good night sleep, eat a nutritious breakfast, and eat well and drink plenty of water during tournaments.
- ✚ Players should find a place for their entire team to keep their bags.
- ✚ Players should support other MVA teams if possible when they are not playing.
- ✚ We are aware that players have obligations other than volleyball and we will try to be understanding. However, players will not be excused from events that they have control over. It is up to the coach as to how unexcused absences affect playing time. Players are expected to have good time management.