



**SEASON 2009**

**TEAM Z VOLLEYBALL CLUB**

*You have Questions? We have Responses...*

Looking back, 2008 was an exceptional year for the Club. The transition to JVDA was viewed as a complete success from the feedback received at our end of year surveys. However, most importantly, every team played a competitive schedule and each team had a strong finish to the season. Moreover, our families responded that we achieved our #1 goal, your daughters became better volleyball players!

Looking ahead, the demand for highly competitive play and competent training and skills development has continued to increase. Team Z Volleyball Club has elected to expand once more. Everyone in the Club's organization is excited about this growth opportunity and the continued strength of our program. To answer that need we are expanding once again to include at 16's a regional program this year!

Growth comes with change, as would be expected. With all the various Club members and constituents, it's time to put some other things that we used to 'just talk about' in writing, in order to ensure fairness, consistency, and clearer communications and understandings across all age groups. Something that players, parents, and coaches value when it comes to 'delivering on our promise.'

What we are presenting at this time are some conclusions we've arrived at based upon questions of last season, and questions posed to us as this new season gets underway. We hope you appreciate the time and thinking that went into our answers. Please don't hesitate to speak with Rich Zeciski if you have further questions.

*Best wishes from Team Z Volleyball Club!*

**TRAVEL**

***Q. What is the policy on having parents travel with their daughter?***

**A.** It would be great if parents could travel to see their daughter play. But with job commitments, other siblings to attend to, the costs associated with travel, etc. – this is just not realistic. In the past, some parents have chaperoned the daughters of team mates. Families work out expense sharing, etc. among themselves.

The Club will not make these arrangements for any player or family, nor be responsible for chaperoning the players. The Club is released from any of this responsibility and/or liability associated with player travel.

## **PRACTICES**

### ***Q. What is the policy on attending practices?***

A. When a player joins this Club, it is with the understanding that attending practices is conditional to membership. Practices are a significant part of what you are paying for in fees. It's where techniques are taught, and skills are learned. Practices are where players come together to grow as a team. If someone misses a practice, it hurts team development, simply said.

Having said that, there may be a time when a practice is missed. For example, if a student athlete is absent from school on a particular day, we would accept that illness as a valid excuse if a practice is missed. The player or her parent must contact the coach to make him/her aware of this absence, as it could impact the practice strategy for that evening.

We do believe 'that school comes first.' But we also believe that students need to use their abilities in time management to attend school, attend practices, and complete studies responsibly.

Having an exam the next day is not perceived as a valid excuse for missing practice. Players miss personal development and the team misses team development.

### ***Q. Will a player be penalized for missing a practice?***

A. This is at the discretion of that player's coach. There are no hard and fast Club rules per se, but it is possible that performance is negatively impacted by missing practices. It is helpful to remind everyone that decisions about 'who starts,' or 'who plays X position' are made at practices...the Coach uses what he or she sees at practice sessions to determine skill level, impact play, etc. – and has the line-up 'in mind' prior to walking on the court for a tournament.

### ***Q. What happens if a player misses a tournament?***

A. Missing a tournament by a player (unless there is serious illness or some other serious personal matter at hand that the coach is made aware of in advance) is the same as letting your team down. The Team is built around all players, regardless of the amount of playing time each player may or may not have.

We give the tournament schedule out in advance for review and calendar planning. Once the team and Coach agree on the events, and the Club makes the commitment for that team, we do not believe 'last minute' excuses are valid (i.e. family vacations or proms). We ask that you plan ahead and around the critical competitive challenges, as that

### ***Q. How involved will Z be this year with the Club, given the expanded nature of the program.***

A. Z will be present on average at one practice per week for the National Teams (Orange and Navy). Once they begin traveling during those heavy qualifying months, Z may miss one week, but will be there more than once a week at many of the beginning of the season. He will be present at least one practice per month with the Regional Teams. In addition, a high school coach will be at one practice per week at the regional level, with your bench coach assisting;

### ***Q. How many practices will there be each week?***

A. We are scheduling three practices of at least two hour duration, per team, per week, for the national program. This is similar to what we did last year...we 'beefed up' practices as we got close to Qualifying events. There are exceptions, however, based on court time availability – something that we cannot always be certain of – but we do try our best. If there are changes, the Parent Rep / Coach should be able to communicate this in advance. Regional teams will practice 2 times per week.

## **PLAYING OTHER HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS**

### ***Q. Can my daughter play another sport during club volleyball season?***

A. Frankly, we can't make that decision...it's up to you and your daughter to decide. You should ask yourselves if she can participate in this other sport and STILL make team practices. Can she attend the Club tournaments as per the schedule? These are tough decisions, at times ...we know. Please give this your careful consideration before making this type of decision and financial and emotional commitment to club ball.

## **PLAYING TIME**

### ***Q. What is your policy regarding 'playing time?'***

A. We don't actually have one statement that can address all the particular situations. In reality, it depends. But we do appreciate the question and concern, so let us try to answer in this way:

Practices are critical in building personal and team productivity. We strive to build productivity as a whole. No Club that we know has a 'guarantee of playing time.' We do ***Play to Win***, as our Mission suggests. Our coaches will do their best to allow all players to earn their positions through skill demonstrations at practices and scrimmages, and participate in a fair manner so that the entire team benefits. This may mean that your daughter is considered a 'starter,' and plays in most games. Or, this may mean your daughter sits out in a game or a match, at coaches' discretion, with the first goal being to win. This is particularly evident during a Qualifier.

## **COACH CONTACT / Communications**

### ***Q. What if I believe the coach isn't being fair with my daughter? Who do I talk to?***

A. This procedure is likely the same as or similar to what you and your daughter experience in junior high or high school sports. The first communication should be between the coach and the player and CERTAINLY NOT on a tournament day or during tournament play. There is too much going on to distract the coach from their number one responsibility at that time.

As the first step, the player will want to ask the coach what she needs to do to improve her productivity, and it is our understanding that the respective coach will provide a professional coaching response.

In the event that this is response is not perceived to be a suitable outcome, the player may request a follow-up meeting with the coach, the player and their parent(s). It is our expectation that healthy and honest conversations in this manner can remedy any situation.

In the unlikely situation that this is not possible, a parent is asked to contact the Club's director, Rich Zeciski. It will be at Z's discretion whether to continue the discussions with other parties involved. We have not had reason to take this course of action in the past, nor do we expect to in the future. But we've been asked, *What If?*, so we are making our position clear to everyone at this time.

## **PLAYING FEES**

### ***Q. Please explain the breakdown of fees for joining. Are we paying for a lot of overhead?***

A. Essentially, there IS NO OVERHEAD. The Club has benefited from a number of volunteers, working very hard to make this organization run smoothly. Every Club Director/parent volunteer paid full fees for their daughter, along with donating generous amounts of personal time. They were reimbursed on occasion for portions of out-of-pocket expense. The only money paid out to other people was to our Coaching staff, and those amounts were not as much as we would have liked. Our Coaches work very hard and put in tremendous personal time at practices, in travel, and in actual tournament attendance. This year's budget has allocated salary this year for the Club Trainer, Z.

## CLUB COMMUNICATIONS

### ***Q. How will you keep up with communications with more players and teams?***

A. On our year-end survey, we received very high marks from families regarding our ability to communicate necessary information in a timely manner. Going forward, please know that we will use email as the preferred method of communications. It's fast; it's easy; and it's more accurate than phone messaging or phone chains.

## POST SEASON PLAY

### ***Q. Does my daughter have to attend post season ?***

A. We would expect that your daughter (and yourself) would *want her to have this opportunity*. Club play goes beyond 'making it to the Nationals.' The entire season is a skill-building opportunity. That includes what we refer to as the post season. And that's why we build into our budget the opportunity for EVERY team to benefit from that final coming together of all that was learned in Team and individual play throughout the six-month period. We believe that it takes *all 9* players to 'show up' to make a team successful, and post season is no different.

## PAYMENTS

### ***Q. Can payments be spread over a longer period of time?***

A. The Club incurs significant expenses before girls set foot on the courts. All players and teams must be registered; tournament entry fees must be sent in to secure a berth in the important limited access events. Court time and coaching stipends must be paid, along with uniforms and warm-ups.

As an operation, cash flow is critical to us, same as for you. This year we are making it possible for fees to be paid in 5 installments, versus the 4 of years past (Regional Program will have 4). We hope this gives families a little better budgeting opportunity, and we will manage our cash outflow accordingly.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

### ***Q. We are interested in having a more active role in our daughter's team. What are the opportunities?***

A. It would be our goal to have every family do something with the club and/or their daughter's team. This may or may not be possible... we know that some families are simply not able to offer any additional time to the Club and certainly respect that with our busy lifestyles.

Each team will designate a parent rep to be responsible for team communications and travel accommodations. We ask that each team choose their own rep, based upon parental interest and time availability. *It is not 'first come/first serve' nor is it the intention of the Club to select the parent rep.* Once the team is formed, and at the next time we all get together, we expect that each team make their respective representative known to us.