

Welcome to Boost Volleyball Club! Pitch and Deb have been running clubs for over 20 years, and while this particular club is in its second season, our methods and procedures are tried and true. We will do everything we can to make sure this season of volleyball is a great experience for all involved. The first step in that is providing accurate information for you, so that you are aware of our club procedures. This handbook holds the answers to most (if not all) of your questions, so please take some time to read through it.

Boost Volleyball Club (BVC) is a member of the Iowa Volleyball Region, which is a part of the larger USA Volleyball Organization. These associations can be found online: Iowa Region – www.iavbreg.org and USA Volleyball – www.usavolleyball.org.

I. Directors and Coaching Staff

Craig (“Pitch”) and Deb Pitcher are the club directors and run the club. We are here to help you, so please feel free to contact us.

Pitch: craigapitcher@gmail.com

Deb: debpitcher@southslope.net

The coaching staff is hired by the club director. They will meet all USAV and Iowa Region Coaching requirements including: membership, cleared USAV background screening, signed Jr Personnel Code of Ethics, completed coaches IMPACT training course or higher CAP certification. The coaching staff will also complete mandatory USOC SafeSport training. Bios of our coaches can be found on our website.

II. Teams

Most of our teams will be considered Regional Teams, but our desire is to grow to have National Teams as well. The level of competition that each team plays (Power, Gold, or Silver) will be determined by Pitch and the coach as they evaluate the talent and skill that is on each team. The tournaments attended by our teams will usually be within a 90 minute radius of Iowa City. All of our teams (with the exception of 10U) will compete in the Regional tournament in Des Moines, either in the Qualifying or Non-Qualifying divisions.

The number of teams within the club is based on the number of athletes who try out, the number of available coaches, and the availability of facilities in the area for practices. The goal is to have teams formed for the following grades: 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th. If there are not enough athletes, coaches or facilities to form one team within a particular grade, then a team will not be formed. In addition, some grades may have more than one team if numbers allow.

Teams will consist of 9 or 10 athletes. Occasionally, we will move an athlete from one team to another to help out a team that is short players for a tournament. Movement is at the sole discretion of the club. We will not move an athlete from or to another team until we have first discussed the move with the parents.

III. Club Fees

All players are responsible for registering with the USA Volleyball Iowa Region and paying the \$50 registration fee (\$30 for 4th and 5th grade).

The fee for participating with Boost Volleyball Club is \$885.00 (with the exception of our 4th grade team, which is \$750.00 due to less tournaments and shorter practice length). Club dues cover gym rental, tournament entry fees, uniforms, volleyballs and other equipment, coaches' and directors' pay, USAV registrations and background checks for club staff and parent representatives, coaches' travel expenses, and administrative expenses.

Once a player is accepted to the club and signs the commitment letter, along with their parent(s) or guardian(s), the family is responsible for full payment of all club dues for the entire season. The first installment of dues (\$295 or \$250 for 10U) is due at the Parent/Player meeting in November. The second and third installments (\$295 or \$250 each time) are due on January 20th and February 20th. (If a family needs to make alternate payment arrangements, please contact Pitch or Deb.)

Additional fees associated with BVC might include travel & lodging expenses, and any BVC apparel that you decide to purchase (t-shirts, sweats, etc.). Players are required to purchase a pair of NAVY spandex to wear with their uniform, but that is the only thing that is required.

As we certainly understand the financial strain that activities can cause a family, it is our desire to offer an opportunity for some help for those who choose to participate. Our club will be hosting a cookie dough fundraiser that will allow families to earn some money toward the final installment of club fees. For every box of cookie dough sold, \$8 will be paid directly toward your final installment. So, if a player sells 20 boxes, they will earn \$160 off their bill. If they sell more or less than that, then they will earn more or less. In the event that a player happens to earn more than the full amount of the final installment (\$295), then we will reimburse you for the amount that you already paid in previous installments.

Checks for club dues should be made out to Boost Volleyball Club and mailed to Deb Pitcher at 1820 Wenrose Dr. NE in North Liberty, 52317. You may also request an online invoice from Deb that will allow you to pay via credit card.

IV. Practices

Practice sessions for all BVC teams will be twice a week. This year we will be implementing a new procedure in which each team will practice once with solely their team. This practice will take place on a weeknight. For the second weekly practice (which will be Sunday nights from 7-9 PM), *the entire club* will practice at the same time on all 5 courts at the GreenState Family Fieldhouse in Coralville. Sunday night practices will be dedicated to skill development, and will be taught by Pitch and all the coaches for the whole evening.

All athletes will have the opportunity to learn and grow in the techniques of passing, setting, attacking, serving, blocking and digging. Movement, transition, and footwork patterns will also be emphasized. As the players move up in age divisions, strategies will expand and the athletes will learn more advanced offensive and defensive techniques.

Attendance at all practices is very important, and an absence of even one player often affects the whole team and the coach. We strongly urge all players & parents to be respectful of the time of other

players and coaches, and do their best to uphold their part of the commitment to attend and be on time to all practices. However, we understand that difficult situations do arise, so if a player is not able to attend a practice, it is their responsibility to contact their coach at least an hour prior to the beginning of the practice session, so that the coach may plan the practice accordingly. *It is important to note that if a player does not attend practices on a regular basis, playing time will be impacted.*

Practices will be held in the Iowa City/North Liberty area. Most of our gym time is reserved at the GreenState Family Fieldhouse in Coralville.

V. Inclement Weather

As a general rule if area schools have canceled or dismissed early because of inclement weather, practices for Boost may also be cancelled. However, in certain cases where road conditions have improved throughout the day, it may still be feasible to hold practice. In this case, and in the event that inclement weather starts after school is dismissed for the day, the coach and Pitch will make the decision about whether or not practice will be cancelled. If practice is cancelled, the coach will attempt to call or email at least one hour prior to the start of practice. If you are unsure, please call your coach. Otherwise, if you are unable to reach your coach, **please use your own judgment**. No penalties will be given for missing practice due to inclement weather.

VI. Tournaments

Teams involved with BVC will attend 6 or 7 tournaments (4th grade will attend 4). The majority of the tournaments will only be one day, either Saturday or Sunday, but there will most likely be at least one (the Regional tournament in Des Moines) that will require an overnight hotel stay. All hotel reservations are the responsibility of the player and her parents. The Parent Representative for each team will survey parents as to where to stay and reserve a block of rooms at the hotel. Often there is a cut-off date for reserving your room, so please make arrangements well in advance of the tournament date.

The typical one-day tournament schedule starts at 8:00 AM with “pool play” consisting of three or four “round-robin” matches. Bracket play for one-day tournaments starts sometime in the afternoon, ending with tournament finals sometime that evening. Because the length of volleyball matches can be unpredictable and tournament formats and management varies, it is difficult to pinpoint the time a tournament may end. Teams making it to the finals will add another two or three matches to their day. A few multi-day tournaments (Regionals and other special tournaments) involve two days of pool play followed by single elimination bracket play.

All clubs register for tournaments the first weekend in December. After that date we will let you know as soon as we can which tournament dates are confirmed. You will have the dates of the tournaments, but we will not get the individual tournament schedules until about 1 week prior to each event, so exact times will not be known until then. When Deb receives the tournament schedule, she will forward it to the entire team via email. Be aware that there are some times when tournament schedules are not available until just before the tournament begins (sometimes the night before play starts). This is partly due to late entries, withdrawals or team changes, all of which impact the actual tournament playing schedules and match-ups. Boost has no control over the administration of these

tournaments, but we do make suggestions, as do other clubs, to those who run the tournament for incorporation in their next event.

Most playing sites will have concession stands available throughout the day, however you may also choose to bring some food of your own. We recommend bringing some healthier food to sustain your athlete throughout the day. Occasionally a tournament will not allow extra food to be brought in, but usually it is ok. Upon arrival to a tournament, the team will identify a team area where the athletes can leave their bags and hang out between playing and officiating. The area may be a room or simply a spot in a hallway. Either way, the team area represents our club and should be kept neat and clean. Athletes may want to bring some items to help pass the time between events, however, remember that the team area is not secure and valuables (such as smart phones, etc) should not be left unattended. Be sure to properly dispose of any trash and leave the area as you found it at the end of the day.

All Junior tournaments are at least partially self-officiated. Officiating at tournaments is the shared responsibility of the entire team, including coaches. All players are required to help with line judging, scoring, score flipping, and down officiating. Teams assigned to the officiating and scorekeeping must fulfill this responsibility, especially during playoffs. Players may not be on their phones at the scoring table at any time. If this is an issue, the team's coach is permitted to take the phone until the end of the event. Players may not leave the tournament site unless excused by the coach, and parents should not ask the coach to make an exception. Except for a true emergency or injury, all players must remain at the tournament with the team until the completion of the team's officiating and scoring duties.

It is the policy of Boost Volleyball Club that ALL players will be asked to complete BOTH the scorekeeping and referee training courses offered through USA Volleyball. We feel that the training is extremely valuable for the young players and helps to equip them to be knowledgeable players of the game. Every girl on the team should be ready to fulfill any role needed when the team is assigned to work (ref & scorekeep) a match.

VII. *Playing Time*

Players are not guaranteed playing time nor a specific position. The coach will assess the strengths and weaknesses of all players to determine where an athlete best fits in the line-up. However, as a general guideline, players will be given as much playing time during pool play as various positions allow, but then, during bracket play, where the objective is to advance as far into the playoffs as possible, players will be played at the discretion of the coach based on skill level and team needs. Also keep in mind that players are expected to work hard to raise the levels of their own physical condition and skill, and poor attendance, attitude, and effort during practice times will negatively affect playing time.

VIII. *Conflict Resolution*

Parents are not permitted to confront coaches on tournament days to discuss playing time, or to complain about tactics, strategy, and individual or team performance. We recommend that parents and players follow these conflict resolution procedures:

A. If a player has a concern with a coach, parents have the responsibility for teaching their child steps to remedy the concern. The **player** should discuss the concern with their respective coach and try to arrive at a solution. None of the coaches should be considered unapproachable. They are all very willing to listen to a player's concern and try to arrive at a mutual solution, but they will not have a chance to alleviate a problem if there is no communication from the player. (It is understood at the younger ages that sometimes the parent will be the first contact with the coach.)

B. If the concern is not resolved, the player and parents may make an appointment to speak with the coach either before or immediately following a scheduled practice. Please do not approach a coach to discuss a concern without prearrangement.

C. If a solution is still not reached, you may contact Pitch. He may choose to set up a meeting with the player, parents, coach, and himself.

BVC expects parents and guardians to maintain a civilized code of conduct at volleyball events. Please model sportsmanship for your child by treating all coaches, officials, tournament directors and players of either team with courtesy and respect. Do not coach your child during the game or advise the coach on how to coach, who to put in the game and/or who to take out of the game. Refrain from spreading negativity among fellow parents and players, but rather follow the conflict resolution guidelines in an unemotional and respectful manner. This will go a long way in contributing to a positive experience for all team members.

Players are also expected to conduct themselves with the highest level of sportsmanship when representing Boost Volleyball Club. Each player is expected to treat all other players, teammates, coaches, referees, and fans with courtesy and respect. Failure to do so may result in loss of playing time, suspension and possible expulsion if the infraction is severe enough to warrant.