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*22 Years of Providing
Quality Training And Competition for
The Central Ohio Athlete*

**2008-2009
ATHLETE AND PARENT
HANDBOOK**



ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Doug Mace – Director OV97901MO09
PO Box 861
Washington Court House, OH 43160
740-572-1921
dbmace@dragon.bbs.com

Dave Holtsberry – Assistant Director OV97927MO09
PO Box 657
Hebron, OH 43025
614-561-4011
dholts@adelphia.net

Dave Mitchell – Tournament Director
4243 Trabue Rd
Columbus, OH 43228

614-738-6372
damitch@wideopenwest.com

Beth Mace – Bookkeeping
PO Box 861
Washington Court House, OH 43160
740-572-1921
dbmace@dragon.bbs.com

John Buyer – Webmaster/Personnel
418 W Elm St
Washington Court House, OH 43160
740-572-6026
johnbuyer@hotmail.com

DeDe Dean – Fundraising
237 Kitdare Dr
Delaware, OH 43015
dededean@aol.com



Mission and Purpose of Central Ohio Volleyball Club

The Central Ohio Volleyball Club is a nationally known junior volleyball club and is associated with USA Volleyball (USAV), and the Ohio Valley Region of the USAV (OVR), and with the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). It is by purpose a competitive program which promotes the advancement of the sport of volleyball through the development of players in the youth and junior level.

We, the coaches, athletes, parents and other members of the Central Ohio Volleyball Club share in the mission of creating and supporting a program that has a profoundly positive effect on young athletes within the context of competitive volleyball.

We believe our club helps the athlete with "LIFE" by teaching them to set difficult, yet achievable goals. We help our athletes achieve their goals by fostering in each of them and in ourselves a personal commitment to support each other and to work as a team, which requires diligence, perseverance and discipline.



A History of the Central Ohio Volleyball Club

The Central Ohio Volleyball Club was formed in the spring of 1988 by Vince Speciale as the Central Ohio Volleyball All-Stars with the purpose of taking a Central Ohio High School volleyball Players to California to compete against high school/club players on the west coast. A group of ten athletes from Bexley, Bloom-Carrol, Lakewood, Olentangy and Teays Valley accompanied by coaches Vince Speciale of Bexley and Dave Holtsberry of Reynoldsburg competed and traveled for ten days in Southern California and Nevada playing some of the top club programs in those areas.

In 1989, the organization became known as the Central Ohio Volleyball Club and competed for the first time in the Nike Volleyball Festival in Davis/Sacramento, California. The club continued to grow and started to compete regionally as well as continuing to participate in the Volleyball Festival. During the early and mid 90's the Central Ohio Volleyball Club reached its maximum size with over 400 athletes trying out for 22 teams in those years. As more clubs formed in Central Ohio area, the Central Ohio Volleyball Club began selecting the better players to represent the club in interregional and national competition. The Central Ohio Volleyball Club became extremely competitive in tournaments in Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Michigan as well as continuing competition at the Volleyball festival in California and the AAUs in Florida.

In 1995 alone, 77 former players from the Central Ohio Volleyball Club have gone on to play at the collegiate level. The Central Ohio Volleyball Club has had a total of 31 All-State players, 134 All-District players and numerous All-League or Conference players on our rosters. Some of our coaches have gone on to become college coaches and some of our former players have now returned to coach both high school and with our club.

In 1997, the Central Ohio Volleyball Club celebrated its tenth year as a club. In 1999, the Central Ohio Volleyball Club changed its competitive name to Columbus Juniors. After two years, the name was changed back to Central Ohio Volleyball Club to avoid confusion with other clubs using the name Columbus in the central Ohio area.

The 21st century has seen some changes to COVBC. Some are new and some are renewed.

In 2007 COVBC will be under the direction of Dave Holtsberry and Doug Mace. To continue what Vince started in 1988. Central Ohio Volleyball Club has also reconnected with California to bring to Central Ohio the latest in volleyball techniques used by the top pro players in the world.

As we start this season, the coaches and staff of the Central Ohio Volleyball Club will continue to strive to provide the best possible junior experience for the players in the club.



Welcome to the Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC)

The Central Ohio Volleyball Club is composed of scholastic athletes from the area and counties surrounding Columbus. Our club, coaches and players are all members of the Ohio Valley Region (OVR) of USA Volleyball (USAV), which is the national governing body for all levels of volleyball in the United States. We may also hold membership in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) when we compete at the AAU Junior National Championships. The Central Ohio Volleyball Club abides by the regulations set forth by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) for scholastic competition out of the scholastic season.



Team Composition

The Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC) tries to limit the number of players on a team's roster to no more than ten (10). This allows for maximum training time and repetitions plus a workable player-coach ratio. The COVBC abides by the rules governing team composition as set forth by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) regarding out of season participation which state no more than three (3) players from any school may be on the roster of one team and no athlete may be coached by a coach from their school. The exception to this is that high school coaches may coach junior high/middle school athletes or vice-versa from their schools. The club follows the rules and regulations as set forth for play and competition by USA Volleyball (USAV), the Ohio Valley Region (OVR) of USAV and the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU).*

*There are several variations in competition rules for USAV and AAU from those of the OHSAA and the National Federation of High School Athletics (NFHSA) that govern scholastic play.

The exact number of teams in each age group and the classification of National or Regional level depend on the number of athletes trying out for the club and the athletes' commitment to playing for COVBC for that season. The staff of the COVBC will consider many aspects of the athletes as the teams are selected and organized. Some of the factors that are considered when selecting the teams are:

- Skill level of the athletes involved
- Position(s) that the athletes can play
- Skill at the setter position
- General potential as a volleyball player
- Willingness to be a team player
- Commitment to the COVBC
- Junior volleyball experience of the athletes
- School that the athletes attend
- Assignment of a coach(es) to a team and their scholastic affiliation

When possible, COVBC will try to place athletes from the same area on the same team for travel purposes to practices and tournaments. The athletes must be at the same skill level and when possible on the same team or practice group. The COVBC will not guarantee this will happen and it is not a high priority in selecting teams.

Most of our coaches in the COVBC are scholastic coaches either high school or junior high/middle school program. The selection of a coach or coaches for each team depends on the coach's experience both on the school and club levels, age groups that they have worked with, their ability to organize and run practices, and their commitment to the COVBC.



What is Club or Junior Volleyball?

Junior volleyball, aka: Club Volleyball, is volleyball's equivalent to AAU basketball, Babe Ruth or Little League baseball, USA Track and Field and any other sports organizations. Junior volleyball season usually runs from December to late June depending on the individual clubs and regulations governing play within each state which is usually set by the state high school athletic organization. In Ohio, the Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC) abides by the regulation set forth by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) for scholastic competition out of the scholastic season.

INFORMATION CONCERNING JUNIOR VOLLEYBALL

Levels of Competition

In USA Volleyball competition there are usually two levels of play; the National (Open) level and the Regional (Club) level. The National Level of competition is geared to the players and teams that are competing at a higher level and whose skill levels are higher. The Regional Level of competition is designed for the developing player and teams.

Age Requirements

The age level at which an athlete will compete in USAV competition is based on the athlete's age on September 1st of that competitive year. For the 2008-2009 season, the age is computed on the age of the athlete on September 1, 2009. The age levels and birth dates for 2008-2009 season are:

- 18 and Under – September 1, 1990 or are HS students in the 12th Grade or below.
- 17 and Under – September 1, 1991
- 16 and Under – September 1, 1992
- 15 and Under – September 1, 1993
- 14 and Under – September 1, 1994
- 13 and Under – September 1, 1995
- 12 and Under – September 1, 1996
- 10 and Under – September 1, 1997

Some athletes may compete in a higher age group if in the evaluation by the Central Ohio Volleyball Staff; the athlete is able to compete with a higher age group and after discussion and approval of both the athlete and parents.



What if I Play Other Sports?

The Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC) encourages athletes to participate in their school activities and sports teams. Due to the nature of the schedules and practices for our club teams, it may not be possible to participate in spring sports for the school. Participation in winter sports should not affect the athlete or the team. COVBC does ask that the prospective player and parents consider her activities before committing to play with COVBC. It is highly recommended that the athlete not play spring sports if you are on a team and definitely not participate in a spring sport if you are on a travel team.

What if I played for COVBC before?

Every athlete interested in playing for COVBC must attend with a parent one of the informational meetings held before tryouts each year. Players from a previous year(s) COVBC team must tryout for a position on the next season's team. No Player, regardless of years experience, is exempt from the meeting or tryout. Players should never assume because they played previously for COVBC that they will automatically make the program and be on future COVBC teams.

Before the First Tryout

Each prospective player and a parent must attend one of the informational meetings held before the tryouts at several locations in the Central Ohio area. These meetings are usually held in October as the scholastic season is ending. The purpose of these meetings is to cover information about COVBC and any changes that have occurred from the previous years. Before the athlete participates in the tryout for her age group, she must submit the following documents:

- COVBC Tryout Application
- COVBC Waiver Form
- A Non-Refundable Tryout Fee

All Forms and tryout fee may be returned at the conclusion of the informational meeting. Players trying out for the COVBC do so knowing that they may not make a team for that year. If the athlete cannot participate in a tryout because of a limiting physical or medical condition or an absence, they must contact Dave Holtsberry, the Club Director of Training prior to the start of the tryout period to determine the status of the athlete's participation in the club program and team.



TRYOUT PROCEDURES

On the day of the scheduled tryout, the Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC) asks that the athlete be prepared to participate on a physical basis continuously for 2 to 3 hours with few breaks. The athlete will be given a number to wear for the duration of the tryout that will be used to identify her to the evaluators. Athletes should also bring and wear knee pads and any necessary braces and supports. We also require that the athlete not wear jewelry and no gum is allowed during tryouts.

Tryouts are open to the parents and others. The COVBC only asks that as a spectator you do not interfere with the tryout in progress. Tryouts are conducted by the COVBC staff. Although tryouts may vary slightly depending on the age group, participants are evaluated with a point system by the staff on their athleticism, volleyball skill abilities and to a small degree on their ability to listen and receive coaching instruction in game situation drills. We base selection of players on what athletes do during the tryout periods and what we perceive their potential to be. We also ask that the athlete tryout for her age group regardless of previous club experiences and allow the COVBC staff to evaluate her for the possibility of moving up to the next level. This is not for the parents to decide.

AFTER TRYOUT

At the conclusion of the one day tryout for each age group, the COVBC staff will meet to determine which athletes will be offered a contract to participate with the COVBC for that season. Athletes will be notified at the tryout site or by phone of their selection. At the end of the Ohio Valley Region (OVR) mandated ten (10) day waiting period, the athlete and parent(s) will be asked to return to sign the OVR Player Contract. Once the athlete signs a contract they may not play for any other USA Volleyball club or program unless released by the club. The athlete and parent(s) may waive the ten day waiting period and sign a contract if they so desire. We ask that you inform Dave Holtsberry by email on your intent to do so as soon as possible.

IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE WITH COVBC, WE ASK THAT YOU CONTACT DAVE HOLTSBERRY BY EMAIL AND TELL HIM OF YOUR DECISION BY THE WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING THE TRYOUT DATE SO THAT THE COVBC HAS THE OPPURTUNITY TO FILL THE VACANCY.

TEAM SELECTION

The COVBC staff will then discuss the placement of athletes on one of the teams. The cost for the Open Travel teams is greater due to the increased travel and lodging that is required of the teams during the season. The exact number of teams in each age group and the classification of Open and Club level depends on the number of athletes trying out for the club and the athlete's commitment to playing for COVBC for that season. The staff of the COVBC will consider many aspects of the athletes as the teams are

selected and organized. Some of the factors that are considered when selecting the teams are:

- Skill level of the athletes involved
- Position(s) that the athletes can play
- Skill at the setter position
- General potential as a volleyball player
- Willingness to be a team player
- Commitment to the COVBC
- Junior's volleyball experience of the athletes
- School that the athletes attend
- Assignment of a coach(es) to a team and their scholastic affiliation

When possible, the COVBC will try to place athletes from the same area on the same team for travel purposes to practices and tournaments. The athletes must be at the same skill level and when possible on the same team or practice group, The COVBC will not guarantee this will happen and it is not a high priority in selecting teams.

Most of our coaches in the COVBC are scholastic coaches either in a high school or middle school/junior high program. The selection of a coach or coaches for each team depends on the coach's experience both on the school and club levels, age groups that they have worked with, their ability to organize and run practices, and their commitment to the COVBC.



Rules and Regulations of the Central Ohio Volleyball Club

General Rules and Regulations

While representing the Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC), all athletes, parents and coaches are expected to behave in a responsible manner. Determination of what is “responsible” lies solely with COVBC.

The COVBC works hard at being a “class” organization. Therefore, we require our athletes, parents and coaches to respect all opponents, referees, parents and fans as well as the equipment and facilities of the places we practice, play and stay. Abuse of others or other’s property has not and will not be tolerated. Anyone associated with COVBC damaging equipment owned by COVBC or any facility used by COVBC for practice, tournaments or other functions; or at lodging facilities; or in vehicles of transportation used by COVBC will be required to reimburse COVBC and/or facility and/or owners of the damaged property for damages before continuing in the COVBC and its functions. The athlete may be sent home at the parents’ expense from away tournaments. In some cases, the athlete may be dismissed from the club.

Any athlete found to be using or under the influence of any substance, tobacco and/or alcohol will be removed and/or sent home immediately from any practice, tournament or club function. In some cases, the athlete may be dismissed from the club.

Any athlete with a delinquent account during the previous club season may be denied the privilege of participating in the COVBC or any other USAV affiliated program, to include tryouts, practice and competition. Any athlete with a delinquent account during the current season may be denied the privilege of participation in practices and/or competition. Problems with payments should be discussed with Club Director Doug Mace so that arrangements can be made.

Practice Guidelines

The COVBC believes practice time is an important part of any athletic endeavor. It’s not only important to the athlete for developing and refining skills and physically conditioning the body but it is necessary instrument in developing the team concept of play and also for creating team chemistry and cohesion at the competitive level. Therefore to be able to achieve this end, it will take a strong commitment from the athletes and parents to make sure practice attendance remains high. The local open and club teams will practice a minimum of twice a week. The travel teams will practice minimum of three times a week. It will take dedication from the athletes, parents and coaches to make a team a success. Missed practice and poor practice attendance do nothing to help a team reach a successful level. The athlete and parent should look at the schedule and if the athlete is going to miss fifteen (15) percent of the practices, the family should consider not participating in our club. Missing such a significant amount of time does not make it cost effective for the athlete. Furthermore, an athlete’s best performance will occur when they are on top of the game physically, mentally and emotionally. In

order to maintain the body and mind at a peak performance level, an athlete must learn to handle various stresses and deal with the recovery process following workouts. These stresses can be any one or combination of the following: poor nutrition, illness, injury, fatigue or lack of sleep; insufficient rest between workout sessions; emotional stress from schoolwork, friends or family situations; or other extracurricular activities. It is therefore imperative that you take these factors into account when scheduling your time and activities. The body can only handle a certain amount of stress within a given time period before illness and injury result.

ALL practices in the COVBC are open to parents and visitors. Scheduled practice time is the START time and not arrival time. Plan on arriving at least fifteen (15) to twenty (20) minutes prior to the start of practice. Depending on the location, help with net and equipment set up may be required of each athlete. Athletes who arrive late may receive extra conditioning or loss of playing time. The COVBC will not only coach the athlete, but train the athlete. Athletes are encouraged to bring an extra t-shirt for practice as well as a water container. This saves time during practice.

ALL athletes are expected to attend every practice. Only an illness or family emergency serious enough to keep the athlete home from school are legitimate excuses for missing a practice or competition. Regardless of the reason, if an athlete misses a practice, her playing time may decrease.

If an athlete cannot be at a practice, the ATHLETE is expected to inform the coach. If an athlete knows in advance of a conflict, the ATHLETE should inform the coach as soon as the conflict is known.

It is the ATHLETE'S responsibility to inform the coach, not the parent(s).

Volleyball shoes are to be carried into the practice sites and worn only during play. This is to ensure that the shoes last longer and the playing surface remains clean and safe.

No chewing gum is permitted during practice.

No jewelry is permitted during practice.

Practice shirts must be tucked in front and back at all times.

Kneepads are to be worn at the knees at all times.

Horseplay by athletes and/or coaches at practice is strictly prohibited.

Athletes and/or parents are expected to provide transportation for the athlete to and from practice sites.

Competition and Tournament Guidelines

The COVBC will issue information about upcoming competitions and tournaments to each team as soon as it is available. This usually includes start times, other team and if possible a map and/or directions to the site of the competition. Most tournaments do not release play schedules and/or team pools until the week of the tournament. As a parent, ask your athlete about this information and has it been given out. Many clubs and tournaments now have website information available with downloads including play formats, teams, times and maps, REMEMBER, schedules and team pools do change as some teams drop out at a very late date.

During competition, all athletes are expected to be at the competition site ready to warm-up at the scheduled time as determined by the coach. This usually means being at the site about thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled time. EARLIER IS ALWAYS BETTER!

ALL athletes are expected to attend every competition. Only an illness or family emergency serious enough to keep the athlete home from school are legitimate excuses

from missing a competition. Regardless of the reason, if an athlete misses a competition, her playing time may decrease.

If an athlete cannot be at a competition, the ATHLETE is expected to inform the coach. If an athlete knows in advance of a conflict, the ATHLETE should inform the coach as soon as the conflict is known. It is the ATHLETE'S responsibility to inform the coach, not the parent(s). Schedules will be discussed at the preseason meeting with the coaches, athletes and parents. Most if not all conflicts should be resolved at this time.

Proper conduct is expected of all those associated with the COVBC at all times. This includes athletes, coaches, parents and families. This means treating other teams, coaches, officials and competition coordinators with respect.

Athletes and/or parents are expected to provide transportation for the athlete to and from competition sites unless the COVBC has arranged for transportation of the teams.

Athletes may not leave the site of a competition until excused by the coach.

Competition/Tournament Officiating Guidelines

In junior volleyball, teams share responsibility for officiating usually providing a second referee, line judges, scorekeeper, libero tracker, scoreboard or scorecard handler and ball shaggers. Officiating is the shared responsibility of the entire team and must be taken seriously by all team members and coaches. All COVBC players will be trained in one or more areas of the officiating team. Each coach will determine a procedure for his/her team to handle the officiating responsibilities when necessary. Every team member is required to stay until after the final officiating assignment. **PLEASE DO NOT ASK THE COACH FOR PERMISSION TO LEAVE EARLY.** Except in cases of true emergencies, an athlete on a team who has officiating may not leave a competition or tournament before the assignment is complete.

Athletes will be given a published list of officiating responsibilities before the first tournament.

Guidelines to Playing Time

The COVBC does not have the philosophy of equal playing time during competition or tournaments but that the athlete is paying for instruction and training during practice time. **WE DO NOT GUARENTEE EQUAL PLAYING TIME ON ANY TEAM OR ANY COMPETITION.**

Playing time for athletes in competition is determined by attendance, attitude, effort and performance at practice and other competitions; the athlete's potential; the team's needs at the time; and the team's needs in the future. This decision is solely at the discretion of the coach. This "coaching decision" is NOT up for debate, discussion or question. Athletes are encouraged to ask the coach what they can improve on to achieve more playing time. (See Grievance Procedure)



GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Competitive team athletics, by its very nature creates situations where everyone may not be happy all the time. Knowing when and how to communicate with your athlete's coach is a concern for almost every parent at some point in the club season. Most often the concern is how to inquire about issues involving or surrounding playing time.

The Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC) encourages the athlete to take responsibility for their participation. For this reason, we expect the athlete to talk to the coach first when they have a problem concerning their playing time or if they are unclear about the role the coach is expecting of them during practice and or competition. The appropriate way to do this is for the athlete to ask the coach what they need to do to get more opportunities to play in competition. Many times, the athlete may have an idea why they are not playing when the parent may not. Parents can best help their athletes by helping them set some goals to achieve more opportunities.

When a parent has a problem that is specific to their own athlete, we also expect them to first talk to their athlete's. Coaches have been instructed not to discuss "coaching decisions" with a parent. These "coaching decisions" include, but not limited to, specific match decisions such as who played when, where and for how long and who was subbed in or out.

The coach will not be required to defend his/her thought process or conclusions in the determination of playing time, and **it is improper for a parent to make that request.**

Specifically, the procedure to follow if you as a parent or your athlete as a member of a COVBC team has concerns about COVBC policies or actions, should be done in this order:

1. The athlete will speak or meet with the coach to discuss the matter. If the matter remains unresolved, or if the athlete has a reasonable concern that speaking to the coach will not resolve this matter.
2. The parent should speak to the coach. The parent should contact the coach to set up a meeting. Meetings are to be at times and locations other than tournaments or competition sites. If a coach is approached by a parent during competition, the COVBC has instructed our coaches to refuse to discuss any controversial matter; to refer the parent to the Club Director; and to walk away from the situation. The recommended time for a parent and/or athlete to talk to the coach about the problem is a previously arranged meeting time either before or after a scheduled practice. If the problem or concern is still not resolved then the parent should continue to STEP 3.
3. The parent may speak to the Age Group Head Coach and or Club Director. In certain cases and situations, the COVBC may ask the athlete to attend this meeting. The meeting should be previously arranged and will not be scheduled during or at a tournament or competition site. The Age Group

Head Coach and/or the Club Director will not engage in discussions about “coaching decisions”. The decision of the Age Group Head Coach and/or Club Director is final and not subject to appeal.

OTHER POLICIES REGARDING GRIEVANCES

The Central Ohio Volleyball Club (COVBC) will not tolerate hostile, aggressive confrontations between a parent and any official, coach, athlete, parent and or competition staff members whether the other party is a member of COVBC or any other club. Violation of this policy may result in the athlete being dismissed from COVBC without a refund.

It is inappropriate for an athlete or parent to approach other athletes and or parents of the COVBC or any other club about a problem the athlete and/or parent is having with a COVBC coach, about a coaching decisions or about a disagreement with an administrative decision. Asking uninvolved people to take sides in an issue is unfair to the third party and to the COVBC. Grievances need to be handled between the parties involved and is the proper manner.

Any COVBC athlete and/or parent who may be approached and asked to listen to or express opinion about matters between two other parties in the COVBC is strongly encouraged to refer the complaining party to take the matter up with the coach in question, the Age Group Head Coach and/or the Club Director.

Any COVBC athlete and/or parent, who as a third party, hears remarks or stories about the COVBC, the coaches and/or its policies, that cause the COVBC athlete and/or parent to be concerned, is encouraged to contact the coach and/or Club Director immediately to determine the facts, or alert the club administrator to a situation it may be unaware of. It is detrimental to everyone involved to repeat complaints you hear or overhear to other uninvolved parties. By the time the story gets to the third or fourth party, it frequently bears little resemblance to the truth or the facts of the situation.

Parents are asked to please refrain from negative comments around your athlete and/or teammates. Young athletes are vulnerable and if they hear complaining about the coach, the coach’s style or the club policies, this can have an adverse effect on their performance and/or attitudes. If you, as a parent, are unhappy about something involving the club, you should follow the grievance procedure outlined in the previous section to resolve the matter. Repetitive complaining to the athlete(s) or other third parties that interfere with COVBC’s efforts to pursue its stated mission and purpose may be the cause, in the sole determination of the Club Director, to ask a member of the club resign.