

Checklist of questions to consider when choosing a volleyball club:

- How many practices per week will the team have and what is the duration of each practice? (Practices can vary for club to club. Know what you are getting for your money).
- Are practice days reduced during the week leading to a tournament?
- Where will the practices be held?
- What is the club's playing time policy?
- How many tournaments will be attended; when and where? (Tournaments may last one, two or up to three days. Some teams will play tournaments "regionally"; other teams will travel to various tournaments throughout the country).
- What is the coaching background/experience of each coach on the team?
- Has the coach ever coached "this" age group before?
- What is the playing level of this team? Open? Competition? Or Elite?
- Are there rules for interacting with the coaches during tournaments? If so, what are they?
- Are there any teaching clinics held for the players outside of weekly practices?
- Is there strength and conditioning program held for the players outside of weekly practices?
- What position will your daughter play? (Share with the coach at the try-out what position(s) your daughter wants to play).
- What is the process for evaluating and providing feedback to the kids DURING the season?

- How many girls will be on the team? (Playing time is impacted by this variable).
- Is the club a non-profit organization?
- What are the club fees? Get a complete itemization, in writing, of what is being covered by your fees. (Costs should be used for comparison between clubs to make sure you know what is and is not covered in their fees).



Typical Budget for Parents

- Annual club fee. Ask about the payment schedule.
- Uniforms: Cost may vary depending on quality; two shirts and a pair of shorts can cost \$200-300. Know what you are getting for your money.
- KRVA Registration - \$52 per player
- Travel – lodging/hotels, airline tickets, food, etc.
- Hidden costs. e.g. traveling to and from practice, gas, tolls, etc.

Common Myths

Myth 1 - It's about the club, not the coaches. The reputation of the club your daughter plays for is important, but it does not guarantee the coach your daughter will play for is skilled and/or right for you. The fact of the matter is the coach is what makes the difference. Understand the philosophies, reputation, style and character of the coach your daughter will be playing for. Interview the coach if necessary. Speak with other players and parents who played for the coach in the past. The coach should be able to provide references. Also ask yourself; is this person someone you want your daughter to spend time with? Is this a person of integrity and character?

Myth 2 – The more expensive the club fees the better the club/coaching and the more you get. After all, isn't the saying, "...you get what you pay for..." true? Not always. Some clubs charge more because they must cover their overhead (salaries for full time employees), turn a profit and/or pay more for gym rental. Other clubs charge more because they were formed by a sports complex as a way of filling gym time.

Myth 3 - Playing club for your high school coach ensures playing time on the high school team. Fact; the best players will play regardless of the club they play for. Sometimes playing club for your HS coach can be a negative. HS coaches sometimes "pigeon hole" or "slot" players into certain positions based on their biases or a need they are trying to fill for the HS team and not necessarily the best position for your daughter. It is sometimes a good idea to get a

fresh look from a different coach. It is worth noting that playing for a HS coach from another school, who has many of his/her HS players on the team, can also be a negative. The coach may already have designs on who will play certain positions, thereby not providing your daughter with a fair opportunity to play a position she is best suited for.

Myth 4 – Playing in tournaments across the country provides more exposure to college coaches. While it is true many college coaches attend national tournaments, 90% of the players from this area who go on to play volleyball on some sort of scholarship, play within a three hour driving radius of Philadelphia. So how does playing in a tournament in the Midwest or West Coast provide exposure to college coaches "locally"?

IN CONCLUSION

When evaluating a club for your child, the most important part of ***YOUR*** evaluation process is to fully and completely consider what is important to your family and your goals for your daughter. Ask yourself, why is your daughter playing club volleyball? Is it for recreation? To gain more experience for high school play? Master certain skills? Help develop a more well rounded individual? Be with their/your friends? Because everyone else is doing it? Possible college scholarship? All of the above? Understanding what is important to you and your family and identifying your goals will dictate your personal criteria for choosing a volleyball club.