

# Sartell JO Volleyball Organization

## Player and Parent Handbook

### **Mission:**

The Sartell JO Volleyball Organization (SJVO) is a “not for profit” organization sanctioned by the North Country Region (NCR) of USA Volleyball (USAV). The club exists to support and promote competitive volleyball for youth between the ages of 11 (or currently in 5<sup>th</sup> grade) and 17/18 (or currently Juniors) who live in Sartell, St. Stephen or currently attend school in the Sartell – St. Stephen School District.

### **Philosophy:**

The Sartell JO Volleyball Organization (SJVO) is a competitive organization. The organization partners with our athletes, coaches, parents, NCR, and USAV. The organization encourages teamwork, respect, responsibility, discipline, and positive attitudes in a safe, learning environment. The organization believes in fair play, sportsmanship, working hard and having fun. Sartell JO Volleyball Organization (SJVO) strives to offer a high-quality program at an affordable price.

### **Program Overview:**

The SJVO is a competitive program, not a recreational program. Coaches will focus on playing strategies and player involvement for the optimum performance of the team as a whole. SJVO does not guarantee equal playing time on teams competing in our 14's, 15's, 16's, 17's or 18's programs. Coaches will determine player positions based on the skill of each player and the need of the team. Our goal is to provide the best JO experience for all athletes in our program.

### **Volunteer – You Can Help Make a Positive Difference:**

This is a non-profit organization that works through volunteers. Parents are needed to serve on the Board, to help assist with club fundraisers, and to assist in any hosted tournaments or games.

- Each family is required to volunteer a number of hours to be determined by the board per season or buyout these hours during the registration process.

### **Club Uniforms:**

- Players need to supply game shorts (black biker/spandex), socks, appropriate tennis shoes, a whistle, and knee pads.
- All players rent a SJVO jersey for their use during the volleyball season (included in membership fee).
- All jersey's must be returned at the end of the season.
- Jersey's not returned or damaged will be assessed a fee to replace or repair the uniform.

### **12's Program (Current 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders):**

This program offers fair playing time based on attendance, participation and attitude at practices. SJVO is committed to giving players an opportunity to apply their skills in competition. The program offers a balance of participation and competitive philosophies according to their age and ability. We will find a league and/or tournaments that best fit the skills and level of each team to help them to grow as players and experience success. SJVO will hold player evaluations for this program to assist with team formations.

Teams are not based on friendships, parent requests or prior team placements.

- Membership fees and registration must be paid and completed by a date determined by the board and posted on the website.
- Teams will consist of no less than eight players with an optimal maximum of ten players. Based on age, skill level, number of players, and team needs, the board may opt to form a team with less than eight players or more than ten players. We will not cut players interested in playing in our program.

- Coaches are hired based upon volleyball knowledge, positive interaction with players, and the ability to navigate all aspects of coaching.

### **13/14's Program (Current 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders):**

This program offers fair playing time and competitive play during the season. Fair playing does not necessarily always mean equal playing time. SJVO is committed to giving players an opportunity to apply their skills in competition. The program offers a balance of participation and competitive philosophies according to their age and ability. SJVO will hold player evaluations for this program to assist with team formations.

- See "Evaluations and Team Formations" section for details about evaluations.
- Teams are not based on friendships, parent requests or prior team placements.
- Membership fees and registration must be paid and completed by a date determined by the board and posted on the website.
- Teams will consist of no less than eight players with an optimal maximum of ten players. Based on age, skill level, number of players, and team needs, the board may opt to form a team with less than eight players or more than ten players. We will not cut players interested in playing in our program.
- Teams will be developed based on skill level, age, and team dynamics. Our goal is to provide the best JO volleyball experience for all athletes in our program.
- Coaches are hired based upon volleyball knowledge, positive interaction with players, and the ability to navigate all aspects of coaching.

### **15's-18's Program (Current 9<sup>th</sup>– 11<sup>th</sup> graders):**

This program offers fair playing time and competitive play during the season. Fair playing time does not necessarily always mean equal playing time. Teams' levels (15U, 16U, 17U, 18U) will be determined by the levels presented at evaluations.

- See "Evaluations and Team Formations" section for details about evaluations.
- Teams will consist of no less than eight players with an optimal maximum of nine players. Based on age, skill level, number of players, and team needs, the board may opt to form a team with less than eight players or more than nine players. Our goal is to not make any cuts but may be possible based upon registration numbers at certain age levels.
- Teams will be developed based on skill level, age, and team dynamics. Our goal is to provide the best JO volleyball experience for all athletes in our program.
- Coaches are hired based upon volleyball knowledge, positive interaction with players, and the ability to navigate all aspects of coaching.

### **Evaluations and Team Formation:**

Player evaluations will be held in November after the Minnesota State High School League Volleyball Tournament. SJVO will contact Sartell-St. Stephens volleyball coaches, post schedules on our website and all social media outlets, and email to spread the news regarding Evaluations and Team Formations. Players must attend the evaluation sessions to be considered for team assignment. Failure to attend evaluation sessions may affect team placement.

Evaluators are coaches and/or other persons with high volleyball knowledge that are not Sartell JOVB Board Members. Evaluators will be considering the following criteria:

- Attitude
- Willingness to be coached
- Communication
- Athletic ability for volleyball
- Athletic potential
- Work ethic

- Sportsmanship
- Teamwork

Team Formation will occur after evaluations have been completed. Team levels may include 12's, 13's, 14's, 15's, 16's, 17's, and/or 18's (based on the age of players on the team). Players may be asked to tryout with an older level based on evaluations suggestions or if a player has participated in the high school program.

- Coaches, with the approval of the Board, reserve the right to change team assignments (player positions, moving players up or down) at their discretion during the season.
- Starting positions will not automatically be given to any player based on prior status. Starting positions must be earned through demonstrated effort, cooperation and discipline, attendance of practices, tournaments, and ability.
- Coaches will determine playing time based on the players:
  - Effort and hard work at practices and matches and cooperation with team and coach.
  - Performance at practices and matches.
  - Punctuality, participation and attendance at practices and matches.
- Selection to a particular JO team does not in any way guarantee selection to, or a position on, a particular Junior Varsity or Varsity high school team (nor does a position on a particular Junior Varsity or Varsity high school team determine where you are placed within our program). JO teams are unlike high school teams in that NCR dictates the lowest level a player may play at based on her birth date.
- Once a player is placed on a team, there will be no refunds. Refunds due to injury will be voted on by the board and considered on a case-by-case basis depending on when the injury occurred (at what point in the season).

#### **Membership Fees:**

Membership fees are determined by a budget based on tournaments selected and approved by the SJVO board, before the season begins. One hundred percent of player fees are used for registration of player, coaches' wages, jerseys, practice sessions, equipment, facility rental, dates/leagues/tournaments, support of our Sartell High School program, and scholarship opportunities.

SJVO enforces a "NO PAY – NO PLAY" rule. If the players online registration isn't received by the registration deadline the player will not be allowed to tryout.

A family cap for registration fees is decided prior to each season by the SJVO board based on current budget and will be advertised with information advertising when registration is open.

#### **Practice:**

- SJVO board will set practice times based on gym availability. Practices will begin in December or January. Practice and tournament schedules will be posted on our website at: [www.sartelljovolleyball.org](http://www.sartelljovolleyball.org)
- It is the goal of SJVO to schedule two practices per week per team: however, gym availability will dictate the number of practices.
- Players are expected to attend all practices. We support multi-sport/multi-activity athletes within reason. High School sports take priority over Sartell JO Volleyball. All other sports/activities must have a balance or playing time may be affected. The coach must be notified in advance of any absence as soon as the player becomes aware that they will be absent. Unexcused absences of lack of communication with the coach will result in limiting the player's playing time at the next tournament.
- Players and coaches must be on time to practice. This means arriving before the start time to dress and prepare. If tardiness becomes a problem, the coach will discuss appropriate actions with the SJVO board.

- Coaches will lead highly disciplined, challenging practices, encouraging players to go beyond their limits. Players will develop by working hard at practice and following their coach's instructions. It is ultimately up to the player as to how much they improve or how much effort they put into practices. An athlete must be able to think for herself on the court. Creating spontaneous, game-like situations at practice is essential to empowering players to think for themselves.

### **Tournaments:**

- SJVO board will determine tournament schedules for all Sartell JO Volleyball teams.
- All athletes are expected to attend every tournament. Sartell JO Volleyball tournaments are to take priority over all other activities with the exception of pre-scheduled school activities, sports, or family event. If an athlete cannot be at a play date or tournament, she must inform the coach at the beginning of the season or as soon as she learns of the necessary absence. Absence from a tournament for any reason may affect future playing time. No refunds to individual players are made for missed tournaments.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation of their player to and from tournaments. SJVO board recommends that players do not drive themselves to and from tournaments. Car-pooling can be arranged with other teammates and is encouraged.
- Players are expected to arrive at a tournament by the time designated by the tournament coordinators and coach.
- Officiating is the shared responsibility for the entire team. All SJVO players are required to take the online officiating training using the link provided on our website. The training is instructed by staff from the North Country Region Volleyball Association. It is the coaches' responsibility to assign officiating duties at tournaments. All SJVO players are required to stay until our officiating assignments are complete at each tournament unless excused for a legitimate reason by the coach. Requirements for 12U players will be shared by coaches as they have less expectations.
- **IMPORTANT:** Players and parents must leave the playing site as they found it. Everyone is responsible for picking up after themselves, cleaning up garbage and any spills. SJVO wants to continue our good reputation with other clubs in order to be allowed to attend their functions.

### **Rules and Regulations:**

JO volleyball is, by its very nature, competitive. This means that playing time will not be equal for every player. Players and parents must understand this from the beginning for the team to be successful.

Many teams experience difficulties as the season progresses due to the issue of playing time. We also want to foster life skills in our players, so we encourage players to follow this process:

- Player should talk to the coach about the issue they are having.
- Player, along with a parent should talk to the coach about the issue they are having.

As in other sports, a 24-hour "think" time is highly encouraged before approaching a coach regarding your concerns. The issue will not be discussed at a tournament or practice, or in front of other players or parents. If there is a concern and/or frustration SJVO asks that the parents/players set up a time to speak with the coach and/or coaching coordinator.

The following guidelines explain how SJVO will be treating the sensitive issue of playing time:

1. Playing time will not be equal for all players. Playing time for athletes in the 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 18U levels will be at the coach's discretion. Even though the fees (by age level) are the same for every player, playing time will not be equal. Playtime is also determined by positions. All positions and/or players do not get equal playtime.

2. Practices will provide constant opportunities for player improvement. Players are expected to attend practices and work hard towards improvement. Sometimes, this can be frustrating, but a player's work ethic and mental focus are essential to their growth as volleyball players. Players who attend practices on a consistent basis have a better opportunity for more "game time" as they will be more familiar with the team strategy.
3. Winning occurs through mental attitude and physical ability; it requires a positive attitude toward the game, the coach, and teammates. Playing time may be adjusted for attitude and skills performance at practices during games.
4. SJVO will coach to win. This means putting the strongest team on the court during a tournament, and, during the bracket play of a tournament. SJVO recognizes that playing time is important to player improvement. The coach must balance playing improvement with a winning strategy. All players should see the court during pool play at tournaments; bracket play will be treated more competitively. During a tournament, the winning strategy will take precedence; during practice, the player improvement is the most important.
5. Players should discuss playing time issues with the coach as outlined in the "Rules and Regulations" portion of this handbook. Players are ultimately responsible for their improvement (not the parent). They need to understand what they need to improve upon to get more playing time. Players have the opportunity to learn how to discuss improvement with the coach and to obtain feedback on their performance.
6. Parents should not confront the coach regarding playing time issues. If the player has discussed the issue with the coach and parents/player are not satisfied, a meeting can be scheduled with the coach, and if necessary, the coaching coordinator. The process is outlined in the "Rules and Regulations" portion of this handbook.

#### **Sartell JO Volleyball Organization Code of Conduct:**

- The Sartell JO Volleyball Organization will follow and enforce a Code of Conduct. Individuals (family members, friends, players, or coaches) who are disruptive during practices, play dates, or tournaments will be asked to leave the site by the parent representative, coach, or a member of the Sartell JO Volleyball Board. After the event, the individual will receive a written notice by certified mail from the SJVO board requesting their attendance at the next board meeting to discuss the incident. The meeting will allow the board and the individual to review the incident prior to the board imposing disciplinary action (if necessary). Please do not allow your behavior as a fan disrupt your child's experience on the court.
- Family members who confront the coach in an angry or hostile manner at a SJVO event will be subject to disciplinary action by the Sartell JO Volleyball Board.
- Families are asked to use common sense and behave responsibly throughout the season. Inappropriate language or action that is disruptive or interferes with a player, coach or official's participation is unacceptable. This also applies to other club members, board members or families of the North Country Region.
- Examples of unacceptable behavior that will result in action taken by the Board:
  - Threatening or aggressive behavior towards another person
  - Obscene words or gestures
  - Racial, ethnic or sexually oriented comments
  - Celebrating the errors or misfortune of participants
  - Attempting to distract or interrupt a participant's concentration
  - Harassing participants i.e. booing, jeering or yelling at individuals
  - Openly scrutinizing coaching decisions or negative comments about player performances
  - Berating or abuse of officials

- Families and coaches are encouraged to practice good sportsmanship and to remind each other when needed; before an official response becomes necessary.
- SJVO needs parental support in achieving our goals:
  - Improving player skill
  - Instilling a winning attitude (not a win-at-all-costs attitude)
  - Creating positive team interaction
  - Teaching players to take responsibility for their own improvement
- As representatives of the Sartell JO Volleyball Organization and our community, it is expected that all players, parents and coaches will conduct themselves in a proper manner, showing respect and courtesies to Board decisions made and following the organization's grievance policy if concerns arise.
- Players must treat their teammates and coach with respect and do as they are instructed. If this becomes a problem, the player will be talked to separately by the coach. If the problem continues, the coach, along with a Board member, will also talk with the parents and finally may remove the player from the organization.
- Parents must understand that from the coach's point of view, the coach will do what is best for the team, not necessarily what a parent wants for their daughter. Coaches decide how to optimize player's skills and what positions they will play.
- All players are bound by the NCR Code of Conduct (received with registration materials). Any player found to be in possession of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs will be sent home from any Sartell JO Volleyball event and may be expelled from the Club.
- The coach's day ends on the court. Parents must not expect anything more from the coach than they would from another parent on the team. The coach will not be expected to coordinate the day's extracurricular activities. Coaches need down time too.
- Any expulsions from SJVO resulting in Code of Conduct violations will not be subject to a refund of any kind.

### **Communication and Sartell JO Volleyball Grievance Policy:**

The Sartell JO Volleyball Board encourages communication between coaches and players and parents. Players: Ask your coach his/her expectations of you or how you can improve. Parents: Ask coaches whatever questions you may have, but be considerate, asking at a place and time that is convenient for the coach. Parents- please do not approach coaches to discuss issues the day of a tournament, practices or playdates. As in other sports, the 24-hour "think" time is highly encouraged before approaching the coach regarding your concerns.

If you have concerns that a coach is not following Board policy and philosophies and have discussed it with the coach with no resolution, please follow these steps in the order listed:

1. Consult this handbook for Board policy and philosophies
2. If you do not find the solution here, put your concern in writing and present it to the parent representative or the coaches representative
3. Submit your concerns to the board via the website, [www.sartelljovolleyball.org](http://www.sartelljovolleyball.org)
4. For other concerns related to the SJVO program, refer to item 1 above and if your concern is not addressed in this handbook, the board will review your concern and sent you a notice or call you to inform you of when the board will convene to discuss your issue (you may be given time at the next scheduled Board meeting or a special meeting will be held to address your issue if necessary).

The organization's bylaws can be viewed at our website. These policies are subject to change at the discretion of the SJVO Board. Board members are listed on our website: [www.sartelljovolleyball.org](http://www.sartelljovolleyball.org)

### **Sartell Volleyball Board of Directors:**