

Thursday, 12/28/23

Directors;

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We hope that you've all enjoyed an amazing Christmas holiday-break.

We look forward to seeing you "on court" in the New Year!

We have two quick updates for you today, and then a short discussion about playing formats

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Town Hall Meeting: RE-SCHEDULED to Tuesday

The "made for parents 'Town Hall' zoom meeting" that I mentioned in our previous letter to you has been postponed... from tonight... to next Tuesday. *I apologize for the late change.* I'm afraid that my own holiday return flights changed, necessitating a re-schedule. Hopefully this is good news, since several clubs had mentioned this week that having a "meeting" during the holiday might not have been the best idea anyway.

New Date and Time: Parent's Town Hall Zoom on Tuesday Jan 2nd, at 6pm. *Directors and Coaches are welcome to attend, but are by no means required.* This will be an informal, social type of meeting, designed to allow parents lots of opportunity to ask questions. *The zoom will be recorded so that anyone who can't log in real-time will be able to review the video at their convenience.*

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Power-1-Even

Evidently I wasn't the only person to get disrupted by the holiday. More than a dozen Directors missed the Power-1-Even "two weeks prior" registration deadline... which happened to fall on Christmas Day.

Understanding that this is a new protocol, and that Christmas is Christmas, we're working hard today and tomorrow to rebuild the event so that everyone can participate.

Please let your parents know that we should "go live" at TM2 sometime during this weekend.

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Formats:

Reminder: Our preferred play format for the upcoming season will be the “traditional” 8 team division on two courts (4 team pools, in full-match 25-25-15 play). *We will not play the 3v3 or the 4v4 crosses.* Teams that finish 3rd in pool go home early, while the 4th place teams work the last match of the day, at the 1v1 or 2v2 cross.

We did reduce the FEE charged under this format, compared to last year, since we’ve gone back to “four teams per court.” *We are not offering a further refund to the teams that finish 3rd or 4th even though they will receive one less match of play.* This is consistent with practice at most competitions, where teams that win, go further in the day, and team that lose, end a little earlier.

The GJC implemented this change in response to the results you offered at the annual survey.

There, you Directors made clear

- * that you did not enjoy the 6-teams-on-2-courts format that we played last year.
- * that you wanted full-match (best of three 25, 25, 15) play
- * with all the crosses
- * but that you want to *avoid being in the gym so late.*

The format described above is our attempt to create a “best fit” design. By dropping the 3v3 and 4v4 crosses, the day is one “round” shorter, which should help us get out of the gym before dark.

Your continued feedback will be appreciated...

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We are frequently asked “why have we seen so many different playing formats recently?”

It’s a fair question; here’s what’s going on:

First; *We accept all teams that register by deadline.*

That leads to some unusual division sizes! (what do you do with 37 teams?)

You've consistently said in feedback that you don't want the RMR to enforce "fixed division sizes" by maintaining strict registration deadlines and *waiting lists*.

We used to ask a team or two to move up when convenient. (move one team up, and then you're working with 36 teams... a great division size!) However, with SOS in play, many clubs choose to decline if we suggest that they play up. *We're working to improve SOS so that "playing up" works well for everyone*

Second; **Teams do drop out late**. Once we've published where everyone will play for a power, if a team drops out, that leaves THEIR pool short... the 8 teams on two courts becomes 7-on-two... an awkward format!

We do discourage late-drops by retaining their registration fees, by fining them, and by fining them even more if they repeatedly drop late... but it still happens fairly often.

Third; We've used the Friendship and the Boys events to **experiment with new formats**. There have been some duds, but we've also found some formats that really work well.

The "nine-teams-on-three-courts" format is my personal favorite. There you play in pools of three (8am, 9am, 10am). We re-sort after those three matches, based on your finishes there. All three teams who finished "first in pool" go to court 1 for the 1130am match. (the 2nds go to ct 2, and the 3rds to 3)

Everyone gets four matches, there a clear winner (from court 1) and the format just really seems to stay "on time." As an extra benefit, if a team drops out at the last minute, you just play the 8-on-2 "traditional" format.

This worked well for the boys the last two seasons.

Maybe next year we can consider the format for the girls Powers.

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Team Officiating Clinics and "Team Officials" Certifications

Our new "in-person, on-court" officiating clinics have really taken off!

We've hosted 34 clinics so far, and we have another dozen or more on tap.

* All RMR athletes and coaches are required to take the online modules in their Academy folder
Instructions that can assist your members as they try to find the Academy are [HERE](#)

* RMR coaches or athletes in their 1st or 2nd year certifying as team officials (ref or scorer) should also attend an in-person clinic. Our plan to have members register for clinics through the Academy didn't work out, so we're working with club Directors one by one to schedule the clinics

* Directors may still sign up to host a clinic [HERE](#)

Please make sure your athletes (and coaches!) have taken their online modules prior to attending an in-person course... it makes a HUGE difference!

* It's "ok" to play in a Power before your certification clinic if you have to. Hopefully your team has a few ref/scorers with some experience already? If you'll really need help, please mention that to the Site staff at your Coaches Meeting (*Don't forget to bring your printed Season Master Roster!*)

Certification at Academy: Lots of members have written to ask why they can't seem to "complete" their ref/scorer certifications at the Academy. Please share with them that

NEW scorers/referees can ignore the "In person Clinic Registration" as well as any "scoresheet or rating sheet submission" modules. Yes, this appears to leave them "incomplete" for now... but their clinicians (or the office) will be marking these items as complete for them, after they finish their in person courses.

RETURNING/Maintaining refs /scorers are allowed to ignore those elements for now as well. They are not subject to the in-person class requirement.

ADVANCED students who hope to officiate for pay as "Junior Referees" should identify themselves to our officialschair@rmrvolleyball.org . We'll contact these folks as we rebuild the "Junior Referee" program

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Have a Happy New Year!

Keith, for the RMR