



CENTRAL ILLINOIS ELITE VOLLEYBALL CLUB
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October 10th, 2023

Dear Parents and Athletes:

This is the 2023-24 Central Illinois Elite (CIE) information packet. Please read through the packet entirely as there is a lot of information.

The choice to play club volleyball can be, at times, a demanding commitment not only for the players, but also for the parents and families. The CIE program has a solid coaching staff, techniques, and philosophy that we will share with you throughout this packet, we hope that CIE is worthy of your commitment. If you understand the core beliefs of what CIE is about, it will be much easier to understand **HOW** and **WHY** we are going to do things the way we will do them. At CIE, our program will strive to develop each athlete in every area of volleyball to the best of their ability. Our Philosophies regarding the methods and teaching the techniques of all the basic skills, as well as our practice planning and implementation are different from other clubs in the Peoria area. We hope to help you understand that CIE is a club volleyball **program** and not just a collection of club volleyball teams and coaches. Our goal is, and will always be, to provide the best club experience for our athletes and develop their skills as volleyball players and their integrity as young adults. While athletics are something we participate in while we are young, the lessons learned from athletics can and should last a lifetime.

We hope that all of you will find CIE to be an excellent program, worthy of your support for the 2023-24 club volleyball season.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bartlett -- Club Director
Brian Martin -- Club Director

CIE PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY - Why Choose Central Illinois Elite VBC?

CIE will be different from any other club you may have participated in around the Peoria area. CIE is completely dedicated to providing athletes with the **technical and tactical** training needed to reach their highest possible potential. We strive to help each, and every athlete achieve their maximum performance regardless of age or ability. For the younger players we want to develop a solid base of fundamental skills, as well as a passion for the sport. As players get older and progress through our program, we want to provide the path to a level of excellence that allows each athlete to test their own abilities. We understand that we are providing a service to the players, and parents, not the other way around. This understanding is what will drive us to provide the best possible club experience for everyone involved.

FOCUS ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT - The **BEST** reason to choose CIE in the Peoria area is that we understand and embrace the idea that the purpose of club volleyball is to assist players in training and developing their individual skills and techniques. Therefore, we will focus much of our training time on **developing the player** rather than developing the team. Yes, we want our teams to be successful, but not at the expense of developing the individual players. We feel that good players will become a good team if trained properly and given the opportunity to succeed. When athletes are young, it is easy for players and parents to make the mistake of getting caught up in trying to find the best team to play on or trying to play with friends. In the search to play on the best team, however, players often overlook the most important element of long-term growth in the sport of volleyball, which is the training and development of individual skills. College coaches do not recruit elite teams; they recruit elite players with elite skills. By providing the **best available training and developing the skills of each athlete**, we can provide the best possible club volleyball experience for our athletes. As written above CIE is completely dedicated to providing its athletes with the technical and tactical training needed to reach their highest possible potential.

MASTER COACH CONCEPT- This type of training allows each athlete to receive **the same comprehensive training** as everyone else in her age group regardless of individual or team skill level. In most clubs, each athlete is at the mercy of his or her individual coaches' technical, tactical, and physical understanding of the sport of volleyball. If this is the case, practices can be poorly organized, inefficiently executed and often fail to give each player the chance to reach his or her full potential. At CIE, we adopted the master coach concept to ensure that this does not happen. The master coach oversees developing and implementing the practice plan for all the athletes and making sure that all of the involved coaches understand the practice plan, **thereby assuring each athlete the same high quality training during practices**. Yes, there is position specific training as well (i.e., setters, middle hitters, defensive specialists, etc.) but with this concept, it can be accomplished simultaneously if all the coaches are working together under the same plan.

SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO TRAINING- We are developing a **volleyball program**, not just a club with a collection of teams and coaches. One of the problems that exist in

youth volleyball, especially in this area, is the lack of consistency regarding teaching the basic skills. It is not uncommon for young players to have several different coaches teaching them the skills many ways over the course of their youth and junior playing days. In our program, all the coaches, in every age level and every team, must learn to teach all the basic skills with the same techniques and methods that we have been teaching for years with a great deal of success. In doing so, players can continue to develop and improve each year and build on what they learn each season instead of starting over again each year with a new coach. We understand that player development is an ongoing process over time, and we try to teach each skill systematically and efficiently with the player's long-term growth, development, and health as a primary objective.

LIFE LESSONS TO LEARN- Over the years of being involved in club volleyball we have learned that when a group of people make a commitment to do something great, success usually follows. Words and concepts such as Hard Work, Commitment, Sacrifice, Responsibility, Accountability, Dedication, and Perseverance have great value not only in athletics, but in all areas of our lives. These are the concepts that allow players to succeed. It seems more and more parents and athletes approach athletics with a sense of "entitlement". They believe that the concepts above do not apply to them and that they are "entitled" to success. Athletics, just like the real world, do not operate that way. Success, either individual or team, is only accomplished by understanding, believing, and applying those ever-important concepts listed above. Through their participation in sports, young athletes learn lessons about themselves and others, which will carry over throughout every aspect of their lives. As young student-athletes, they must learn the most efficient ways to use time and energy to manage schoolwork, family, practice, social life, etc. They must learn about setting priorities, setting goals, and striving to achieve those goals while at the same time understanding that success comes from the pursuit of excellence. At times we all have seem to have forgotten that future success almost always comes from past failures. Part of becoming a successful adult is learning to deal with failure as a child. That is how we grow. That is how we learn. There is nothing noble about falling but getting back up is one of the most important qualities we can teach. Winning is fun but losing is often much more valuable and the lessons we learn from that eventually shape us into winners. As coaches, we know that the lessons learned from making a commitment, being part of a team and the words **TEAM** and **TEAMMATE** really stand for - a group of people who share a common goal together and understand and agree to make the sacrifices necessary to make that goal become reality. These athletes learn that individual needs are sometimes put aside for the good of the team or the team is destined for failure. We realize this goes against today's "SPORT CENTER" mentality where individuals have become bigger than their teams, but we also know that individual glory takes a backseat to team success every time. Being part of a team within a larger program and making sacrifices and commitments to help that team achieve success is possibly the greatest lesson to be learned from athletics.

FULL TIME DIRECTOR- Jennifer Bartlett has been the full-time director since the club was founded in 2013 and is involved in all aspects of club volleyball. Brian Martin is also a full-time director this season and will be involved in all aspects of club volleyball with an emphasis on the Local and the K-8 programs. We added a Director of Player Development last season, Jon Rask. Usually, club coaches and club directors have other full-time jobs requiring attention every day. This can often prevent them from putting in the time the athletes deserve. As a full-time director, it is Jennifer and Brian's job to ensure practices, regardless of age or skill level, is prepared and ready to be implemented and that all other matters regarding the club are taken care of regularly. We also ask that all parent/player issues and communications go through Jennifer and Brian before going to the individual coach. This (and our 24-hour rule) will be discussed in depth at the Parent/Player meeting after tryouts.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING TO THE TRYOUTS? Nothing, all players should have registered for try-outs online. We will check you in, get you a tryout shirt and place you on the proper court for evaluations. The \$50 tryout fee will be deducted off the player dues if the player accepts a spot in our organization.

CAN ATHLETES PARTICIPATE IN OTHER SPORTS? The common misconception is that athletes cannot participate in other sports and still play in the elite program. This is not true. The elite program athletes are allowed to play other sports. Our practices and competition schedules are already in place for our entire season so if they are playing another sport, they can see the potential conflicts and make proper arrangements. We do ask that players inform us if they are participating in another sport that might include some conflicts so we can make any necessary adjustments for them and their teams. **If you are having scheduling conflicts, please inform us 48 hours before the conflict occurs.** Some athletes have chosen to play collegiate volleyball as a goal, and they must understand that serious training and competition is necessary for a player to reach their potential and possibly achieve that goal. The Expansion program is also in place for those multi-sport athletes that still want the club volleyball experience but may be involved with multiple sports and activities at this time.

HOW MANY PLAYERS ARE ON EACH TEAM? We will strive to have 9-10 players on each team at all levels and all age groups. More than 10 makes it difficult for coaches to give all players playing time and less than 10 can result in teams being short players in case of injury and/or conflicts.

DO PLAYERS GET "EQUAL" PLAYING TIME? There is no such thing as "equal" playing time in volleyball. Volleyball is different from other sports in that it is not a timed game, there are no innings, no quarters, or halves to base playing time. Due to the nature and speed of the game, you cannot judge "time" by rotations or points either. We understand that all players practice so they can play in games. We strive to give all players "fair" playing time based on practice, ability, attendance, skills, positions, situations, etc.

HOW/WHEN ARE TEAMS SELECTED? We will wait to make the actual teams until we can see the players in a practice environment. For players trying out for an Elite team, we will inform them via email if they have made an Elite team, **but we may not make the teams until sometime in mid to late December.** This allows us the opportunity to properly evaluate all the players fairly. This season we are going to try as hard as we can to have them on teams by Thanksgiving Break.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER TRYOUTS? WHEN ARE THE MANDATORY PARENT/PLAYER MEETINGS? For the Elite program, we will set a date to meet with the players and parents to go over the season. If your player accepts a spot in our program the \$50 Try-out fee will be deducted off their initial player dues.

Once the date is set, we will inform you via email of the date and time of the meeting. The meeting will be held at the Louisville Slugger Sports Complex.

WHAT ROLE DO THE PARENTS PLAY AT CENTRAL ILLINOIS ELITE? The landscape of youth sports has changed quite dramatically in the last decade regarding parent behavior and actions. We will address these issues in depth at the mandatory parent/player meeting after tryouts but felt if necessary to include something here. We want all our parents to enjoy the experience of club volleyball with their daughters. All we ask is that parents remember who the adults are and to ALWAYS show good sportsmanship with what you say and how you act to support your daughter and her team in a positive manner. **Parents should NEVER speak negatively towards or about teammates, a coach, or an opposing player.** You too are representing Central Illinois Elite as much as the players are.

2023-2024 ELITE PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Elite program is geared for those athletes that wish to excel in volleyball and compete at the highest level possible. Our schedule will be competitive.

When the Elite teams travel to tournaments, the parents will be responsible for getting players to the tournament. We will try to book blocks of rooms at the locations for everyone if you choose to stay overnight. We will discuss it in more detail at the player/parent meeting TBT. Players and Parents are encouraged to get involved in Team Bonding on tournament weekends to help the team cohesiveness.

12U ELITE SCHEDULE(Tenative Schedule)

Date	DAY	EVENT	LOCATION
March 16 th /17 th	Sat. & Sun.	Peoria Power Play	Peoria, IL
April 13 th /14 th	Sat. & Sun.	CIE Icebreaker	Louisville Slugger Dome
April 27 th /28 th	Sat. & Sun.	CIE Spring Classic	Louisville Slugger Dome
May 11 th /12 th	Sat, & Sun	CIE Diggin at Dome Championship	Louisville Slugger Dome
May 18 th /19 th	Sat. & Sun.	CIE Diggin at Dome Championship 13's	Louisville Slugger Dome
June 1 st /2 nd	Sat & Sun	Land of Lincoln	GLC, Aurora, IL
June 10 th /11 th	Mon & Tues	Asics Navy Pier National Championship	Navy Pier, Chicago

13U/14U Elite Schedule (Tentative)

Date	DAY	EVENT	LOCATION
March 16 th /17 th	Sat & Sun	Peoria Power Play	Peoria, IL
April 6 th /7 th	Sat & Sun	CIE Icebreaker	Louisville Slugger Dome
April 20 th /21 st	Sat & Sun	CIE Spring Classic	Louisville Slugger Dome
May 4 th /5 th	Sat. & Sun	CIE Viva La Volley	Louisville Slugger Dome
May 18 th /19 th	Sat & Sun	CIE Diggin at the Dome Championship	Louisville Slugger Dome
June 1 st /2 nd	Sat & Sun	2024 Winter City Challenge	GLC, Aurora, IL
June 7 th /8 th /9 th	Sat, Sun & Mon	Asics Navy Pier National Championship	Navy Pier, Chicago

2023-2024 ELITE PRACTICE INFORMATION

The Jr High Elite Program will start in December and will practice on select Sundays in the afternoon to early evening. They will have a similar schedule in January and February. If we have enough 13's and 14's to play in a High School Tournament at the Dome, we will enter them into the tournament. It will be an added expense, but it will be minimal to keep costs low. We must pay for a coach and the entry fee. The cost will be around \$60-\$75 per player. **The 12's will not be involved in any High School Tournaments.** The 12's may have more opportunity to practice in January and February due to us offering a VolleyKIDZ session those two months.

When we enter March and the 13's and 14's are done with their IESA season, we will practice on Monday/Wednesday from 6:30-9 and some Fridays from 5-7.

The 12's will practice on Tuesday and Thursdays and the time will be determined later.

2023-2024 ELITE PROGRAM FEE STRUCTURE

The dues listed do not need to be paid all at once; you may use the payment schedules and options we have set up for the season. Individualized payment plans are always an option that can be worked out on an individual basis. If you and your family are willing and able to help "sponsor" another player in financial need or know of anyone who might wish to, anonymously or otherwise, please contact Jennifer at your convenience. We can also coordinate fundraisers to help as well.

Membership Dues: 12U/13U/14U Elite Program \$1,000

Does not include any January and February Tournament entry dues or coaches travel Expenses. It will include 7 Tournament entries once the IESA season is completed for the 12U/13U and 14U. The schedule is above.

Payment Schedule for 12U/13U/14U Elite:

Due Thurs. Nov 18th: \$350(plus uniform package)
 Due on or before Feb 2nd: \$350
 Due on or before March 2nd: \$300
TOTAL: \$1,000(does not include uniform package)

Here is a rough estimate of what travel tournaments will cost: (note that these are estimates as none of these expenses are fixed costs, they may be higher or lower) We tend to estimate on the high end most tournaments.

Event Name	Est. Cost	12U	13U	14U
Land of Lincoln	\$25-\$75	X	X	X
Asics Navy Pier 12U	\$25-\$75	X		
Asics Navy Pier 13U/14U	\$50-\$100		X	X

2023-2024 ELITE PROGRAM UNIFORM PACKAGE:

3 Short Sleeve Practice shirts, 2 spandex, 2 Team Jerseys, Warm-up pants and Hoodie, Backpack. If your backpack and Jerseys are in good condition from the year before you can use those as we will be using the same jerseys and backpack.

New Players			Returning Players	
Under Amour Spandex(required)	2	\$50	2	\$50
Under Amour Jerseys (If your last year's jerseys are in good condition, you can use them)	2	\$125	IF NEEDED	
Fleece Hood (Required)	1	\$45	1	\$45
Fleece Joggers/Sweatpants (Required)	1	\$40	1	\$40
UA Backpack (Only if you do not have)	1	\$45	IF NEEDED	
Practice Shirts (Required)	3	\$30	3	\$30
Coach Package (Required)	1	\$25	1	\$25
TOTAL DUE ON OR BEFORE NOV. 18TH		\$360.00		\$190