

Chapter 3. Season Preparation and Tryouts

Season Plan

1. Time Line of Events

- a. Try-outs may begin on or after the 2nd Saturday in August to early-September for boys and November for girls. The boy's club season runs late September - early December locally and picks up again in May or June after the boys' high school season is completed for the Boys Junior National Championships in July. Boys' clubs are allowed to tryout in August but the membership season does not begin until September 1st. Any boys that were not registered for the previous season will have to register for the month of August to tryout and begin practices and then renew for the new season beginning Sept 1st. The girl's season runs from tryouts in November to May. Post season play extends the club season into early July. The period from the conclusion of the Jr National Championships to September is the time for clubs to plan the upcoming season. The coaching assignments, number of teams to offer, budget, and facilities are factors that need to be considered.

2. Assembling the Coaching Staff

- a. Determining who will coach the athletes is one of the first decisions the club director must make. Experience, training, certification, volleyball knowledge, and interpersonal skills are all factors that should develop a hiring procedure that requires background information and references from all potential coaches.
- b. ALL Coaches in the Arizona Region must be a minimum of IMPACT certified prior to coaching. IMPACT certification courses, which are offered annually on the USAV Academy, are designed to present coaches with a background in philosophy, liability and issues that will aid them in their experience. The Arizona Region offers additional coaching education opportunities each year for those looking to expand their coaching education beyond IMPACT.
- c. All coaches must be registered AZ Region/USA Volleyball members prior to tryouts for the club. To be registered, all coaches and adult club personnel must register on the SE MMS online registration system and consent to a background screen. Fingerprint cards and other background screen results cannot be substituted for the USAV background screen.
- d. All coaches and any adult associated with the club must also be SafeSport Trained. This is a free course and must be completed before any adult works with the players or can be put on a roster. The SafeSport Core Training must be taken first. Refreshers courses are available each year to keep the certification current. The Core Training must be taken every 4th season. To take the free SafeSport Trainings, log into your SE MMS record, click on USAV Academy.

3. Number of Teams to Offer

- a. Once the coaching staff is assembled, the club director can determine the number of teams the club wants to offer in an age division. The number of teams to offer in each age division can be decided using the club mission statement. Afterwards, the club can then match coaches with teams.

4. Determining Team Budgets

- a. Once the number of teams is decided, a budget and payment schedule for each team can be created. Season costs include tournament contract fees, monthly base fees, and travel costs. There are no set guidelines for collecting money. The club needs to find a system that meets the needs of the organization and it must make that system very clear to the players and the people who will be responsible for paying the fees. The following information can be used as a reference.
- b. Start Up fees are payments that are typically one-time fees. These one-time fees cover the cost of the athletes' uniforms, administrative membership fees, background screening fees, club registration fee, annual equipment needs (balls, carts, etc.), administrative costs of try-outs (printing, facility rental, etc.), region tournament contract fees and national travel tournament entry fees. The junior members must be registered prior to tryouts and must provide proof of current paid membership at tryouts or they should not participate.
- c. The base monthly fee can be tailored to the parameters of each team. The total monthly costs for the team are compiled then divided among the number of athletes per team. Most teams will base costs on fewer players than they actually carry. This will allow for loss of income due to a change in the number of players on a team (i.e., due to injury, scheduling conflict, etc.). The team costs include facility rental (based on the number of practices per month), coaching salaries, employment taxes (if applicable), and administrative fees.
- d. The number of national tournaments in which a team participates determines the monthly travel costs per team. The club can generate a mini-budget for each tournament based on tournament entry fees, lodging, airfare, van rental (including additional driver insurance), gas and staff travel fees (including per diem). The above costs can then be divided by the number of athletes and either factored into the monthly dues (spreading the tournament cost over the months prior to the event) or collected as the costs arise.

5. Facilities

- a. One of the most difficult factors in running a volleyball club is finding a reliable facility to rent. Gym space is scarce, as most area high schools and churches have only one gym. Club volleyball must be flexible to secure gym time around the demands of the school sports and church functions. Without a facility, the club cannot function.
- b. Consider establishing a rental plan prior to try-outs to ensure that there is enough gym space and time to accommodate all team practice needs. Exact practice schedules can be finalized after try-outs. Many rentals are secured in September before the schedule is filled.

6. Insurance

- a. All facilities used by the club need to be insured through USA Volleyball. As facilities are secured a certificate of insurance will be required by the facility. Club organizer(s) can submit the certificate of insurance request form to the Arizona Region office for the needed certificates. The insurance provided is part of the USA Volleyball registration fees, so there is no charge for the certificates. The policy covers liability

for damage to the facility and participant accident insurance to cover athlete injury. These certificates of insurance are for scheduled club tryouts and practices only. Any other use of a facility requires sanctioning and approval by the Arizona Region Commissioner. A new certificate will be issued for the separate event. There are fees to sanction an event.

- b. In addition to the insurance supplied through USA Volleyball, Director's and Officers' (D&O) insurance is highly recommended. The insurance broker for USAV normally puts together a package of D&O insurance for member clubs that is affordable. It provides liability insurance for the decision makers of the club. There is an additional charge for this insurance and it is an annual renewal.
- c. Workman's Compensation Insurance is another insurance that should be looked at by each club. Talk to your accountant about this insurance. The insurance broker for USAV has not provided a package for this insurance in the past.

7. Scheduling and the Try-out

- a. Once all of the preliminary decisions are made, schedule the try-outs. Athletes cannot participate in try-outs, practices or tournaments during any portion of the high school season. The Arizona Region has established tryout dates that do not conflict with the high school season. These must be strictly adhered to or sanctions may apply.
- b. The Arizona Region Junior Committee has established recruiting guidelines. Refer to the Junior Club/Team Policies in the Policies Manual of the Handbook to make sure there is no violation of recruiting when scheduling try-outs.
- c. The Arizona Region has established dates for boys and girls tryouts. Absolutely no formal commitment can be made by the player or the club prior to the established tryout dates. Allowing or requiring commitment before the tryout date is cause for sanction of the club and/or the director.
- d. *Gender Competition Guidelines*
The Arizona Region follows the *Gender Competition Guidelines* of USA Volleyball. Primarily a player must play on the gender team that they are born. There are rules and safety issues concerning an athlete born male participating on a female gender team.

8. Advertising

- a. Once all of the decisions are made and the try-out dates are finalized, the club's task is to attract potential athletes to the organization. Listed below are several suggestions.
- b. *Information Flyer*
An information flyer can be used to generate interest. The flyer can contain the answers to all of the most pertinent questions: coaching assignments, team descriptions, costs, try-out information and procedures and information meeting times. Once assembled, the flyer can be distributed at area schools and other groups.
- c. *Social Media*

Many clubs use a Facebook or Instagram account to help spread the word about their club and tryouts.

d. Open House Sessions

The Arizona Region has established an Open House Period for clubs to offer pre-tryouts evaluation, parent information and basic club info for the parents and players to make a decision as to which club to tryout with. The Open House Period is the 10 days prior to the tryout date for the specific age group. A club may offer up to 3 sessions per age group for the Open House Period. The club MAY NOT require the athlete to commit to their club, may not allow a parent or athlete to sign any commitment documents or collect any money to secure a spot on a team. The club MAY give feedback on the evaluation and where they think the athlete may factor into their teams. Any offer of a specific team is non-binding prior to the tryout date and should not be offered.

e. Listing with the Arizona Region

List your try-out information with the Arizona Region. It will be placed on the Arizona Region Website. The tryouts are posted on a first come first served basis. A flyer in either Word or .pdf format can also be attached to your information. Once the tryouts have been completed, the information will be removed from the website.

9. Registration and Forms

- a. Before an athlete can walk on the court, they must have a current USAV/AZ Region membership. The registration is done online in the SportsEngine MMS registration system. No player should be participating on court at any tryouts or clinics without being registered for the current season. If a club is using the USAV insurance to secure their facility, the insurance becomes void if a non-member is participating.
- b. The completion of the USAV Medical Release and Waiver is very important. This document allows for treatment to begin on an injured athlete if the parent is not present. This document must be carried with the coach at all times they are with the team in any capacity. These documents must be treated with the utmost security as they could have information that could be used to steal someone's identity if in the wrong hands. At the end of the season, these forms should be shredded. This form does not get turned into the Region Office. It is to be kept by the coach.
- c. Additional forms for required for registration include a copy of the player's birth certificate on file with the Arizona Region, the Concussion Acknowledgement form and the SafeSport Parent/Participant Form. The birth certificate is to be submitted the first time a player joins a club in the AZ Region. After the first season, it is kept on file and does not need to be submitted. Both of the latter forms are required annually for junior membership. Players will not be eligible on a roster until these forms are received by the Region Office.
- d. The club may also have general information forms about the athlete which aids in the placement on an appropriate team. Such information includes date of birth (to determine which age group) and teams for which the athlete is able to play, sizes for uniforms, parent contact info and club code of conduct. These forms should not be turned into the Region office.

10. Club Communication Policy

- a. Create a Club Handbook - This Handbook should explain the policies and guidelines of your club. Thoroughly explain how unmet financial obligations will be dealt with and what course of action should be taken if a dispute arises during the season. Be sure to spend plenty of time discussing the need for individuals (players and chaperones) to pre-register with the AZ Region as well as the host of liability issues. Provide a Club Handbook to your parents and players.
- b. The club should have a method for informing the participant about what a commitment to their club means. The more information given to parents/players prior to their commitment the fewer problems you should have if situations arise. Written policies and copies of any signed player contracts should be given to the parents for further reference. The club contract should include information as to the end of the season for the club/team, what happens if the athlete is injured and can no longer play, payment responsibilities, etc.
- c. The Arizona Region has a policy that states that once a commitment to a club is made that decision is binding until the end of the competition season or until the club releases the athlete. The Arizona Region and USA Volleyball expect players who have committed to a club to stay with that club through the Junior National Championships even if the team is not participating in Junior National Championships. If your teams are done after the Region Championships and it does not matter to you if your players go with another club to a season ending event, please include in your contract when their club commitment is completed (i.e., at the end of the Region Championships, at the end of the Jr National Championships, at the end of the season ending event we attend). All players are released from their club commitment after the end of Jr Nationals. No contract can cover more than one season of play.