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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

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Great Bay Volleyball, Inc. a 501 3 (c) non-profit Corporation



# Great Bay Volleyball Club

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# Great Bay Volleyball Inc.

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Great Bay Volleyball, Inc.  
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Program Director, 2007 to present:	Michael McDonnell
Coaching Director, 2007 to present:	Steve McEntire
Treasurer, 2007 to present:	Dan Brodeur
Secretary, 2007 to present:	Rick Veno

Board or Directors, 2008-2009 to present:

Dan Brodeur  
Mike McDonnell  
Steve McEntire  
Rick Veno  
Jenn Kuehl



## GREAT BAY VOLLEYBALL CLUB

### STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY



At Great Bay, we pride ourselves on providing a positive and educational experience for the youth we serve. Our goal is for every player to realize their full potential and graduate the program with a sense of pride, confidence and accomplishment. We are dedicated to maintaining a quality staff of coaches and administrators. We all share the same goal; the pursuit of excellence and an unwavering dedication to creating a safe, positive and significant experience for all players.

Many of our players have an ambition to play in college. Whether that is the goal of our players or not, we are committed to the process of fundamental and advanced training at all levels. Although each team within the club has specifically assigned coaches, we strive to promote standardization of teaching techniques. This is accomplished through constant communication with our coaches about club expectations, internal training sessions and outside professional coaching clinics. Our intention is to recruit and retain coaches who choose to constantly challenge themselves. Beyond education or certification, we seek to have coaches who are dynamic, energetic and share our love of teaching the game.

All of our teams participate in a competitive league environment throughout New England and occasionally beyond. While we strive for continuity throughout the various levels, we believe that each coach has their own unique strategies and teaching methods. Therefore, we leave decisions of playing time at matches up to the individual coach. We do require (emphatically) that they treat all players with respect and dignity. Attitude, ability, effort and dedication are all factors that can affect playing time. We also encourage coaches to take into account the age level at which they are coaching when making playing time decisions (i.e. the younger the age group, the more consideration for playing time).

Our promise to players and parents is to commit to the best possible combination of fairness and education while honoring the competitive nature of the sport. We are fully dedicated to the idea that if you are a player in our gym, you will be included in the process of learning. While the objective of every competitive team is to win, we believe there is more to club volleyball when it comes to our players. It is therefore that we believe success is a byproduct of our philosophy and independent of our winning tournaments. Our hope is for the support of players and parents in a subtle change in focus for club sports; excellence not glory.

## A Word about this manual...

*At Great Bay, we think players, coaches, parents and administrators are closely intertwined. We believe that everyone should know each others' roles. Our hope is that this manual will serve to properly inform anyone involved with Great Bay about our goals, philosophy and structure. Since we all rely on one another to make the club run, it only makes sense to address these issues in one document. Whether you are a player, parent or coach, we hope this will answer any questions you may have while also addressing the important rules and guidelines for participants at Great Bay Volleyball.*

## Coaching and Playing at Great Bay

*What is our Goal? What should we expect from each other?*

Volleyball was founded in Springfield Massachusetts in a YMCA by William G. Morgan. Originally called Mintonette; we have come a long way from the days when “dribbling” and “innings” were an integral part of the game. Today, over one billion people play volleyball around the world. In particular, women’s volleyball is growing rapidly throughout the United States at high school, club and collegiate levels. It is currently the third largest sport for women in the country. Increased interest in competitive volleyball has brought a demand for qualified and dedicated coaches. We owe it to ourselves, our players and our community to be properly trained and thoroughly prepared at all times throughout our coaching careers.

As a coach or player at Great Bay, you should expect to see other Great Bay coaches in your gym. We encourage visits from other coaches and players whenever practical. We see this as an opportunity to learn from one another. In fact, we insist that each coach take time to go to at least two other practices during the season. If you don’t see another coach or Great Bay Director at one of your practices by the fourth week of the season, you should contact the Coaching Director or Program Director so a visit can be arranged.

Most importantly, we expect coaches to be as dedicated to the program as we would require their players to be. Demanding and fair is a good motto. We hope that you will work to provide a fun, positive and dynamic atmosphere at every practice and tournament. We hope that players will embrace this philosophy and work with every coach to contribute in the same way. We expect that coaches should know the game. It is not required that you play (or played) at higher levels only that you understand the game at higher levels. What follows here is a simple guide to expectations for coaches and players in the Great Bay Volleyball program. To begin, we hope that you will join us in embracing this creed:

## Coach's Creed

Developing a personal philosophy should be looked upon with great importance. We believe that developing a core set of guiding principles is a critical step in our development as coaches. Individual and professional growth will dictate changes in style and methods over time but core principles will likely remain constant. If we strive to keep our principles intact, we are likely to have success in our relationships with players, parents, administrators and fellow coaches. Remember; it is about the development of players! Following are some simple principles to guide us in our efforts to be better coaches:

- ✓ **We are teachers first.** Raising a player's Volleyball IQ is a lifetime benefit to the player.
- ✓ We are coaching **Student** Athletes. Promoting the importance of academics, and reminding our players that participating in organized sports is also a means of improving their academic performance, should be a priority.
- ✓ It should be our goal to motivate players by instilling confidence and building morale. **Competence Builds Confidence.**
- ✓ We should promote **sportsmanship, work ethic and teamwork.**
- ✓ **Dedication and preparedness** are paramount for anyone involved in the Great Bay program (coaches, administrators, players and parents).
- ✓ **Honesty and trust are essential to success:** Player to Player, Coach to Player, Coach to Coach.
- ✓ **Coaches for excellence, not glory.** The team should win because they are motivated to do well, not because of a coach's aspiration.
- ✓ We will dedicate ourselves to **perpetual improvement of our own skills** as a coach and as a player.
- ✓ We will agree on how we teach fundamental skills and strive for consistency at all levels.
- ✓ We will **contribute** to the program **to the best of our abilities according to our individual talents.** Strategy is a coach's personal preference but should be designed with an **emphasis on fulfilling team or program goals.**
- ✓ **We will pursue excellence** and demand that our players do the same.
- ✓ We will establish a **"Guilt Free Zone"** for all our players. This is a safe place to fail in pursuit of excellence without the pressure of having to be perfect every time.

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## Gold Medal Squared Certified:

Great Bay is a Gold Medal Squared™ Certified club and we are committed to teaching Gold Medal methods and principles. Each year, to maintain our certification the majority of our staff will attend at least one Gold Medal Squared Coaching clinic. The Club attempts to subsidize the cost of the clinic to the extent that it is financially viable at the time of the clinic.

We realize that every coach brings their own set of unique skills and experiences to the club. We want you to know and understand the GM2 methods but we also want you to share your personal experience with players. We hope you will let them know that there are a lot of good methods being used around the world to teach the sport of volleyball and we have chosen one of the very best as a foundation for teaching them the game.

We believe fellow coaches can (and should) be your best source of information. Coaches should work closely together to ensure that a consistent set of skills is being taught program wide. We will hold mandatory internal coaching sessions for all Coaches in the club to ensure consistency. Our hope is that *any* player from *any* team at *any* level can walk into *any* Great Bay practice and hear and see the same methods, principles and cues being used by our coaches.



### Teaching the Skills

The whole is better than the parts...

In volleyball, there is a beginning, a middle, but never an end! **Learning is forever.** During the beginning stages of learning (the cognitive phase) intense knowledge of the game is not necessarily required by the athlete.

We are teachers first. Simple is better than complex at this stage. At a clinic I attended recently, Dr. Carl McGown from BYU said (quoting Confucius) “I hear I forget, I see I remember, I do I understand”. Demonstration of the whole skill (not broken into parts) will best transfer into game situations. Simple, concise instruction about key elements of the skill (one key at a time while still practicing the whole skill) will be more effective than long, complex explanation and subsequent analysis.

Have your players practice the whole skill after giving them a key or cue you would like them to focus on. Then give *immediate* and *specific* feedback about their performance. We try to avoid feedback such as “good job” or “well done” but rather we want the player to know what they did well and what we want them to work on (“Feed Forward”). For instance, you might say “I love the way your platform was simple and straight, *we* need to work on not swinging the platform to target, Great Job with your footwork!” While our goal is to be **relentlessly positive**, we must talk about the negative in terms of how we want our players to improve. “Couching” a negative between two positives is a popular method of delivering feedback.

Following are some of the cues we use for each discipline.

#### Passing Keys:

- Wrists and hands together – thumbs pointed down

- Face the ball - angle the platform
- Simple & Straight (platform)
- See the Ball, See the Spin Watch the ball in (to your arms)
- Shuffle quietly to the ball

**Setting Keys:**

- Shape your hands around the ball - thumbs back.
- Extend (finish palms up)
- Right foot slightly forward – Square to target
- Right, left-right (footwork to the ball)

**Blocking Keys:**

- Eyes open!
- Thumbs up – Wrap hands around the ball
- Ball - Setter - Ball - Hitter
- Seal the net and close the seams
- Footwork: open, cross, turn, block. Or shuffle, shuffle.
- Load and Go

**Serving:**

- Dominant elbow high (level with shoulder)
- Bow & Arrow
- Elbow leads hand
- “Place ball” with left hand.
- Float serve – No follow thru – hit the equator of the ball
- Top spin – higher toss, reach high, follow thru

**Defensive Keys:**

- Quick to the ball and stay low
- Ball – Setter – Ball – Hitter
- Feet apart – knees bent – knees inside of toes
- You must be stopped when the ball arrives.
- Relentless Pursuit

**Hitting:**

- Right, Left, Right, Left
- Slow, Faster Fastest
- Small, Bigger Biggest
- Reach! – Load – Fire! Elbow leads hand.

## Core Values



Establishing a core system of values is essential to our program and ultimate success... It occurred to us that we need a core set of values for various disciplines of the game if we are to establish a consistent and successful program. We decided this was more about philosophy than discipline so the categories are broader than the list of fundamental skills listed above. When planning our practices, we want to make sure we are keeping the following Core Values in mind:

### Offense:

- ✓ Be Intelligent
- ✓ See the Defense
- ✓ TCB (Take Care of Business at the net (i.e. overpasses or over sets))
- ✓ Be Patient... (Keep a bad ball in play, expect the ball back, etc.)
- ✓ Be aggressive when the time is right.
- ✓ Master the tools of offense

### Defense:

- ✓ Be ultra aggressive – never quit!
- ✓ Don't be afraid of the floor
- ✓ Never – Ever stand up (lock your knees)
- ✓ Turn and run when it makes sense
- ✓ Always be available. E.P.E.D. (Every Play, Every Day)
- ✓ Relentless pursuit of the ball is a must
- ✓ Read: Ball – Setter – Ball – Hitter
- ✓ For non-emergency plays, you must be stopped when the ball arrives

### Transition:

- ✓ Back to base on every play
- ✓ Stay low (If you stand the play is over)
- ✓ Intense concentration for the entire match
- ✓ Hitter coverage
- ✓ Awareness of play development

### Serving Strategy:

- ✓ Serve to a place, not a person
- ✓ Have a Pre-serve routine
- ✓ Have at least two serves. One you're sure of and one you can ace with
- ✓ Focus for a moment on your target (place); then watch the ball. Your brain will do the rest.

- ✓ Don't give away the zone to your opponent by staring at it.

### Communication:

- ✓ Be Loud
- ✓ Be early with your calls
- ✓ Call everything
  - "It's up"
  - "Mine"
  - "Hannah"
  - "Back Row, 3 Hitters"
  - "If she tips, I got it"
  - "Free"
  - "5,5,5!" "yes, yes"
  - "Out" "In"
- ✓ Know your teammates' tendencies for communication
- ✓ Be Specific. Use names whenever possible instead of generalities like "help" and "yours".

### Team:

- ✓ Be Positive
- ✓ Never stop learning
- ✓ Give suggestions, not instructions (Let the coach; coach)
- ✓ Dedication – Go above and beyond
- ✓ Play to your fullest potential but not beyond. Don't do tactically what you can't do technically.
- ✓ **Perfection is a state of mind**
- ✓ **Competence Builds Confidence**
- ✓ Be Loyal
- ✓ Be honest (especially to yourself)
- ✓ Be Forgiving (especially to yourself)
- ✓ Mistakes...
  - A mistake repeated is learning
  - A mistake corrected is success
  - A mistake ignored is disaster

Finally, we think we are unique in our approach to club volleyball. We all understand that this is a sport of competition. We will not deny our desire to win. We simply want to win for the right reasons. In keeping with our philosophy, winning is a by-product of hard work, determination and good spirit. If you think you can improve everyday while helping your players or teammates to do the same, you are a winner. If you are a coach who can provide their team with; a dynamic atmosphere, confidence through competence and a secure environment in which they can grow as an athlete and a human being, welcome to Great Bay Volleyball!

If you have any questions or concerns about coaching at Great Bay, please see a list of directors and administrators in the front of this manual.

## A Special note to Great Bay Parents (A parents Promise)

We feel that parents are a big part of the Great Bay Volleyball experience. We hope you will read and understand all the information that we expect your child and your coach to read. Remember that we coach because we love working with your kids and we love volleyball! If you read our Statement of Philosophy, you will know that we are dedicated to providing a safe and positive environment in which your child can learn. We can accomplish our goal of being the best club in New England but we need your help.

*We need you to...*

- ✓ ...always remember this is a game for *your* children.
- ✓ ...Let coaches talk to referees and opposing coaches or fans about the game.
- ✓ ...Help your child with responsibilities and remind them about the importance of showing up on time.
- ✓ ...Be relentlessly positive with us!
- ✓ ...Encourage your child to try their hardest and regret nothing.
- ✓ ...Read this manual and affirm your support by signing the contract.
- ✓ ...Cheer for the team...Loud and Always!
- ✓ ...Never cheer against another team... they are children too just like yours.
- ✓ ...Help when asked to help... we are essentially a volunteer organization.
- ✓ ...Talk politely with your coach if there is an issue and know that they have been asked to do the same with you (At Practice, not at Tournaments). If you can't work it out, please talk to the Program Director.
- ✓ ...Remember that coaches coach, parents parent and players play!
- ✓ ...Have fun and support your child! It's a wonderful opportunity for your child to get to know other children from around the state, make new friends, experience different places and learn to work in a team environment!

## Club Rules and Goals

An absolute must for a balanced, healthy program.

Open, honest communication about club and team rules will yield an emotionally healthy program. We have high expectations for everyone involved in Great Bay Volleyball. We hope

for your commitment in making every effort possible to support the club and your team. Club volleyball is a quadrangle made up of parents, players, coaches and administrators. Working together, we can provide a great environment in which to learn and play. Following are a set of guidelines we expect everyone involved with Great Bay will follow.

## Club Affiliation Policy

A Great Bay coach who also holds a high school coaching position (referred to herein after as a “dual duty coach”) shall not discourage any player from freely choosing a club for which to play. Further, such a coach may not discourage players from choosing NOT to play at all during the winter season. A player who plays multiple sports at his or her high school should never be encouraged to abandon that endeavor for the sake of club sports but rather only if it is an attainable goal of the athlete to do both. For those athletes interested in club sports, a dual duty coach is required to make them aware of neighboring clubs\* by providing contact information (website addresses, phone numbers or emails) for those clubs. The Director of Great Bay Volleyball shall provide this information to all current dual duty coaches. No coach in the Great Bay family shall discriminate\*\* in any way against a player from another club while coaching for a high school program. Similarly, as club coaches, we will embrace players from any high school program regardless of the club affiliation of its coaches. If it is suspected that a coach is in violation of this policy, we strongly encourage you to report the offending coach to both the director of their club and the athletic director of the school he or she coaches for; no matter what their club affiliation.

It is important we understand the difference between a high school coach making a legitimate coaching decision and discrimination against a player because of club affiliation. We realize that *all* coaches are under pressure to make decisions based on many factors including but not limited to; skill level, effort, coachability, enthusiasm and dedication. Because of this, benefit of the doubt will often go to the coach. Unless a coach is blatantly discriminatory about club affiliation it will be difficult to prove. However; derogatory or degrading remarks about other coaches or clubs should be reported as a conflict of interest, un-sportsmanship like and unprofessional. Our paramount concern is how we conduct ourselves as Great Bay coaches. We intend to set the benchmark for accountability. It is with that in mind that we are encouraging you to report any Great Bay dual duty coach who you suspect is disparaging or degrading another program or mistreating a player based on club affiliation. How we establish ourselves now will shape the future of our program.

Please join us in establishing a higher standard when it comes to Junior Olympic Volleyball. It is our hope that the integrity and spirit of all youth sports is honored and respected by everyone involved with Great Bay Volleyball.

\*A neighboring club is defined as a club close enough in proximity to a school or township that it may be reasonably attended by a player.

\*\*Discrimination based on club affiliation is defined as (but not limited to); refusing to fairly include a player in team activities (including sanctioned competition) based on club affiliation, disparaging or degrading a player or the club he or she plays for, limiting a players ability to contribute to his or her team based on club affiliation, threatening a player with penalty or sanction of any kind based on the their past, current or future choice of club.

## General Team Rules

### Together      Everyone      Accomplishes      More

- ✓ Dedication to the team is essential and expected.
  - Players are expected to be at every practice and tournament.
  - Please know the schedule in advance.
- ✓ Early is On time, On time is Late, Late is Unacceptable!
- ✓ *Excused* absences may result in any reasonably applicable consequences the coach or club deems appropriate. Such consequences shall not be punitive in nature.
- ✓ Unexcused absences or repetitive lateness or absence (excused or unexcused) are unacceptable and may result in any of (but not limited to) the following:
  - Loss of practice time
  - Loss of playing time
  - Loss of points at practice
  - Possible suspension or expulsion from the club.

Coaches and administrators (together) will make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, we would like you to know our philosophy about the following issues:

- ✓ If you have a valid excuse to miss practice YOU MUST TELL THE COACH DIRECTLY! Please give as much advanced notice as possible.
  - Coaches will hand out adequate contact information at the beginning of the season.
- ✓ Negative or degrading talk or behavior will not be tolerated and may result in expulsion from the team. We deal with team issues at practices, not at tournaments. If there is a problem, work it out!
- ✓ Use of tobacco, alcohol, steroids or any illegal substance is strictly forbidden at any time while playing for Great Bay. Infractions will result in disciplinary action by the Board of Directors including any of the following: suspension from practice and competition, dismissal from the team and possible expulsion from the club. During any suspension period, the player will be expected to attend practice but not participate.

### **Rules for Practice**

- ✓ Never roll balls under the net or kick balls off the court. Bend Over, Pick it up, Throw it to the coach!

- ✓ No talking, bouncing balls, playing or otherwise causing distractions while the coach is addressing a team.
- ✓ If practice begins at 4:00 pm. You should be warmed up and ready to play volleyball at 4:00 pm! That includes:
  - Appropriately dressed and ready to play. Knee pads, shoes, socks etc. on. Appropriate active wear must be worn to practice.
  - Nets are up and ready
  - Stretching is done BEFORE practice
  - Shoulders are properly warmed (pepper).
- ✓ **There are no dumb questions!**
- ✓ Do not be afraid to make mistakes. If you are not making mistakes, you are not learning anything.
- ✓ Please leave the gym, equipment and storage area cleaner/better than we found it!

## Travel Rules

### 1. Travel Attire

- a. Dress for travel with Great Bay is business casual. We want to be comfortable but appropriate.
  - i. For example: slacks, knee length skirts, blouses, dress shirts, sweaters, etc.
  - ii. Not acceptable: tank tops, t-shirts, belly shirts, mini skirts, etc.
  - iii. If you wouldn't arrive at a job interview wearing it; don't wear it.

### 2. Attire while at tournaments

- a. Travel teams (all players) with Great Bay Warm-ups or Sweatshirts should wear them to and from the tournament venue. Every effort should be made for teams to look uniform and consistent in appearance. During down time (in between matches or at night) teams will travel together and dress appropriately. When practical, you should wear your team or club attire.

### 3. Conduct during travel with Great Bay

- a. You are representing yourselves, your parents, your school, your coaches, your team and this club. That's a lot! Please conduct yourselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times.
- b. Rooms are to be kept clean at all times. Players will make every effort to leave the room clean (trash free, reasonable wear and tear accepted).
- c. The team's coach will set a curfew. Athletes must be in their assigned room at curfew; Lights out and Quiet. Please be courteous of other hotel guests and curfews set for other teams.
- d. The use of hotel telephones will be for room to room calls only. Cell phones may be utilized for placing long distance calls. When possible, Hotel Phones will be blocked for long distance calling.
- e. In room movie and game rentals will be blocked when possible. In any case, there shall be no charges to the room of any kind.
- f. With the exception of family members, chaperones, teammates and appropriate coaching staff, **no one** is allowed in a player's room.

- g. Use of tobacco, alcohol, steroids or any illegal substance is strictly forbidden at any time while playing for Great Bay. Infractions will result in disciplinary action by the Board of Directors as outlined here above. At Travel Tournaments, the coaches have the authority to suspend a player for any such infraction. In such cases the coach will contact the Director of the Club immediately.
  - h. No one is allowed to travel alone or leave the hotel or tournament venue without permission from or being accompanied by a coach or chaperone. It is always a good idea to travel in pairs or groups when traveling.
- 4. Conduct at tournaments while traveling (any tournament)**
- a. We will respect all officials, opponents, coaches and tournament directors
  - b. Profane or abusive language is unacceptable and will be met with stern discipline.
  - c. As above, we will conduct ourselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times.
- 5. Finally:**
- a. HAVE FUN! This is a great opportunity to compete, bond with your teammates and coaches and experience other regions in the country!
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## Price Structure and other Frequently Asked Questions about Great Bay.

### **What is Great Bay Volleyball?**

Great Bay Volleyball is a Registered 501 C 3 non-profit organization that trains volleyball players from age 8-18 for Junior Olympic Volleyball competition . We are part of the New England Regional Volleyball Association (NERVA), a sub-region of USA Volleyball. We compete throughout New England and beyond. Great Bay was founded on the belief that volleyball should be fun, competitive and rewarding. Please take a moment to visit our website (<http://www.GreatBayVolleyball.com>) and learn more about us. We pride ourselves on communication and we are constantly adding and updating our information.

### **Where and when are practices?**

Practices are held at various locations ranging from Hampton to Rochester, NH. Locations and times will be announced on the website once they are finalized before each season. The main practice for most teams is held on Sunday afternoons. As stated above, some teams will practice more during the week.

### **When are tryouts and is there a fee?**

Tryouts are normally held directly after the High School season ends in early to mid November. The fee is determined each year and will be published on the website. The typical fee for tryouts is \$25.00 (non-refundable). Membership with USAV

Volleyball is paid directly to USAV and has typically been \$45.00. Players who choose a competing club or are not placed on a team after tryouts with Great Bay will have the USAV fee transferred or refunded.

### **How much does it cost to play at Great Bay and when is the first payment due?**

All Costs are estimates and prices are subject to change without notice. Prices do not include tryouts or membership with USAV. Prices vary depending on the level and age group of the team. Fee's range for \$375.00 - \$1,500.00 and may or may not include travel. Please see "General information about Teams" and the categories that follow below for more information.

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### **Where and when do I make payments?**

All Checks should be made out to "Great Bay Volleyball Club, Inc." You may either pay with a credit card or check using our online payment system or mail checks to:

**Great Bay Volleyball  
P.O. Box 186  
Seabrook, NH 03874**

Payments are due on the following dates (a \$150.00 deposit will be due at tryouts for all Travel teams and credited equally to the three payment dates.)

- ✓ First Payment Due: January 10<sup>th</sup> (40% of the team fee)
- ✓ Second Payment Due: February 10<sup>th</sup> (30% of the team fee)
- ✓ Final Payment Due: March 10<sup>th</sup> (30% of the team fee)

Please note that practices or tournaments that are cancelled due to weather, loss of gym time, or any other unforeseen circumstance are non-refundable. Whenever possible, reasonable attempts will be made to reschedule such events. Tournament dates are generally considered non-practice days unless otherwise designated by the Club.

Occasionally the situation arises when a player cannot complete the full season due to injury, illness or other extenuating circumstances. The Club commits to the cost of gym space, uniforms, entry fees and other expenses on behalf of each player at the beginning of the season. The Club determines individual fees based on the club's entire expenditures. Therefore, all players are expected to pay the full amount whether or not they can complete the season.

The Club has established a policy of advocating for our parents and players.. We believe that we are your ambassador and advocate when it comes to purchasing, pricing, tournament selection and accommodations when

traveling. Where we have saved money, we have issued refunds. When we expect expenditures in excess of the team fee, we gain consensus from the parents and players with an attempt to provide the best possible experience for the player. We try to be as accurate as possible from the outset. We hope you will join us in this philosophy and mutual effort on behalf of our players.

### **General information about Great Bay teams:**

- ✓ Most teams will practice a minimum of twice a week unless attending a tournament (U12 and some U-14/16 teams may practice only once a week).
- ✓ Great Bay Volleyball is a Gold Medal Certified Club and all coaches adhere to Gold Medal principles.
- ✓ Teams are comprised of 8-12 players. We generally try to have 9-10 as the optimum number of players on a roster. At younger age groups, we tend to have larger rosters to help foster development. At older and higher levels of play, we tend to reduce numbers to bolster consistency.
- ✓ Whenever possible, each team shall have two (or more) coaches.

### **Club vs. Open and movement between levels:**

NERVA provides two main levels of competition; Club and Open. The most significant difference being that Open tournaments have a certified core of officials at each venue where Club tournaments are officiated by the players with supervision by the coaches and Tournament Directors (work teams). The Open level is divided into flights (i.e. Gold, Silver, Bronze, etc.) and Club is divided into groups (i.e. AA, A, B, C, etc.) Open is more structured than Club and is generally a higher level of competition. NERVA allows for the movement of top and bottom finishers at each tournament; up and down respectively. NERVA will determine how many teams to move from each level based on the number of teams in each division or flight. Therefore, a Club team can conceivably become an Open team and vice versa. Teams moving up from Club to Open may be required to pay for tournaments and may realize an increase in fee structure. That possibility will be discussed with players and parents whenever practical.

### **Our Travel Teams:**

Our Travel Teams generally apply to play in the Open division. Travel teams are for accomplished players who desire to improve their skills and knowledge and are generally considering a volleyball career in college. Though we require commitment and dedication from every Great Bay player, the nature of a Travel team by virtue of the goals of the players and coaches, is generally more demanding of a player's time. When selected for a Travel team, players should consider the inherent demands carefully before accepting a position. These teams will play in tournaments other than NERVA tournaments generally lasting 2 or more days and requiring overnight stays thus making them "travel teams". Examples of such tournaments are the Bay State Invitational, the annual Great Nor'Easter tournament in New York and others. There is also the possibility of attempting to qualify for Nationals by attending the Northeast National Qualifier in Baltimore or capturing the Regional Bid. Finally a

team could attend Nationals or other large year-end tournaments the generally take place after the NERVA season ends (June and July). These are not NERVA events and there are entry fees, hotel costs and travel expenses associated with these tournaments beyond the team fee. Lastly, Travel teams generally require 2 uniform tops as they play in multi-day tournaments. This, and other factors, tend to increase the cost for these teams.

### **Our Club Teams:**

Club teams are the heart of the NERVA region; the largest segment. Our goal is for all teams at Great Bay to practice at least 2 times a week. The cost for Club teams is generally lower than travel teams. Great Bay's philosophy is to coach every player the same way. The only thing less demanding about club is the element of time. They play in fewer tournaments and generally travel shorter distances. It is important to note that playing at the club level does not preclude a player from seeking a college career and if that is the goal of our players at the club level, the time requirements may be equal to that of the Travel team player. In either case, we will assist a college bound player the same way.

Club teams play in reciprocal tournaments of the Club division and the cost of each team is directly related to the amount of practice time and the cost of tournament facilities associated with each tournament. The reciprocal system used by NERVA mandates that each club in New England have court space available equal to the number of teams they have. Specifically for every group of 4 teams Great Bay has, we must have 1 court available for each tournament date (please note that if we had only 5 teams, we are considered to have 2 groups and we would still need to provide two courts ). Those courts are available to the NERVA scheduler for any level. The scheduler attempts to place Club teams closer to home when possible but the entire Northeast Region is considered "Local".

### **Our Open/Option Teams:**

We created this "in-between" group to accommodate teams that are on the cusp between Open and Club Levels or have the desire and the potential to compete at Travel tournaments. Open -Option teams will be offered the *option* of traveling to out-of-region Tournaments in or outside of the New England area. The Club will determine the potential of a team to travel and if the team is (parents and players) willing and able to pay for such a tournament, Great Bay will make good faith efforts to enter that team.

### **U-12 through U-16 Club/Local:**

- ✓ Most teams will Practice once or twice a week at locations to be announced soon.
- ✓ All teams will be provided uniforms (numbered jersey and spandex)

- ✓ Entry into all local tournaments is provided. Travel to and from tournaments is the responsibility of the player and their family. No player should drive themselves to or from a tournament.
- ✓ U16's will receive an additional garment (such as the Great Bay Hooded Sweatshirt or Warm up Jacket).

#### **U-14 Open Option:**

- ✓ Teams will Practice twice a week at locations to be announced.
- ✓ All teams will be provided uniforms (numbered jersey and spandex)
- ✓ Entry into all NERVA Open tournaments is provided. All Teams must qualify with NERVA to be eligible for the Open Level. Travel to and from regular NERVA tournaments is the responsibility of the player and their family. No player should drive themselves to or from a tournament.
- ✓ U14's will be offered the option of traveling to Tournaments in or outside of the New England area. The Club will determine the potential of a team to travel and if the team (parents and players) is willing and able to pay for such a tournament, the Club will make good faith efforts to enter that team. A list of potential tournaments will be announced on our website.
- ✓ U14's Open will receive an additional garment (such as the Great Bay Hooded Sweatshirt or Warm up Jacket).

#### **U-16 through U-18 Open Travel:**

- ✓ Teams will Practice at least twice a week at locations to be announced.
- ✓ All teams will be provided home and away uniforms provided they play in multi-day tournaments (numbered jersey and spandex). 16 through 18 Open will receive additional garments such as the Great Bay Hooded Sweatshirt or Warm up Jacket).
- ✓ Entry into all NERVA Open tournaments is provided. All Teams must qualify with NERVA to be eligible for the Open Level.
- ✓ Travel to and from regular NERVA tournaments is the responsibility of the player and their family. No player should drive themselves to or from a tournament.
- ✓ These teams will enter, at least, one Out of Region Tournament for travel. The cost of entry, lodging and administration will be included in the team fee. Should group transportation of team members be necessary, there will be an estimate given for the additional cost. Typically, teams have chosen to forgo group transportation and transport themselves (through their parents and car pool efforts). All decisions have to be made club wide and with the expressed consent of the Board of Directors.
- ✓ Open 16's through 18's will be offered the option of traveling to other tournaments in or outside of the New England area. The Club will determine the potential of a team to travel and if the teams (parents and players) are willing and able to pay for such a tournament, the Club will make good faith efforts to enter those teams. A list of potential tournaments will be announced on our

website and may or may not include LIBA, BAYSTATE, AAU NATIONALS or the NORTH EAST QUALIFIER (a qualifier for USA Nationals).

### **Training Academy:**

The Training Academy is offered to players who, for whatever reason, are not on a regular Great Bay team. This is a bona fide opportunity to improve general and specific skill sets while also improving Volleyball IQ. We hope it will improve each player's chance of making a team now or in the future; whether it is for this club, a high school team or any other club. Any player interested in learning will be welcomed regardless of their level of knowledge or skill (up to the capacity of the gym or availability of coaches). We recognize that there are several reasons why some may not be able to play a full competitive season. Financial hardship, multiple extracurricular activities and inexperience are all valid reasons for considering the Great Bay Training Academy.

The Training Academy is not age restricted and we will make every effort to be inclusive of all but divide by appropriate skill level when safety and common sense are at issue. All Training Academy players will be eligible for spots on Great Bay teams should the need arise. Coaches may move players between teams (any team) at any point during the season within the rules of the league and for any of the following reasons (included but not limited to): injury, illness, scheduling conflicts, etc. A coach may also bring a player up if he or she feels a player on the squad has improved to the point where that player will benefit his or her team.

### **Training Academy Focus:**

1. To improve fundamental and advanced level skills in a structured and safe environment.
2. To provide a learning opportunity for players who, for whatever reason, are not playing the competitive schedule.
3. To improve a players chance of participating in the future for club, high school or college volleyball.
4. To support and develop the Great Bay program now, and in the future.
5. To provide a second opportunity for players who feel as though they have more to offer.

### **When will we know about tournament locations?**

During the season, the NERVA coordinator has to place nearly 300 teams at facilities throughout New England. Clubs are responsible for providing one court for every group of 4 teams they have (reciprocal system). On any given tournament date there are teams that withdraw for various reason including travel outside the region, school vacations and sickness. The schedule goes out first to Club directors, is corrected for errors and then sent out to the general public. It is a process unique to New England. Most regions operate on a first come first served basis meaning

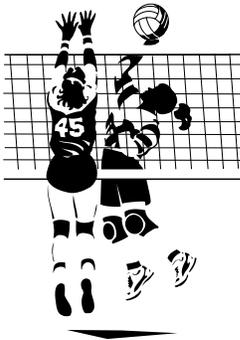
NOT EVERY TEAM GETS TO PLAY ON EVERY TOURNAMENT DATE!  
Our best suggestion is to be patient. We promise you will know when we know.

**Is there an official NERVA web site:**

Official information about NERVA tournaments is posted on at:  
[www.nervajuniors.com](http://www.nervajuniors.com).

**What does the Gold Medal Certification mean?**

- ✓ 80% of coaches in the club have attended an annual GMS Coaching Clinic
- ✓ The 12 and under, 17s, and 18s coaches MUST have attended a GMS Coaching Clinic
- ✓ The club designates a representative to oversee training and to ensure proper teaching methods and training philosophy
- ✓ The club makes a general commitment to train all their players using GMS methods
- ✓ For More information about the Gold Medal certification please visit the Gold Medal Squared website at [www.goldmedalsquared.com](http://www.goldmedalsquared.com) .



**Finally:**

This is a truly wonderful sport for children and adults alike. Remind your players that they can play for a lifetime. Establishing a strong program with consistent teaching methods and a strong personal philosophy will provide our players with the strength of character, physical competence and joy of the game they need to sustain them well past their school years. We should never let the glory of winning get in the way of our love for teaching or the well being of our athletes. The information contained in this document is a simple guide to help make our programs more consistent and promote dialogue between coaches, parents and players at all levels. It is intended to help us build a better program and produce athletes, coaches and parents that will make us proud to be called Great Bay Volleyball.