

# EPVA JO Policies Document

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## 1.0 EPVA Philosophy

- 1.1 EPVA volleyball is built on the philosophy of consistency in coaching and intensity throughout the program; with the expectation of proudly representing Eden Prairie and maintaining high standards for achievement and sportsmanship, while providing the best volleyball experience possible for our players. Our mission, and the mission of our coaches, is to provide an environment that will help teams achieve their goals, while helping players learn life lessons and develop positive character traits through their participation in volleyball.
- 1.2 Specifically, we want our players to:
  - 1.2.1 Be coached using the principles of positive coaching
  - 1.2.2 Have fun playing the game
  - 1.2.3 Feel like an important part of the team regardless of performance
  - 1.2.4 Learn “life lessons” that have value beyond the court
  - 1.2.5 Learn the skills, tactics, and strategies of the game and improve as a player

## 2.0 Player Eligibility

- 2.1 The EPVA volleyball program is available to all girls who live in Eden Prairie, attend Eden Prairie schools, or have a parent that works in Eden Prairie.
  - 2.1.1 Exception: In the event that a team can't be filled with players that meet the above criteria, remaining roster spots may be filled with players not from Eden Prairie provided they register and attend tryouts, with priority given to girls who were eligible at one time and had played in the program previously.
- 2.2 A coach's child who is not an Eden Prairie resident or does not attend an Eden Prairie school, after going through the same tryout process as all other participants, may be added to a roster as an extra player. This player will not take the roster spot of an Eden Prairie player.
- 2.3 Exception: The 18U team is an open team, and will accept registration from players outside of Eden Prairie. In the event that a full team can't be filled with registered 18U Eden Prairie players, the remaining roster spots may be filled using players not from Eden Prairie.

## 3.0 Participation in Other Club Programs

- 3.1 USA Volleyball and NCR regulations dictate that a player can be registered for only one club team.
- 3.2 Skill development is encouraged through Eden Prairie programs, other clubs year round clinics, or fall leagues. Participation in another club's program does not preclude an athlete from registering for the Eden Prairie JO program.
- 3.3 Participation in another program will not impact a player's team placement.

## 4.0 Multi-Sport Athletes

- 4.1 We strongly support multi-sport athletes (see attendance policy below).
- 4.2 We expect equitable sharing of the burden of player absences between both (all) sports, with respect to both practices and playing events.

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## 5.0 Team Selection

- 5.1 Number of teams: The number of teams will be based upon player ability, available gym space for practices, and coaching resources.
- 5.2 Players per team: We attempt to have 10 players on each team. Depending on the skill levels that number can vary to as low as 8 and as high as 11, but our goal is always 10.
- 5.3 Team playing level: As younger players benefit from playing in older age groups, and as our emphasis remains on fundamental skill development, the Eden Prairie program will designate teams as 10U developmental, 12U, 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 18U.
- 5.4 Playing up: We recognize that in some case a players training and development needs may be best achieved by allowing a player to compete with athletes in an older age group. Bearing this in mind, a player registered as 10U, 12U, 13U, 14U, 15U and 16U will be allowed to play up only if they make the next level's team.
  - 5.4.1 The program director and coaching staff determine if a player may try out for an older age group.
  - 5.4.2 The program director and coaching staff will determine if a player is capable, from a skills and development needs standpoint, of playing on an older age group.
  - 5.4.3 All athletes must still register and try out within their designated age group according to their date of birth, regardless of whether or not playing up is in consideration
  - 5.4.4 .

Exception: IF, during 18U team formation; a.) the last date to register prior to the tryout date has passed. b.) There are a minimum of 5 players signed up for 18U and c.) There are less than 10 players registered AND specific positions still need to be filled; THEN, the commissioner/coaches may open up the 18U registration to second year 16U players to fill the specific position needs of the 18U team. If multiple players sign up for the open position(s) on the 18U team, tryouts will be conducted to fill the open position(s). The selection of the second year 16U player(s) to the 18U team may occur only if such additions would not; a.) Cause an otherwise possible 16U team to be eliminated or b.) Create a specific position void on the 16U team.
- 5.5 The tryout process:
  - 5.5.1 At least two pre-tryout clinics will be offered in October and November to familiarize the participants with the tryout drills.
  - 5.5.2 Parents are not allowed into the tryout area to view the process (not within the area or above the area on the running track).
  - 5.5.3 The evaluators for tryouts will consist of the Club Director and coaches from the EPVA JO program.
  - 5.5.4 Tryouts are comprised of three phases:
    - 5.5.4.1 Phase One: Testing
      - Players are split randomly within their age group and run through drills and assessments that the Club Director and evaluators deem appropriate to judge the skill, athleticism, effort and attitude of the players.
    - 5.5.4.2 Phase Two: Program Acceptance
      - Evaluators and the Club Director ultimately accept players into the program, based on considerations including but not limited to skills, age, attitude, and other team requirements.

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- Parents will be required to be physically at the tryout facility at pre-determined times in the event a child is released from the tryout earlier than the scheduled end of tryouts.
- The list of girls making the EPVA program will be posted on the website within 24 hours of the conclusion of the tryout process.
- The tryout deposit for players not making the program will be refunded.

## 5.5.4.3 Phase Three: Final Placement on Teams

- Final team rosters will be determined no later than the second Saturday in December, and will be based on performance at tryouts and practices up until the point that teams are finalized.
- Players will be ranked, with the top ranked players being placed on the first team in each age group. An evaluation will then determine if all positions have been covered (i.e. if a team is formed that doesn't have a setter, a setter will be placed on the team and the player with the lowest assessment, depending on position requirements, will be moved down one team. This process will be repeated until all teams are selected.
- Team rosters will be posted on the website within 24 hours of the conclusion of this process.
- Any exception to the tryout policy will require board approval.

## 5.5.5 Tryout Attendance is Mandatory

### 5.5.5.1 Absence due to family commitment:

- The player must have registered prior to the tryout date.
- The player must have attended all tryout clinics to be assessed by the coaching staff.
- Phase one of the tryouts (general skill assessment) must be completed by a representative of EPVA.
- As much information will be gathered from previous coaches as possible to help determine the player's abilities.
- After completing Phase One of the tryouts, the player must be deemed to be as skilled as at least 50% of the players on the team to which she will be assigned (if her skills qualify her to be placed on that team).

### 5.5.5.2 Absence due to injury or illness:

- The player must have registered prior to the tryout date.
- The player's partial attendance in tryout clinics will be assessed.
- As much information will be gathered from previous coaches as possible to help determine the player's ability.
- A player absent due to short-term illness will have to complete Phase One of the tryout (skills assessment) by the club director or an appropriate coach assigned by the club director.
- A player absent from tryouts due to injury must be available to join her team no later than March 1st.

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- After completing Phase One of the tryout, the player must be deemed to be as skilled as at least 50% of the players on the team to which she will be assigned (if her skills qualify her to be placed on that team).

## 6.0 JO Prep Program (formerly JO Lite)

- 6.1 The EPVA will attempt to offer a JO Prep program if court space is available and the EPVA is able to recruit paid coaches for these teams. JO Prep is a beginning “travel” program for young girls and an introduction to our competitive JO program. This program serves:
- 6.1.1 4th grade girls interested in a travel volleyball experience.
  - 6.1.2 5th and 6th grade girls who participated in U12 tryouts, but did not earn a spot on a U12 team.
- 6.2 JO Prep teams will be made up of a minimum of eight players and a maximum of 12 players. Each team has one paid coach supported by a parent volunteer assistant coach. The JO Prep team(s) practice one evening per week December through March. They participate in approximately five or six league match events at Ralia Sports Center in Maple Grove. If all members of a team are 4th graders, the team will play in the U10 division. A team comprised of a mix of 4th through 6th grade players will play in the U12 division.

## 7.0 Player Drops

- 7.1 Player drops after program acceptance:
- 7.1.1 Players are ranked during the tryout process to assist in these situations.
  - 7.1.2 Rank, position, and other appropriate information are used by the coaching staff to determine if a player may be moved up from a lower team to fill the vacated spot.
- 7.2 Player drops after season begins:
- 7.2.1 As long as the team is at or above its eight player minimum and every position is adequately covered, we will not add players to the roster during the season.
  - 7.2.2 Coaches can petition the board for an exception on a case by case situation.

## 8.0 Playing Time Policy

- 8.1 All Eden Prairie JO volleyball teams are to some degree developmental teams. That is, we exist to help provide opportunities for the personal and athletic development of our members. EPVA recognizes that participation in competition is a critical part of each player’s development. Moreover, we believe that taking part in spirited, pressure-packed competition is perhaps one of sport’s greatest training tools. We also believe our coaching staff shares the responsibility to develop an on-court role for each player that lends to the competitive success of the team. We will work tirelessly to insure all Eden Prairie players and teams achieve their best through developing and utilizing all of their talents.
- 8.2 The nature of sports and volleyball in particular, dictate that not all players get equal playing time. Some players may play more than other players simply because of the positions they each play. Coaches must weigh a myriad of factors when determining playing time. For instance, coaches must consider such issues as a player’s adherence to attendance and other policies, keep in mind any current trends within the team, and evaluate how the team personnel might match up best versus a particular opponent.
- 8.3 The health and safety of our players is of the utmost importance. As such, if a player is unable to practice without limitations we empower our coaches to use their best judgment with regards to how much playing time that player should receive in competition – both in Power League and tournament play.

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- 8.4 As there are varying levels of competition, there should be varying levels of expectations with each event:
- 8.4.1 Power League (Everyone plays)
    - 8.4.1.1 Power League is a developmental opportunity for each player. Coaches will attempt to provide playing time as equal as possible by position (setter, outside hitters, middle hitters, front row, back row) and within the power league day (multiple games and matches).
    - 8.4.1.2 Position by position difference: as equal as possible within positions, understanding that variances occur based upon number of players in the relative positions on the team (i.e. 2 setters vs. 4 outside hitters).
      - During the power league day: as there are typically 3 games per match, and 3 matches per day, coaches will attempt to provide equal playing time within positions across the days collection of games, not in each game or match.
  - 8.4.2 Tournaments
    - 8.4.2.1 Coaches have the authority to use their discretion on playing time in tournaments, understanding that our primary goal is to finish as high as possible in the standings, with the secondary goal of looking for opportunities to get every player playing time. The level of competition may warrant a different player rotation than that of Power League.

## 9.0 Player Absence from Power League or Tournament

- 9.1 Coaches may fill an open roster spot from other current Eden Prairie JO Volleyball players when necessary.
- 9.2 This will be determined on a case by case basis, based on player availability and playing schedules.
- 9.3 Teams may be filled to 8 players per team or to a number that includes one backup player per position to protect the team against injury or illness during the event.
- 9.4 Coaches have the discretion to fill their teams to the minimum level of 6 players in order to avoid a forfeit, which can result in significant negative consequences for the team and EPVA, such as exclusion from future power leagues or events.
- 9.5 In the event of an entire team absence, coaches have the discretion to find a substitute team.

## 10.0 Player Attendance Policy (Attendance is expected at all practices and games.)

- 10.1 EPVA recognizes that its member's lives can be hectic at times. EPVA Volleyball is an activity whose priority comes after family, church, school, and school activities. That being said, we ask that families support a player's commitment by:
  - 10.1.1 Attending all practices and events whenever possible.
  - 10.1.2 Notifying coaches as far in advance as possible when you will not be attending a practice or event. Clear and consistent communication between players/parents and coaches is required.
  - 10.1.3 Providing clear explanations for non-attendance so coaches can make informed decisions regarding any potential consequences.
  - 10.1.4 Arriving at practice 15 minutes early in order to be ready and able to begin practice on time.
  - 10.1.5 Arriving at league play and tournaments 45 minutes early in order to mentally and physically prepare for competition.

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- 10.2 The EPVA trains, supports, and supervises its coaches in many areas, including determining fair sanctions for inappropriately missing a practice or event. Fair sanctions may include not starting a game, not playing in the first game or two of a match, or moving from equal playing time to fair playing time. Fair sanctions are not intended to be punitive. Rather, they are an acknowledgment that teammates have earned more playing time by demonstrating a higher level of commitment to the team.

## 11.0 Game and Practice Attire

- 11.1 Each player is required to wear their official EPVA uniform for all tournaments and Power League games.
- 11.2 Tee shirts and solid black shorts are the required practice attire; preferably their EPVA practice tee shirt – but at a minimum, a tee shirt bearing an Eden Prairie logo.
  - 11.2.1 Tee shirts that have been cut or ripped are not allowed at practice.
- 11.3 Court shoes and either black or white knee pads (black are preferred) are required for all practices, games and tournaments.

## 12.0 Conflict Resolution (addressing conflict)

- 12.1 In the event a conflict arises, direct communication between the two parties should be the first step in attempting to resolve the issue. This communication should occur at a time when the two parties can calmly discuss the concerns, no sooner than after the 24 hour cooling off period.
- 12.2 Players are encouraged to address their concerns to the coach. EPVA believes that such discussions help to develop the necessary life skill of dealing with conflicts directly, immediately, and in a supportive manner.
- 12.3 If the problem is significant, there should be a third party, such as a parent or other EPVA adult member, present during the discussion.
- 12.4 If the problem is not resolved between the parties, the player and her parent should bring the problem to the attention of the Head Coach.
- 12.5 If the Head Coach cannot resolve the issue to the player's and parent's satisfaction, the conflict should be brought to the attention of the Directors.
- 12.6 If the parties remain unsatisfied, the conflict may be brought to the EPVA board.

## 13.0 EPVA Disruptive Parent / Bullying Policy

- 13.1 All parents or guardians of an Eden Prairie volleyball athlete must sign the Disruptive Parent/ Bullying policy prior to an athlete's participation in program.
  - 13.1.1 See website for policy document. It can be found in the Registration Forms section under the "Travel/JO" pull-down tab.

## 14.0 Refund Policy

- 14.1 JO Tryouts
  - 14.1.1 Registration fees are refunded to anyone not accepted into the program.
- 14.2 JO Season
  - 14.2.1 The EPVA is a nonprofit organization that strives to keep fees as low and affordable as possible. In order to do this our goal is to set fees for each season based on a net zero budget – that is, we

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charge what we expect to spend. Budgets are created for each age group by totaling expenses for categories including coaches' salaries, practice courts, tournament fees, uniforms, player registration, equipment, insurance and administrative costs. The total cost to field a given age group's teams is then divided by the number of girls in that age group to arrive at individual fees. Thus, once a player has been accepted into the program or placed on a team there will be no refunds.

14.2.2 Families will have the opportunity to petition the Board of Directors for forgiveness of fees in the event of an unforeseen financial hardship combined with a season ending injury. The petition will be voted upon by the Board at its next scheduled Board meeting.

## 14.3 Camps and Clinics

14.3.1 Refunds available if requested prior to the first day of the camp or clinic.

## Injury Policy

14.4 If a player is advised by a doctor to miss a practice or game because of injury or other medical condition, a doctor's note must be provided to the Club Director clearing the player to return before they will be allowed to participate in future practices and games.