



# Team Yakima Volleyball Club

## Parent and Player Handbook



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# Introduction

Formed in 1977, by Dr. Gayle Brewer and Mr. Jim Lust, Team Yakima has now been in existence for more than 36 years, making it one of the earliest junior volleyball clubs in the Northwest. The intent from the very beginning was to include players from all schools in the area, thus the name "Team Yakima". One result of this involvement by so many girls from various schools has been the development of the Yakima Valley Region as one of the most successful high school volleyball areas in all of Washington as proven by the many conference, district, regional and state championships.

Due to the success of the club, Team Yakima has recently expanded outside the valley, drawing players from the Tri-Cities, Wenatchee, Ellensburg, Cle Elum, Goldendale and more. Team Yakima has open tryouts and any dedicated volleyball player who wants to try out for the club is welcome.

The number of teams we create every year is driven by the number of players who tryout, the gym space we are allocated from the school district, and the number of qualified coaches who are interested in coaching. Although our goal is to find a team for everyone, this isn't always possible.

Our player and player parent handbook is designed to educate you about our club, our coaching philosophy and how to be successful within the Team Yakima Volleyball Club. We hope this handbook will provide you information that will be useful to your decision on whether to play for Team Yakima during the upcoming season.

## Mission Statement

Team Yakima is committed in providing our athletes with the best quality coaching staff available to develop and improve their volleyball skills through high quality practices and competitions. Athletes from all levels are encouraged to participate, including elite and introductory players. Team Yakima promotes teamwork, sportsmanship, and discipline for success on and off the court.

## Executive Board of Directors

The Executive Board of Directors directs and oversees all activities within Team Yakima Volleyball Club. The Team Yakima Board of Directors is a volunteer group made up of professionals who have dedicated a portion of their lifetime to the game of volleyball. This commitment could have been as a parent, coach, official, fan or player. Board Members are nominated by a current member, and then based on the individual's ability to add value to the Board, is accepted or declined based on a vote by the current Board of Directors. The Team Yakima Board of Directors has room for from five to nine board members and the non-voting Club Director.

### Club Director

Heather Pryse  
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### Team Yakima Volleyball Executive Board of Directors

Terry Schweyen – President  
Vacant Position – Vice President  
Virginia Hays – Secretary  
Michele Taylor – Treasurer  
Rich Austin – Board Member  
Carla Scott – Board Member  
Paul Finley – Board Member  
Shanee Andreas – Board Member

### Supporting Staff

Jamboree Tournament Director – Steve Vogt  
Yearbook – Susan Braun

### **Heather Pryse, Club Director**

Fall season 2016, is Heather's first year as Club Director. Involved for a number of years as a Team Yakima coach, she has coached all skill levels - elite, competitive and developmental. Heather was raised in the Yakima Valley, attended Selah high school, graduated from Central Washington University, and is employed as a Contract Manufacturing Supervisor for a large fruit company in the Yakima valley. Heather brings invaluable volleyball experience, leadership and a passion for the game.

# Parent and Player Informational Meeting

Team Yakima hosts an informational meeting in the fall prior to club tryouts where parents and players can come learn about the club. This is a great opportunity to talk to coaches about their coaching philosophy as well as get information about practice schedules and costs for the different teams. The Team Yakima Club Director, along with some of the key coaching staff will be at the meeting. Details for the Parent Informational Meeting will be posted on the club website and emailed out to our Team Yakima families from the previous season.

## Tryouts

Team Yakima Volleyball Club will hold open tryouts each year to select players for our teams. Our tryouts will comply with Evergreen Region policies that include player pre-registration, tryout date guidelines and tryout fees.

### Tryout Preparation:

- Download and fill out all the needed paperwork before you come to the tryout.
- Be sure to get there early. Thirty minutes before the scheduled start time is best.
- Contact us beforehand to let us know if you will be arriving late because you are coming from another tryout.
- Wear something colorful or bright so that coaches can identify you even if they can't see your number.
- Bring a 2x3 (or close) photo of your face to attach to your paperwork.
- Great effort turns heads and is remembered. Avoid being tentative in your play but know the difference between being aggressive and playing recklessly.
- Let the lead tryout coach know if you are trying out while injured or have to leave early.
- Talk to us before or after tryouts as much as you want! We value the opportunity to answer any of your questions.

### Playing Up:

Playing up is defined by Team Yakima as a player whose age qualifies her for a younger age group than the team she actually plays for. Age groups are further defined as: U12, U14, U16, U18. (U13, U15 & U17 are considered by Team Yakima as strategic teams and not considered full age groups.) It is the philosophy of the club that it is rarely beneficial for a player to play-up. "Play-up" is considered playing at a higher age group than which the player qualifies. A strong player that plays in her age group develops leadership abilities and confidence on the court that helps her excel as a player. Playing up -- can be intimidating and cause the player to be tentative in her actions and can actually inhibit skill development. There are rare circumstances where playing up is permitted.

- The player is physically and mentally as mature as the rest of the players in older age group, and the player is also in the same school grade as the older age group.
- The player is physically and mentally as mature as the rest of the players in older age group, and the player will take on a dominate role in the higher age group team. (Players who play up, cannot be primarily bench players.)
- The player has significant talents that qualify her for a gold team, but the gold team is coached by a coach that the individual is ineligible to play for because of WIAA in-district guidelines (This includes any U12 players in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade) Please note that WIAA guidelines are strict and may be open to interpretation, and you may read the guidelines here: <http://www.wiaa.com/subcontent.aspx?SecID=350> In cases of confusion, we will contact your school's athletic director.
- The player has a parent coaching the team in a higher age group and the agreement is made before hiring the coach.
- For other rare circumstances, the parent and player must appeal to the Board of Directors prior to tryouts.

### The Selection Process:

Teams will consist of a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 14 athletes. We will have multiple coaches evaluating players during our tryouts. Each year during tryouts we consider every athlete as a prospective player of Team Yakima Volleyball Club. All players must tryout every season, and no player is guaranteed a spot on a team because she played last season. We will evaluate as best as we can during the duration of the tryout. Selection will be based upon the following criteria:

- A player's performance during the tryout - skill level, effort, competitiveness and interaction with other athletes.
- Our perception of that player's athletic potential – what she may be able to do over the course of the season.
- Our perception of the "coach-ability" of the player.
- Evaluations of players during the past club season, camps or the current high school season.
- Being in good standing with the Team Yakima Volleyball Club and USA Volleyball.
- Past history of parental involvement or behavior. (negative or positive)

### Missing Tryouts:

Although Team Yakima strongly encourages players to attend tryouts, if a returning Team Yakima player has an approved reason for missing tryouts, AND informs Team Yakima 30 days before tryouts of her excused reason for missing tryouts, she may still be placed on any team for the season. If a player would be a new player to the club, a member of the coaching staff or leadership team may

attend a school match to evaluate the player. Excused absences include (school events, immediate family weddings). Exceptions may be made for injuries, family emergencies or extenuating circumstances. If a player misses tryouts and positions are still available on a team, we may invite the interested player to tryout at a team's practice following the start of the season.

#### **Notification of Team Selections:**

Depending on the number of players who try out for Team Yakima each season, the player notification process may vary. It may be an announcement at the end of the first day of tryouts, the second day of tryouts or a combination of the two. Commitment rules change frequently in the region, and this may drive the team selection process. Often competitive teams that will necessitate an immediate commitment and signed letter of intent will be announced at the end of the first tryout. On occasions, an additional tryout may be necessary to finalize teams.

## **Multi-Sport Athletes**

Team Yakima has a coach specific multi-sport athlete policy. We do encourage multi-sport athletes to turn out for Team Yakima, but each coach has the opportunity to have different views and policies on the impact this will have on your child's playing time. What is most important is that you are upfront and honest about your player's participation in a conflicting sport or activity. If you communicate the potential for conflict at tryout time, your coach must remain consistent with the messaging he or she gives when your child is chosen for a team. If a player ends up playing for a winter or spring sport that was not communicated at tryout time, the coach has the right to penalize the player by limiting or eliminating playing time all-together, and no refunds will be given for this circumstance. Players participating in other sports often experience game/tournament conflicts. Again, communication with Team Yakima coaches about participation in (and travel arrangements to) a tournament, particularly a multi-day event is important. When possible, participating in Sunday matches following a school or other club sport event on Saturday is encouraged and will help reduce negative impact on both team performance and the players' playing time. As long as the player meets his or her agreement with the coach on attendance, Team Yakima expects teammates and their parents to respect the coaching decisions regarding these players.

## **Officiating & Scorer Clinic**

Every player is required to attend a scorekeeping clinic each season. Team Yakima will schedule their club clinic in early to mid-December. The Team Yakima hosted clinic is free for Team Yakima players or adult chaperones that wish to attend. If players are not able to attend the scheduled club clinics then they need to contact the club director to find out information on make-up clinic options with other clubs in the valley. Make-up clinics will typically cost the player \$10, and will be paid to the club hosting the clinic. Players will not be put on a roster until they have attended a scorekeeper clinic. Due to the size of Team Yakima, there are typically multiple clinics offered within the club.

## **Practice**

Team Yakima teams practice on average twice per week. Team practices are usually 90 minutes to 2 hours in length. Some teams may have additional specialty practices based upon coach preferences for their teams. Coaches will sometimes schedule additional practices in preparation for major tournaments. There are times when our practice schedule will change based on weather conditions or school events. The club will make every attempt to reschedule gym time during that week rather than losing a practice, although this is not always possible. Because Team Yakima uses Yakima School District facilities, gyms are closed during winter & spring breaks.

#### **Practice Rules:**

Our focus with practice is to provide an intense and structured environment that best represents the pressure a player will feel in a competitive match. To achieve this, certain rules are required by all teams as detailed below:

- Every practice is important. It is expected that each player will exercise good time management skills so that scheduling conflicts are kept to a minimum.
- All athletes are expected to make every effort to attend practice. If a player must miss a practice, a telephone call or text message (not email) to their head coach is expected at least 4 hours before practice. Only after attempting and failing to reach your head coach, can a player contact a teammate to relay the message to the head coach. Advanced notice is expected if the missed practice is due to vacation, school function or another event scheduled in advance.
- Missing practice may result in loss of playtime based upon whether the absence was excused and the expectations arranged by the coach with the individual player and her family.
  - Excused absences are for family or school events in which the player cannot control the scheduling of that event (band concerts, plays or winter or spring sports games).
  - Situations such as AAU basketball or club soccer, and implications must be thoroughly discussed with the coach prior to the season's start. It is up to the coach as to what extent this may or may not affect a player's court time.

- Not all players and/or circumstances will be consistent within the club based on individual coaching arrangements or agreements.
- Players who can only attend a half hour or 45 minutes of a practice because of another event should still come to practice. It is much better to get some practice time rather than miss the whole practice.
- Injured athletes who can attend school are expected to attend practice to support their team and be available to help where they can, even if they cannot physically participate in practice. Players with fever or stomach flu should not come to practice.
- Scheduled practice time is start time. Please arrive early enough to be dressed and completely ready for practice by start time. This usually requires arriving not less than 10 minutes before start time.
- There will be no jewelry allowed at practice. Please leave your jewelry at home.
- All practices are open and parents are welcome to observe practices at any time. Parents may not coach or offer instruction to their child or another team member at any time during practice. Parents are not permitted on the court, unless a coach approves, and the parent is a current USAV member with SafeSport & Impact training and a current background check.

## Playing Time

Playing time, for many players and parents, is a central concern that can distract from our focus on the team's success and can often create divisions within the team. At Team Yakima Volleyball Club our playing time philosophies vary with the level of the team and with coaching philosophies.

In any case, every player will have an equal opportunity to compete for playtime within their position during practice and at tournaments. A player's time will be affected by any of the following:

- A player's practice attendance (excused or not excused will be weighted differently).
- A player's ability to perform at the necessary level for a skill or position.
- How a player's attitude adds to or detracts from the chemistry or performance of the team.
- A player's past performance during the tournament or the previous week of practice.
- A player's effort, work ethic and behavior.
- The importance of the match.
- Not being in good standing with respect to team fees.

Some generalizations can be made regarding playtime issues. It is our goal that all players have some on-court role every tournament. There may be exceptions with players recovering from injuries, problems with adherence to team rules/policies or when teams are trying to win a bid, or a tournament championship.

- Playtime is generally more equal at the development level, Red & Blue level teams.
- Playtime will vary by position with some positions playing all the way around the court and some playing only front or back row.
- Playtime is more equal during pool play than in tournament bracket play.
- Playtime may be more equal earlier in the season as coaches are exploring different lineups and identifying starters.
- Playtime may be more equal in one-day regional tournaments compared to multi-day tournaments, qualifiers or Regional championship tournaments.
- Playtime in tournaments is not guaranteed on Team Yakima Gold level teams. These are elite level competitive teams, and play to win.
- Position and time on court are determined by the needs of the current club team, not a player's history from past seasons or the current positions played on the player's middle school or high school teams.

All playing time is decided by the coaches and is not negotiable. Coaches have the right to play the athlete they think is best suited for a position and who helps contribute to the team's development and success. If your child is concerned with the amount of playing time, here are some suggestions on how she should approach and talk to her coach:

- Avoid language that is demanding or accusatory. Instead ask, "What can I do to play more..."
- Avoid seeking to talk to your coach when you are emotional. We seek to utilize the 24-hour rule if at all possible.
- Parents may participate in the conversation with the coach but the player should always be present.
- Discussions about other players on the team are not appropriate, any conversation will focus on the player and what skills she may need to improve to have opportunities to play more.
- While email or a phone call can start a discussion we prefer that all playtime discussion to be in-person with the coach and the player and scheduled before or after practice.
- Coaches should never be approached during a tournament regarding playtime or other parental or player concerns.

**Movement between Rosters:**

Occasionally we will move an athlete from one team to another as needed to complete a roster. We will not move an athlete to another team until we have discussed the move with the athlete, the parents and both coaches. If the player is moving down a skill level to a new team, then the player can refuse, and choose to receive a pro-rated refund for the season. If a player is moving up, she has the right to decline the offer and stay with her current team.

## Tournaments

Most tournaments that Team Yakima teams are one day, either a Saturday or a Sunday. The typical one-day tournament schedule starts at 7:00 AM with pool play consisting of three or four matches followed by bracket play in the afternoon. A few tournaments (Pacific Northwest Qualifier, President's Day Tournament and Emerald City Classic) involve two days of pool play, followed by single elimination bracket play. Gold Elite teams are typically the level of team which attend multi-day tournaments.

**Parent Guidelines:**

- We strongly recommend that players get a nutritious meal and have a 10:00 PM curfew the night before a tournament.
- Parents are responsible for the transportation of their child to and from tournaments. Team Yakima Volleyball Club recommends that athletes do not drive themselves to and from tournaments. Car-pooling can be arranged with other teammates and is encouraged. Please be considerate and either arrange a ride exchange or contribute toward the cost of gas. Please inform coaches of ride arrangements for tournaments outside of the Yakima Valley.
- Many gyms prohibit food or drink other than water in the court areas. Teams may be penalized by the tournament site director if parents or team supporters ignore this rule.

**Player Rules:**

- If a player knows that she will miss a tournament, be late or have to leave early from a tournament it is her and her parent's responsibility to notify the coach as soon as a conflict is identified.
- All athletes are required to be in the gym, ready to warm-up, at the scheduled start time set up by their head coach. Usually this will be when the gym opens, one hour prior to the start of the first match.
- Players are expected to avoid displaying negative emotions during matches. Arguing with the officials will not be tolerated.
- All athletes are required to stay at the tournament until the team has been released by one of the coaches. We play as a team, and we will leave the event as a team.

**Officiating:**

All USAV tournaments are at least partially self-officiated. Officiating at tournaments is the shared responsibility of the entire team, including coaches. All players are required to help with the line judging, scorekeeping, score flipping, and down officiating.

- The coach may rotate officiating responsibilities but will often only use the most experienced scorekeepers.
- No headsets or cell phones are to be used during officiating assignments. This also includes cell phones at the scorekeeper's table.

**Team Area & Food Table:**

Upon arrival, the team will identify a team area where the girls can leave their bags and hang out between playing and officiating. The area may be a room, table or simply a spot in a hallway. Either way, the team area represents our club and should be kept neat and organized at all times. Most girls will bring some type of blanket and/or pillow, homework, a book, headphones or other items to help pass the time between matches. Remember, the team area is not secure and valuables should be left at your own risk. Also, be sure to properly dispose of any trash and leave the area as we found it when the tournament is over.

Most tournaments do not offer healthy concessions. Team Yakima Volleyball Club teams, with the help of each Team Parent, will organize a team table with items assigned for each player to bring to that tournament. The food will be kept in our team area and everyone associated with our team will be welcome to use the team cooler. We do ask that the players have first access to the items since they must coordinate meals and snacks with their playing and officiating schedule. Please note that some Seattle-area schools do not allow food on the premises, and special arrangements need to be made by the Team Parent.

## Team Yakima Hosted Tournaments

Team Yakima Volleyball Club hosts three tournaments, a U12 tournament in January and a U14 tournament in January or February and the Northwest Junior Jamboree Tournament during March. These tournaments help support many of the club's expenses. Families have two responsibilities with regards to the tournament.

- Families are expected to donate their time with helping with set-up for the tournament on the Friday before the tournament weekend and for take-down and cleaning following the end of the tournament.
- Our Team Yakima Volleyball Club teams will stay to the end of each tournament that we host. After their last match, our teams will assist with officiating for out of town teams and help with cleanup and/or teardown of the gym the team is responsible for during that tournament.

## Travel

Team Yakima Volleyball Club's travel policy places the responsibility of most aspects of travel to tournaments and supervision of athletes on their parents. Parents are responsible for all costs for travel and meals for themselves as well as their child.

### Chaperones:

The Chaperone position is required for all USAV teams and is listed on the team roster for every tournament. The Chaperone must attend the coaches meeting at the beginning of each tournament and the team Chaperone is responsible for our players' behavior while not on the court at the tournament venue. Team Yakima will cover the registration and background check expenses for Team Chaperones. Team Yakima Volleyball Club does not ask Chaperones to be responsible for player travel to tournament sites or for player behavior while at hotels. Chaperone travel expenses at tournaments are not covered by the club.

### Hotel Policies:

- Our policy is that players will stay with their parents when traveling requires the team to stay in a hotel. If a player will not have a parent at the tournament then the parent should make arrangements with another female parent or guardian on the team to stay with that family. In no case will a player stay in a room by herself.
- While not a requirement, we prefer to have the team stay together in the same hotel if a family will be using a hotel. If that family has friends or other family in that community they can stay with them if they desire to do so.
- All players are expected to be in their rooms and in bed at curfew. Unless a coach has designated an earlier time, the default curfew will be 10:00 PM.
- No boys, who are not relatives, are allowed in your hotel room at any point, for any reason.
- Athletes may not leave the hotel area at any time without permission from their parent or the parent that they are staying with. Athletes should never be alone. Use the buddy system.
- An athlete found in breach of the USAV Code of Conduct (use of drugs/alcohol or possession of weapons) will be sent home immediately at the expense of the parent or guardian.
- An athlete who damages any property at a hotel or lodging will be personally responsible for damages.

### Driving Policies:

- As a general rule, players who are 17 years or older may drive to tournaments in the Yakima Valley. Outside of this area, players are required to be driven by a parent or guardian. We do realize that this is not always possible and communication with the head coach is required for exceptions to this rule.
- At no time may a player ride with a coach unless traveling with the team or a portion of the team and another adult.

## Player Costs & Billing

### Player Dues Cover the Following:

- Coach wages, USAV registration and background checks. Team Yakima Coaches make minimum wage as first year coaches, and receive a 25¢ raise for each of the next five years. The maximum wage we pay coaches is currently \$12.50 an hour.
- Chaperone background checks and USAV registration.
- Equipment replacement. Team Yakima takes very good care of our equipment, but every year we need to replace worn out balls, nets, first aid kits and ball carts.
- Tournament entry fees. Competitive and elite teams pay higher dues than our other teams due to their extensive tournament schedule.

### Team Fee Covers the Following:

Team fees vary within the club by the level of the team and are based on the tournament schedule that your coach selects. Your player's team fee includes:

- Coach Travel – covers hotel, mileage and \$25 a day meal stipend for coaching staff (not for players).



Your player's team fee does not include the following expenses:

- Any travel expenses or meals for players.
- Team food table expenses.
- A player's USAV registration fee

#### **Billing and Payment Policies:**

- **Responsible Party** - The parent or guardian who signs the participation agreement and the USAV Letter of Intent is liable for any and all fees, dues, and charges for goods and services incurred by the participant. By signing the agreement, the responsible party accepts liability and agrees to be bound by the terms of the agreement.
- **Late Fees or Returned Item Fees** - A \$30.00 late fee will be assessed to any account if the payment is not received within 10 days of the stated due date. In the event a check or credit card draft used to pay fees is returned to Team Yakima Volleyball Club or refused for payment regardless of the reason for refusal, a \$30.00 service fee will be assessed to the participant's account and a cashier's check or money order will be required for all further payments.
- **Refunds** – If the participant becomes disabled or injured while playing or practicing with the club that she cannot practice or compete for more than 2 months at club volleyball or any school sports, then a refund will be given. The responsible party will still be required to pay all incurred costs prior to injury to including uniforms. The club will return any unused portion of prepaid fees to the responsible party within 14 business days of receiving a note from the player's doctor.
- **Payments** – Accounts may be paid by credit card or personal check at the Club Parent Meeting but must be paid by personal check, money order or certified funds after that. Checks should be made out to Team Yakima Volleyball Club. Please write the players name in the memo line on any check. Under no circumstances should payments be given to coaches. Cash should never be mailed. Payments should be mailed to the club post office box.

#### **Team Yakima Volleyball Club**

P.O. Box 2168

Yakima, WA 98907

- **Payment Schedule** – Team Yakima will be offering two standard payment options this year. The first option will be to pay all costs in one payment via credit card or check at the meeting in December to order uniforms. The second option will be to pay all costs in two personal checks, one post-dated for February 1. The first check should pay for uniform costs in full.
- **Statements** - Accounts may be paid by credit card or personal check at the Club Parent Meeting unless a payment plan is arranged.
- **Payment Plan** – If a monthly payment plan is necessary for your family please contact the Treasurer to make arrangements.
- **Delinquent Payments** – A player who is delinquent with payments will not be placed on the tournament roster. Players not on the tournament roster are not able to play and may not sit on the bench during tournaments.

## **Scholarships and Need-Based Aid**

Club volleyball has expenses that are related to team fees as well as the travel-associated costs that come with participation with our older age group teams. We are committed to the goal that no deserving athlete will be prevented from being in the club for lack of funds.

#### **Scholarships:**

Every club season, Team Yakima Volleyball Club may award scholarship money to one or more families needing assistance with an athlete's fees. Families will be required to fill out an application, which can be located on the teamyakima.com website, or requested from the Club Director or Treasurer. The amount available every year fluctuates and all funds are distributed at the discretion of the Board of Directors and Club Director. In the event that an athlete is voluntarily or involuntarily removed from the team, the responsible party for that athlete must pay back the full scholarship amount. Players earning scholarships are expected to fully participate in all club fundraisers and contribute whenever possible to the success of his or her team and the Club. Unless otherwise approved by their families, scholarship recipients' identities are known only by her coach, her team's chaperone/Team Parent, and members of the Board of Directors.

## **Fundraisers**

#### **Yearbook Advertising:**

Team Yakima has one primary fundraiser that is mandatory. Players are required to sell yearbook ads in our annual yearbook. The level of participation is directly tied to the level of the team. Gold level teams have a higher expectation than other teams due to the superior level of their coaches and the number of tournaments they attend. The yearbook minimum changes from year to year, but will be communicated to all players at the beginning of each season. This fundraiser contributes to 33% of Team Yakima operating expenses each year.

# Communication

## Routine Team Communication

The primary way that you will receive communication from your coach or the club director will be through email. If a last minute change occurs with a practice or with a tournament we will try to text out that information or use our team parents to call parents directly. Billing information will be sent by US mail or through the Team Parent. It is critical that you provide the club with all email addresses where you want information sent as well as cell phone numbers for both parents and the player. If changes occur, please update the club director.

Our expectation from parents and player is that immediate communication (about something in the next 4 hours) be made to coaches by text. If the subject is more distant, we recommend email. We also recommend following up any important verbal notification with an email to act as a confirmation and reminder.

## Website

Our website (<http://www.teamyakima.com>) has a lot of information and resources for parents or players. A directory exists on the website with email and phone numbers of all board members and coaches as well as our mailing address. Player pictures, names a schools will be posted on both Facebook and the club website. If you do not wish us to post the information, please submit this in writing at the beginning of the season. A player's home address or other contact information will never be posted on the website.

## Player to Coach

Both players and coaches are responsible for establishing a relationship of trust and mutual respect. Bringing up a problem can be very difficult for a player, but this is one of those life skills that sports can teach. Parents may need to push their child to take that first step. Our coaches work to be approachable and to create a safe environment for player to bring up concerns.

For players, the most common concern we encounter revolves around playing time. Our expectation is that the player should start this conversation by asking what she needs to do to play more and how she can work towards playing a larger role in contributing to the team's success. Often times, players are unclear on what they need to change or how playing time is determined and an early conversation can address these questions.

## Player to Player

It is our expectation that if a conflict arises between players on a team, that it gets resolved outside of practice/tournaments time, if possible, so as to minimize the effect that it can have on the chemistry of the team. It is important for players to realize that they do not have to like everyone on the team or be friends with them but they can still respect their contribution to the team. If the conflict is not reconcilable, it is our expectation that the players involved should not aggravate the problem by involving other players or parents on the team with gossip, rumors or attacking people on Facebook or other social media. Team Yakima has a zero tolerance for behavior that may be considered bullying.

## Parents to Coach

Team Yakima Volleyball Club wants to encourage appropriate communication between our parents and the coaching staff of their child's team. What is appropriate communication?

- **Information about your child's health.** Recent illnesses, medical restrictions relative to practice, allergies, medication needs are all examples of important information that we want you to communicate to your coaches.
- **Information about your child's emotional health.** It may be important for your coach to know if your child is struggling in school or had a recent death in the family or is dealing with another emotionally charged issue. Without this context, your child's behavior in practice or during a tournament may be interpreted as being lazy, unfocused or disrespectful.
- **A quick heads up that your child is struggling to talk with the coaches.** This is appropriate if it is only a head's up and not a detailed email. Remember that we begin this conversation with the player first.
- **Your positive experiences with the coach or the team.** If we are doing things right then reinforce that by letting us know.
- **Your willingness to become more involved.** If you want to help with pictures, video, fundraising or other activities to support your team and the club, let us know!

There are topics of communication with your child's coaches which are not appropriate or where there is a more appropriate venue to make that communication.

- **Conversations about play time.** If your child is receiving playing time consistent with this handbook and the expectations set forth by your coach at the player/parent meeting at the beginning of the season, and your child has not tried to discuss her playing time or her role on the team with her coach, it is inappropriate for you to do so. Before approaching the coach yourself, encourage your child to talk to her coach about what she can do to help the team and earn more court time or ask the coach

to more clearly define her role on the team. If after this conversation, there are still concerns, a conversation with the coach, parent, and player may be appropriate. Request a meeting with the coach. The player must be present at the meeting unless there is a very good reason for her not to be.

- **Other players on the team.** Your personal opinions of other player's attitudes, skill, performance, or conduct are not appropriate topics of conversation for you to have with your child's coach. There are some exceptions with regards to code of conduct. A team chaperone should inform the coaches of any issues that arise on the team relative to tournament rules or club travel policies. Any issues relative to drugs, alcohol or weapons should be brought up with the head coach immediately. Please use your best judgment here, and understand that if you cross a line, the coach will let you know immediately that this is an inappropriate topic of conversation.
- **Coaching technique, tactics, systems, etc.** These are all issues that are not open for discussion or negotiation. There are opportunities with end of season parent evaluations to provide feedback on these topics to the coaching staff, the board and the Club Director.
- **Poor Sportsmanship.** The Club Director will not tolerate aggressive parent behavior toward any of coaches, coaches of other clubs, parents, or officials. If a parent exhibits this type of behavior, they will be appropriately sanctioned, which may include being asked to not attend tournaments in the future or even dismissal from Team Yakima Volleyball Club.

### **Finding the Best Time to Talk**

In looking for a good outcome to any meeting with your coach it is important to find the best time and setting for the conversation to occur. Here are some guidelines for finding the best time to talk.

- Little problems are easier to fix than big ones and little problems have a way of getting bigger when not addressed. If there is a question about what a player needs to do to play more, don't wait for half the season to begin the conversation.
- Don't ask to meet during practice or during a tournament. Your coach will not meet with you at this time. Before or after practice is usually the best time. Please allow plenty of time for the meeting.
- The 24-hour rule is a good rule because it works! If there is any emotion to an issue then wait at least 24 hours after the issue before having a meeting.
- Provide a little prep for your coach but not too much before the meeting. Let your coach know why you want to meet but don't send a lengthy email. Emails or long phone messages tend to be too emotional and accusatory. Avoid that with just a brief note or conversation.

### **Evaluation Process:**

Team Yakima Volleyball Club believes that player and parent feedback is critical to the growth and development of our coaching staff as well as to the continual improvement of the club as an organization. At any time you may send an email to the Club Director at [teamyakima@gmail.com](mailto:teamyakima@gmail.com) to give any constructive feedback about your child's coaching staff. This information may contain skills you are hoping your coach would focus on, communication issues your team is having, or skill areas that you feel the coach is missing. Please note – that this is not the forum for general complaints about coaching instruction or specific player playing time. Emails containing this information will not be responded to. The second mechanism is a parent or player evaluation form that will be given during the last week of the regular season and collected at practice or during the last tournament of the season.

Our goal is to obtain constructive, actionable feedback and we welcome your honest feedback. We ask that you be constructive in your feedback as we will provide this to your child's coaches. Personal attacks or venting are not welcome. Consider the type of evaluation you would want as a player or from your supervisor at work.

## **Leadership Decisions**

### **Role of Board Member**

- Support the club in all aspects
- Provide direction, demonstrate alignment and generate commitment as a collective leadership team to assist in fulfilling the club's purpose
- Adapt to change and adjust club policies and strategies where necessary
- Advocate for the club with positive leadership
- Work in an engaged advisory capacity with the club director for guidance and overall direction
- Contribute to the success of the Jamboree by providing support in the planning and administration of the event

- Listen to parent/community input, without feeding or contributing into any frustrations
- Add contradictory opinions about club or personnel decisions to the next Board Meeting agenda for discussion

#### **Role of Club Director**

- Adapt to change by communicating new region guidelines, policies or trends to the Board of Directors
- Advocate for the club with positive leadership
- Lead the club in accordance of the rules of USA Volleyball, Evergreen Region, and the club handbook
- Escalate any required decisions that contradict the handbook to the board for a vote
- Make discretionary decisions that are not specifically outlined in the handbook – but do not violate policies
- Positively represent the club in the community, media and USAV volleyball
- Support and affirm coach decisions within our guidelines

#### **Role of Coach**

- Select team members
- Set season goals for the team
- Advocate for the club with positive leadership
- Determine tournament schedule within budget guidelines
- Determine player positions
- Communicate with parents on practice times/changes, tournament information
- Seek help from Club Director of Team Yakima Board Member when issues arise

## **Social Media/Facebook**

#### **Social Media**

Team Yakima Volleyball Club has a Facebook page and we encourage you to post to the page and update everyone with results and pictures of our players and teams. This is the only sanctioned Facebook page, and players & parents are not authorized to create an additional Facebook page under the Team Yakima name.

One discussion topic that comes up frequently is why some teams are highlighted on social media more frequently than others. The answer is simple, parents from those teams are sending pictures and team results more frequently. If you would like your player’s team highlighted, send pictures and results to [www.teamyakima@gmail.com](mailto:www.teamyakima@gmail.com).

Social media can present both a positive and a negative role and we would encourage players and parents to not use social media in a way that would be disruptive to team chemistry. A good rule of thumb is to not post anything that you would not feel comfortable saying directly to the team or to a particular person.

If a parent or player posts to any social media site derogatory information or opinions about a coach, another player, drugs or alcohol, explicit language within or outside of Team Yakima, this will be considered a violation of our code of conduct and action will be taken.

## **Role of Parents**

Team Yakima offers options for parents who would like to be heavily involved in their player’s team

#### **Chaperone**

Each team is required to have at least one registered adult who is back-ground checked as the designated Chaperone. The Chaperone must be in attendance at every tournament and may not leave the tournament facility unless the team has completed play for the day, and has left the venue.

#### **Team Parent**

Each team has at least one adult. This parent is responsible for leading team communication, tournament food table, and other “spirit” type events. A team may have multiple parents in this role, as long as parents have a specific role, such as the parent responsible for communication, the parent responsible for food, or the parent responsible for travel arrangements. The role of each of these parents must be clearly communicated to all team members and their parents.

#### **On the Court**

Under no circumstance may a parent who is not a coach participate on the court in warm-ups, practices or matches unless approved by the Club Director & Coach. This parent must be an adult USAV member, back-ground checked, and have passed both the Impact & SafeSport training programs.

### **Parental Conduct**

All parents are required to sign and turn in the parental code of conduct to their player's coach. Any violation of the code of conduct may result in the ban of the parent to attend practices or tournaments, or the removal of the player from the team. Parents will also be held responsible for any of their relatives or guests.

## **Grievance Procedures**

None of the coaches should be considered unapproachable. They are all very willing to listen to a player's concern and try to arrive at a mutual solution. Until the coach is made aware of the concern nothing at all can be done to alleviate it. We think the ability to discuss potentially emotional topics is an absolutely necessary skill for negotiating conflict within one's life. However, we also realize there are times a problem needs to be addressed and the player cannot bring herself to approach the coach. In this case, we HIGHLY encourage the parents, in a spirit of collaboration with the coach, to produce the best environment for the player, to bring the issue to the coach's attention. Please do not let problems fester – it only makes things worse for everyone in trying to resolve issues.

### **Procedure Steps:**

Specifically, if you as a parent, or your athlete as a participant on a Team Yakima team, have concerns about Team Yakima Volleyball Club policies or actions, the procedures to follow are, in this order:

1. The athlete should talk to the coach about the matter.
  - a. It is understood at the younger ages sometimes the parent will be the first contact with the coach.
  - b. If the matter remains unresolved, or if the athlete has reasonable concern that talking to the coach will not resolve the matter, then;
2. The parent should talk to the coach.
  - a. Parents and/or athletes should call the coach on the phone or email the coach to schedule a meeting.
  - b. Meetings need to be at times and locations other than tournament. If a parent approaches a coach during a tournament, we have instructed our coaches to refuse to discuss any controversial matter, to refer the parent to the Club Director, and to walk away from the parent.
  - c. We ask that any meetings be at least 24 hours after the reason for that meeting.
  - d. The recommended time for a parent or athlete to talk to a coach about a problem is a previously arranged time either before or immediately after a scheduled practice.
  - e. In most situations, the athlete will be required to attend any meeting
  - f. If the matter still remains unresolved, or if the parent has reasonable concern that talking to the coach will not resolve the matter, then;
3. The parent should talk to the Club Director and request a meeting with the coach, the Club Director and/or the Parent Representative from the Board of Directors.
4. If the parent or the athlete is not satisfied by the action taken by the Club Director, they may request, in writing, that the Team Yakima Volleyball Club Executive Board review the matter.
  - a. The Board may, at its sole discretion, review or refuse to review the matter.
  - b. The Board will not review coaching decisions, training regimes or skill development.

We encourage parents to approach us earlier rather than later about concerns they have. There is little we can do to rectify a situation that is not brought to our attention until the end of the season. It is much better to have open lines of communication about problems when they arise.

### **Other Grievance Policies:**

Team Yakima Volleyball Club will not tolerate any hostile, aggressive confrontation between a parent and any official, any other parent, any athlete or any coach, regardless of whether the coach, athlete or other parent is a member of Team Yakima Volleyball Club or not.

Violation of this policy may result in the athlete being dismissed from Team Yakima Volleyball Club, with no refund.

It is inappropriate and undesirable for an athlete or a parent to approach other Team Yakima Volleyball Club parents and athletes to complain about a problem the athlete or parent has with a Team Yakima Volleyball Club coach, about objections to coaching decisions, or about disagreement with an administrative decision. This is one of the biggest factors in disrupting the chemistry of a team.

Asking uninvolved persons to take sides on an issue is unfair to the third parties, to the team and to the club. Competitive team

athletics, by its very nature, creates situations where everyone may not be happy all the time. For the psychological health of the athletes and the club as a whole, grievances need to be handled between the parties involved and the decision-makers in the situation, meaning, talk to the coach or talk to the administration. Parents spreading negativity or pressuring parents to join adverse opinions about the coach, other players or any Team Yakima staff will be considered as violating the code of conduct and may be expelled from the club.

It is detrimental to all persons involved to repeat complaints you hear (or overhear) to other uninvolved parties. By the time a story gets to the third or fourth party, it frequently bears little resemblance to the facts of the situation.

We strongly encourage any member who is approached and asked to listen to or express an opinion about matters between two other parties in the Club to suggest to the complaining party that he or she needs take the matter up with the coach in question, or the Club Director, and refuse to listen further.

## **Sexual or Physical Abuse & SafeSport**

Team Yakima Volleyball Club recognizes that all forms of sexual abuse, assault or harassment with athletes are illegal and unethical, even when an athlete invites or consents to such behavior or involvement. Sexual abuse and harassment is defined as, but not limited to, repeated comments, gestures or physical contacts of a sexual nature. This includes demanding sexual favors in exchange for promotions, playing time or any unwelcome touching of any kind, unwanted letters, telephone calls, texts or email of a personal nature, unwarranted inquiries about personal life or sexual habits, repeated jokes with sexual content, and sexual comments about a person's appearance or body.

In addition, Team Yakima Volleyball Club will not tolerate hazing. Hazing is defined as any intentional act that endangers the mental or physical health of one person or a group of people, by another person or group of people, for the purpose of group acceptance or membership. Hazing behavior would include but is not limited to: brutality such as beating or striking, excess calisthenics, excessive consumption of food or drink, or intimidating/threatening activities that cause extreme mental stress.

Team Yakima Volleyball Club will not tolerate sexual or physical abuse of any of its staff or of participants. Team Yakima Volleyball Club regards the safety of the young athletes entrusted to our care and instruction as our highest priority. We do not tolerate physical behavior that compromises that priority. We monitor activities and interactions to try to prevent miscommunications that cause discomfort to any of our athletes or parents.

When not documented in our handbook, Team Yakima follows the guidelines of SafeSport. SafeSport is a training program that believes that, "Athletes will perform better, soar higher, and get more from sport if they feel safe. SafeSport seeks to create a healthy, supportive environment for all participants. Through education, resources, and training, we help members of the sport community recognize, reduce, and respond to misconduct in sport." All Team Yakima coaches and directors have taken this training, and we encourage all parents to do the same. You can find the program at [www.safesport.org](http://www.safesport.org).

## **Reporting Complaints**

If you see or experience behaviors by a Team Yakima Volleyball Club coach, board member or chaperone that you believe to be inappropriate or against any version of the Code of Conduct, report it immediately to either the Head Coach or Club Director. All facts will be written down and a file will be started. All complaints will be investigated. Any employee or volunteer found to be in violation of the sexual and physical abuse policy will be subject to discipline, which may include the involvement of law enforcement and dismissal from the club. There will be no retaliation against any complainants or witnesses who participate in an investigation of an abuse charge.

## **Player Releases**

At tryouts, Team Yakima teams are chosen with particular positions in mind, and a player is making a commitment to that team. Players will not be released to another club during the regular season, although once the Team Yakima regular season has finished for a team, player releases will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Team Yakima Volleyball Club's season end date may vary depending on the level of team, season performance, commitment level of the team, and coach preference. Players are expected to be committed to their Team Yakima Volleyball Club team for the regular season, and initial payment is based on that plan each season. Gold & Black level teams are normally expected to attend the ERVA regional tournament and pay through April. All other teams have a season end date of approximately March 31.

Team Yakima Gold teams typically continue playing post season at the Emerald City tournament and then off to at least one national tournament. Post season costs will be determined in April for the post-season beginning in May.

Several issues arise at the end of the season.

- A non-Gold player may be released to play for other post-season team, if her team fees and all expenses are paid in full. No player will be released to play for another team unless she is in good standing and the team's season has completed.
- A Gold player may be released to play for another post-season team, only after the Team Yakima season ends, even if the player is no longer participating with the club.

## Length of Season

There are some standard season guidelines that the club follows from year-to-year. These guidelines may be adjusted based on the coaching preference, the skill level of the team, and the number of players who continue competing. These standards are:

- Gold Teams – Continue through ERVA Regionals and may compete post season if all guidelines are met.
- 16 Black & 14 Black – Continue through ERVA Regionals if ranked in the top 40% of their age group at the regional deadline.
- 14 Blue & Red, and 12 Black & Red will have seasons that end in mid to late March.

## Post Season

### Guidelines

Gold coaches will meet with the Club Director before tournament registration begins in December to plan out their goals for the post season. For any team to compete post-season, it must have at least 9 committed players. For non-USAV tournaments, a team may pick-up additional players, although this must be discussed with continuing regular season players before final plans are made. For USAV national tournaments, players are not allowed to be picked up, unless they did not play for another club during that season. Adding players to a post-season roster is at the sole discretion of the coach. The coach is not required to hold tryouts for adding players or otherwise follow any other protocols except for region requirements.

### Costs

Gold teams may attend tournaments beyond the regular season schedule based upon consensus of parents and players. The actual costs attributed to a more extensive season would then be divided among those involved and would be in addition to regular club dues. All post season costs must be covered by the players.

### National Championships

For U13-U18 teams with the goal of attending the National Championships, normal guidelines must be followed. These teams must qualify for the tournament, and may not accept a trickle-down bid, unless determined by the Board of Directors prior to the regional tournament that an exception may be planned. Due to USAV requirements, the 9 committed players must be regular season Team Yakima players. Under most circumstances, Team Yakima will not send U12 teams to Nationals.

Thank you very much for choosing Team Yakima. If you have any questions, please email us at [teamyakima@gmail.com](mailto:teamyakima@gmail.com).