

## Ownership and Scope

This document is owned by Duke City Volleyball Academy (DCVA) and managed by the directors of DCVA, Britney Meullier and Jerry Stofleth. This document covers information pertinent to the United States Association for Volleyball (USAV) 2017-2018 club volleyball season. Parents and players should read this document in full prior to the commencement of the 2017-2018 season. Club and coaching philosophy, payments, club and parent expectations, travel and tournament play, and safety are covered in this document.

## Staff

Britney Meilleur	Club Director, Recruiting and Coaching	505-410-2728
Jerry Stofleth	Club Director and Head Coach	505-350-6534
Henry Sandoval	Operations Manager and Fundraising	505-459-4924
Gitiak Hong	Master Coach and Training Coordinator	516-784-7860
Kris Borland	Website Owner and Head Coach	505-379-1600
Leslie Maly	Administrator and Travel Director	505-710-7684

## Mission Statement

At the Duke City Volleyball Academy we have one mission: to leverage the game of volleyball, as the ultimate team sport, to prepare young athletes for adult life. The lessons that are learned as a team player will provide our athletes a jump on how to deal with personal challenges throughout their lives. We do this by maintaining a clear club and coaching philosophy and by implementation of a training system that promotes a clear and consistent message.

## Club Philosophy

Our club philosophy is simple: Success is a consequence of confidence, drive and breadth, as well as a little patience. Success does not result from a focus on winning. However winning is surely a result of a focus on success. We focus on success at Duke City Volleyball Academy. To accomplish this we focus on the players themselves and on their confidence, drive and breadth. And we always preach a little patience.

We strive to teach through example, perspectives on leadership, confidence and humility, and how breadth and balance are keys to success. We stress creativity and how to accept failure as a lesson for success.

We strive to teach others and to learn ourselves, which is why we call ourselves The Volleyball Academy.

## Coaching Philosophy

Our coaching philosophy is one of balance. Life is not black-and-white, nor is volleyball. It is a balance. We strive for a goal of perfect execution, balanced with the creativity to experiment and make mistakes along the way. We encourage drive and dedication, balanced with room for fun and freedom. We encourage our coaches to challenge themselves and strike a balance between the success of each player and the success of each team as a whole. We strive to learn, balanced with our desire to teach.

## **The VB Academy System**

Our system is how we enable our philosophies. Fundamental skills and how those skills are employed on the court and during play will be taught to players and coaches with a consistent style. How to deal with “out of system” play, basic team strategies, and offensive and defensive systems will be provided as guidance to coaches to implement based on team dynamics. And so coaches are encouraged to be creative with their strategies and implementations within the bounds of consistent fundamentals.

To this end, we will implement a system that incorporates group training as well as individual and team coaching. During group training, coaches will learn consistent solid teaching fundamentals from other coaches, players will hear a consistent message from all coaches, and players will have the opportunity to learn from other players. Our goal is for a consistent foundation coupled with creative play.

During team practice our coaches take those fundamentals and build a successful team dynamic and strategy that works best for their players and teams.

## **Coaches**

- Many of our head coaches have coaching experience and are experienced coaches and players. Some have experience at the collegiate, national or professional levels. All of our coaches are experienced in club and/or high school level coaching, and all of our coaches are seasoned players. Our staff consists of professionals from many fields that will provide these athletes with a variety of perspectives on success. Our Head Coach, Gitiak Hong, is a former professional volleyball player and coach and has coached at the University of New Mexico for the Lady Lobos Division I Volleyball team. He brings a vast experience and knowledge to the Albuquerque community that will be passed on to these young athletes.
- However, good coaches are always willing to learn. We will hold training for our coaches periodically to ensure that the DCVA coaching staff remain current in their strategies and are taught the nuances of “good coaching” by our master coaches.
- We send select coaches to USAV coaching training around the country to enhance these same ideas. You will see a USAV CAP (Coaches Accreditation Program) certificate held

by many of our coaches, as well as NMAA accreditation for coaches that coach mid-school and high-school level teams.

## **What you can expect from the club**

Costs – where does my dollar go?

The club will cover the costs for:

- Administration
- Coaching salaries
- Coach travel
- Uniforms
- Tournaments (entry fee into all tournaments during regular season)
- Facility (rent and utilities, maintenance and upgrades)
- Equipment (nets, balls, safety equipment, training equipment)

Off-schedule tournaments

If a team and coach unanimously agree to alter their schedule by adding or substituting a tournament, DCVA will calculate the extra cost, or cost savings, incurred by this change. DCVA management must agree to the change, as requirements for the Sun Country region or USAV must also be maintained.

Safety

- During practice, we will have a certified trainer, or a coach with first aid training present for minor injuries. All of our coaches are trained in concussion awareness.
- During tournaments, we will make a point of determining the tournament host structure for providing these same assurances.
- If at any time a safety concern is raised by a parent, player, or observer, we will take immediate steps to alleviate the problem or concern. The issues can be with player behavior, facility shortcomings, bad guys in the parking lot, etc. All representatives of DCVA are versed in the proper steps to take.

Lodging

DCVA will organize block-lodging at out-of-town tournaments so that coaches and players may stay at one location as a team. Occasionally we will quarter coaches together at separate hotels. We will attempt to provide group discounts for teams, and we will do our best to find comfortable, affordable accommodations. At some tournaments there is a requirement of “stay to play”, meaning that the tournament specifies what hotel options are available for teams. DCVBA will assist parents in making these reservations.

Tournaments

DCVA will handle registration, level placement, and coach transportation for out-of-town tournaments. However, travel from home to hotel to tournament venue is a responsibility of the team and parents.

Post season play

We will provide planning assistance and registration for optional post-season tournaments. Post season play is not included in the baseline club fees. If a team and

coach opt for postseason tournament(s), then associated costs will be determined by DCVA and communicated to the team. All of the players may not elect to participate in post season tournaments. At this point in the season, a coach may ask other players, from other teams or other clubs (if allowed by both club's directors, to join their team if the group is not large enough to compete adequately – this usually means, at least 9 players.

#### Summer programs

We will offer a variety of clinics, camps, fun leagues, skills training, group lessons and private lessons during the off-season. Stay tuned.

#### College recruiting

At DCVA, we recommend players and parents consider college recruiting seriously in their junior year of high school. DCVA has a professional network at several colleges and can assist through advice, recommendations, campus visits, etc. College recruiting requires as much effort by the parents and players as it does from the club – we can only do so much.

#### Coaching

- **Communication:** We expect our coaches to be open and communicative. As we strive to teach our players confidence and leadership, we expect our coaches to exhibit the same. There is no room for passive-aggressive behavior at DCVA. We do not coach through fear and abuse (physical or emotional).
- **Professionalism:** We expect our coaches to promote an air of professionalism. This is not to say, we don't encourage our coaches to be real people, interact with their parents, and unwind like anyone else. We simply expect them to lead by example.
- **Leadership:** Leadership is key to coaching. Leadership is promoted through mutual respect between the coach and the players (as well as the parents). To promote leadership and respect, our coaches must build the respect of their players, not through fear and forced sacrifice, but through building confidence, breadth, and drive/desire.

#### Tournaments

- **Play time:** Play time is a difficult subject. As we teach our players about balance, so must we (and parents) maintain that same philosophy. "Put your best team on the floor". "Everyone should get a chance to play". "Why doesn't the coach take her out?" "Why does the coach play her all around?" These are all common phrases heard during tournaments. The bottom line is that the coach's decision and substitution strategy is dependent on the situation and the coach's style. Some games are more important to the team goal of the season. Some games offer confidence building opportunities. Some coaches elect to use a long-term strategy and maintain a fairly consistent rotation throughout the season. Some coaches feel the need to respond the dynamic of the game and make changes to the rotation based on real-time events.
- We expect our coaches to use their personal judgement and to exercise their own style when making these decisions. There is no right answer, ever. A wrong answer however is to allow pressure from parents and/or players to influence the coach's decisions.

- Disagreements: When a player or parent strongly disagrees with the style and decision-making of a coach, the player or parent should approach the coach first to see if the problem can be resolved. If an adequate resolution is not made by speaking to the coach the club director(s) may be engaged about the issue. Most of the time, a simple question like, “what can I do to get back in the rotation?”, or “coach, I’d really like to serve this set”, will provide an opportunity for the coach to explain and provide guidance to a player. Don’t let it fester – communication, communication, communication.
- Parent education: Often parents are confused about starting positions, lineups, playtime and substitutions, and are occasionally confused over rules or play. We will hold parent technical/tactical meetings throughout the season to better inform the parents on game strategy and how it plays into a coach’s implementation of these ideas.

## **What we hope to garner from parents and players**

### Payment

- Of course, payment! We have laid out our payment schedule for each player and will ask each player’s representative to sign an agreement as to their payment schedule. If payment is more than two weeks late, DCVA reserves the right to refuse a player’s participation in further practice and tournament play. If a parent has issues with payments, DCVA will work on an individual basis to make the payment schedule tractable.
- If a player chooses to leave the club during the season, DCVA has the right to collect any late payment owed to the club. We may also ask for any remaining fees associated with club dues, based on financial impact to the club and team. If a player has paid in full, DCVA may refund some amount of the player payment, based on fees owed and financial impact to the club or team. For example, if player fees have been calculated based on 11 players, we must still pay coach salaries, tournaments fees and lodging based on 11 players for the team. We cannot ask the team to take up the slack.

### Commitment

- Attendance – DCVA expects a reasonable level of commitment from its players and parents. Attendance is key to maintaining a good team dynamic, and a good team dynamic is critical for team success. Short of an emergency or sudden illness, all absences should be communicated to a player’s coach well in advance of a practices or tournaments.
- Timeliness – Be on time to practice (15-20 minutes before practice time). Players need enough time to visit, dress, fill water bottles, etc., and be ready to step on the court at practice time.
- External work – All players should work certain skills at home or in their off-time. During practice time, coaches do not have enough time to adequately work individual player skills, provide breadth in other skills, and work team strategy – it is too much to accomplish in the time allotted. Players can vastly improve their own skills with a small

time commitment every day. A setter for instance, can use a wall at home and set 500 balls per day with a time commitment of about 15 minutes. Players can improve their jump for example by working core muscles at home for 10-15 minutes per day. Players and parents should approach their coaches about an effective home workout regimen (10-15 minutes per day) that would most greatly affect their skills on the court.

- Officiating/Scorekeeping – part of the Junior Volleyball framework is for players to become students of the game. A key component to this is to understand the nuances of scorekeeping, line-judging and officiating. We expect every player to learn how to perform all the skills necessary to officiate a game (Scorekeeper, Timekeeper, Libero Tracker, Line Judge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Referee). DCVA will provide assistance through clinics and USAV online training.
- Team parent / chaperone – each team must have a USAV certified Chaperone. This is most often a parent. Certification for chaperone is available on the USAV website by completing the Safe Sport training. It is recommended that each team have a designated team parent – a person that can be in charge of organization for snack tables, team dinners, and other team events. This team parent is a good choice for chaperone.

#### Balance

While we encourage players to work on and off the court to support their skills and conditioning, we also recognize the dangers of physical and mental exhaustion. During the regular practice and play season is NOT the time to schedule extra conditioning regimens over 15 minutes in length. Muscle conditioning, physical training, flexibility training, etc. will be worked into the DCVA program. External work should only be added in small increments, and should be specifically designed by the coach and/or club trainer.

#### Positivity

We expect to maintain a positive environment for these athletes from our coaching staff, our parents and from the players themselves. Lack of communication is usually the culprit for negative feelings that lead to a negative environment. We encourage all parents and players, as well as our coaches to stay positive and keep talking.

#### Encouragement

The only greater critic of a player than her parent is usually a player herself. Confidence is the hardest trait to shape for a young player. We cannot force the players to stop criticizing themselves. We can however ask that our parents work as hard as they can to encourage their players. The coach will provide the critique they need, and will do so in a positive manner. But, the easiest way to undermine confidence in a player is for their parent to criticize (even in the spirit of coaching) their child. Please let us do the coaching, and parents do the encouraging.

## **Fundraising and Donations**

- DCVA has multiple methods for fundraising available. Some parents elect to take great advantage of this service – some indeed have paid their entire club dues via fundraising efforts. There is no requirement however for any player to participate in this activity.

- Teams and/or individual players may conduct their own fundraising efforts. DCVA simply would like to be aware of any fundraising activity conducted in their name.
- DCVA will have a GoFundMe link for teams and individuals if requested, whereby cash donations may be made directly for a team/player.
- DCVA will not levee any charge or fee for fundraising efforts.
- DCVA is a non-profit organization. Therefore, any donations made to the club are tax-free for the donor. Non-profit donations will be applied to the overall club, not to any one team or player.

## Tryouts

- Tryouts are closed to parents. We would like prospective players to be on site 30 minutes prior to tryout time in order to complete registration and get players organized.
- Prospective players will be provided with a tryout shirt and a number for their jersey.
- Players will be notified as to their selection for a team within 48 hours of tryouts. We would like a reciprocal notification within 48 hours of an offer. There will be some exceptions for players that want to try out for other clubs. Some may want to base their decision on multiple offers.

## Tournaments

### Travel

DCVA does not pay for player travel. Parents are expected to get their players to tournament destinations early enough for coaches to make decisions about lineups and play strategy. This usually means 12 hours prior to play time.

### Lodging

- Some tournaments are “Stay to play” tournaments – those that are denoted “National Qualifier”. For these tournaments, we will make lodging agreements for a block of rooms at a prescribed hotel, based on stay-to-play requirements. The athletes must stay (or at least register to stay) at a pre-specified hotel.
- For non-stay-to-play venues, we encourage players and parents to stay at DCVA pre-scheduled hotels. However, players may stay anywhere they chose. DCVA will attempt to acquire group discounts whenever possible, searching for reasonable pricing in a comfortable atmosphere with complimentary breakfast.

### Parents

We encourage parents to exhibit good sportsmanship, and portray their team and club with class. Please be courteous to other teams and coaches, and please refrain from questioning calls or speaking directly or indirectly to referees. The Sun Country region of USAV implements our guideline for conduct. Sun Country implements a “zero tolerance” policy whereby they will (and have many times) remove a parent from the tournament venue. This policy does not cover coach behavior – this is controlled by the referees.

### Player

We encourage players to exhibit the same good sportsmanship and good citizenship at all venues. We consider ourselves guests at out-of-town venues and want to leave the impression of good will for your club and your city.

## **Club rules**

- Each player must be registered at USAV and have selected Duke City Volleyball Academy as their club. Each player must have on file with our club a medical release form (indeed, proof of a completed form is required for player participation at all USAV sanctioned events).
- 24 HOUR RULE: Parents and players should not approach their coaches about tournament play issues for a full 24 hours after the tournament is over. Emotions run high during tournament play for everyone, and a cooling off period is always mandatory. More often than not a parent will learn everything they desire directly from their player on the ride home.
- Player safety: Players who are dropped off at the club by a parent, must be picked up by that parent unless otherwise communicated to a club administrator or coach. At our new facility, it is our intent to electronically log into and out of the building system. This system should be in place during this season.
- Illegal Activities: Any player caught in an illegal activity while participating in any DCVA associated event (tournament, practice, team-building dinner, etc.) will be subject to expulsion or suspension from the club.