



Dear Tornado Families,

I wanted to send out a message to everyone and personally apologize for all of the confusion these past couple of weeks. I hope that everyone can understand that the staff tried to do their best to get accurate information out to our members, as quickly as it became available to us. There were a lot of rumors circulating so we needed to confirm what we could and could not do as a business, as well as consider how the Corona virus could potentially affect our members. In addition, there were hotels, airfare, entry fees and wristbands to deal with for each team's cancellation. These last-minute cancellations impacted a lot of people. KC worked around the clock on this.

It has been a difficult balance to not over or under react until we had all of the facts. We have been in constant contact with the region and other club directors in the area. Myself and the other club directors were all hopeful, earlier in the week, that we could at least offer our teams, a *non-mandatory*, small group session. We know many of the players and families had requested to still do lessons or at least touch a ball. At that time the CDC had the 10-person rule so we worked diligently on schedules in order to accommodate their recommendations. We had decided to only put 6-7 people in each section in order to ensure that everyone would be spread out to reduce the risk. We also discussed ways to still help our seniors with recruiting under these guidelines. One of the ways was to invite colleges to watch them on a live stream during workouts. We have 3 players that are still trying to find a college home. Please understand how this also greatly impacts them as well. In addition, we had a plan in place for sanitizing balls, implemented clean-up procedures and a hand washing station before and after practices. However; as more virus cases broke out across the US the recommendations were constantly changing. We realize that whatever plan we put in place or attempted, with a good heart and good intentions, it would also come with some resistance from others. This was the very reason why the small groups were merely an option and not mandatory. We merely tried to provide an option, that also protected me as a business owner, for those that wanted to practice. However; I do not believe anyone anticipated that it would be this serious. However; at the end of the day, the safety of our members, their families and my staff are more important. As frustrating as all of this is to us right now, we believe it is in the best interest of everyone. In addition, we want to make sure that we are doing our part not to expose anyone to the potential virus. I am particularly saddened for our current seniors at Tornados and former ones in college. This is a terrible way to have your senior season potentially end. My hope is that USAV will find a way to move their regional date so they can at least play one more time. I can assure you that we will make up all of the missed practices, when it is safe, even if it means that we have to extend the season. As far as making up tournaments, Brigitte has been putting together options as they become available.

Thank you again, for your patience and understanding during these difficult times for all. This virus impacts everyone and no one person is immune to the impact it will ultimately have on our economy. Tonight, I ask that you hug your kids and stock up on needed supplies. As for now, the gym is completely shut down as recommended by the Government and CDC until at least April 3rd to ensure everyone's safety. Stay safe and we will see you soon!

I also ask that you consider saying a prayer for our country, our Tornado families and our seniors please. We are all in this together.

Sincerely,

JoEllen Saulsberry