



# Madison Starlings & Madison Falcons VOLLEYBALL CLUB

**2025-2026**

Athlete & Parent/Guardian

## HANDBOOK



# Welcome to Madison Starlings and Madison Falcons VolleyBall Club!

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## ABOUT STARLINGS VOLLEYBALL, USA

Starlings is a national nonprofit organization registered as a 501(c)3. Madison Starlings is an affiliate of the National Starlings Volleyball Clubs and has its own 501(c)3 reporting status. National Starlings supports girls by creating opportunities to play volleyball.

### THE NATIONAL STARLINGS MISSION

The mission of Starlings Volleyball, USA is to positively impact the lives of at-risk girls through the sport of volleyball.

### THE STARLINGS PHILOSOPHY

Starlings Volleyball, USA, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, believes every girl deserves the opportunity to play club volleyball, regardless of socioeconomic background or level of play. Starlings dues, if any, are a fraction of most junior club costs, with the goal that no girl is turned away because of inability to pay. Beginning in 1996 with a single inner-city San Diego team, Starlings has grown to become the nation's largest junior volleyball club, serving more than 3,000 girls in more than 65 clubs.

The national Starlings organization holds a national tournament in June every year in San Diego, CA, with Starlings teams across the United States being eligible for entry. Madison Starlings has traveled to the national tournament to compete in the past, and considers all tournament options carefully, to ensure maximum participation and best meet the needs of each team, every year.

## ABOUT MADISON STARLINGS VOLLEYBALL CLUB

We are committed to providing high-quality club volleyball to all athletes, regardless of income. We strive to support the mission of the National Starlings while expanding to boys with our Madison Falcons program.

Madison Starlings VolleyBall Club is fortunate to have highly trained and qualified coaches led and trained by Club Director Alexis Middleton and Associate Club Director Victoria LaBrosse. We also have a Board of Directors. Visit [www.starlings.org/madisonboard](http://www.starlings.org/madisonboard) to view our current board members.

Madison Starlings VolleyBall Club aspires to improve the under-representation of minority and low-income youth by increasing access to volleyball for youth in Madison. Our Club is made up of families, coaches, players of all incomes and backgrounds who support this mission. Everyone in our club benefits from diverse interactions and play that includes all demographics. Our families, coaches, players, and supporters gain invaluable life and community connections not currently available in other clubs.

Madison Starlings VolleyBall Club is a member of the Badger Region, a part of the national USA Volleyball. Madison Starlings VolleyBall Club pursues the mission of increasing opportunity and access to volleyball through partnerships with the Badger Region,

USA Volleyball, other area clubs, and volleyball enthusiasts.

### MADISON STARLINGS MISSION

The mission of the Madison Starlings VolleyBall Club is to simultaneously provide high-quality training for our athletes and increase diversity within our sport through equitable opportunities and an inclusive community.



## CLUB CONTACT INFORMATION

The best way to find out information about our club is to visit our website at  
[www.starlings.org/madison](http://www.starlings.org/madison)

### Club Address for Non-Profit reporting/equipment:

Madison Starlings  
4014 Birch Avenue  
Madison, WI 53711

Cell Phone: 608.335.3953 (Lauri Schwartz)  
Email: [madisonstarlings@gmail.com](mailto:madisonstarlings@gmail.com)  
Facebook: @MadisonStarlingsVolleyball

### Club Address for Payments:

Madison Starlings VolleyBall Club  
Karie Cunningham  
17327 W Church Rd  
Brodhead, WI 53520

## ABOUT BADGER REGION VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION

Madison Starlings VolleyBall Club is a part of the Badger Region Volleyball Association, one of the 40 Regional Volleyball Associations in USA Volleyball's nationwide network. Each member of Madison Starlings is required to be a member of Badger Region Volleyball Association and USA Volleyball.

A 501c3 non-profit organization, Badger Region Volleyball Association is comprised of more than 10,000 members across the state of Wisconsin and provides services and education to more than 100 junior clubs and scores of both junior and adult players, officials and coaches. Each club is an independently run business under the umbrella organization of Badger Region Volleyball with regards to rules, policies, procedures and membership.

**Before any participation, you (the athlete) must sign up for a Badger Region/USA Volleyball membership online. This can be done by visiting [www.BadgerVolleyball.org](http://www.BadgerVolleyball.org) and clicking on the red "Membership" tab at the top, and following the steps outlined in the instructions. Keep a record of the email you use, login, and password, for future use.**

As a part of Badger Region you must complete a **medical release** form and turn it in to your club/coach.



## ABOUT USA VOLLEYBALL & SAFESPORT

USA Volleyball (USAV) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of volleyball in the United States and is recognized by the Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) and the United States Olympic Committee (USOC).

USA Volleyball is committed to creating safe and fun environment for youth.

Therefore, it requires the reporting of abuse of any kind (sexual, physical, emotional, bullying, etc.) through the SafeSport program. See USA volleyball for specific safe sport training and [Starlings.org/madison](http://Starlings.org/madison) for safesport link training for youth and adults.

Please see safe sport video on our website, required viewing upon accepting membership in Madison Starlings or Madison Falcons.

Concussion information in video format is also available on the website.

## PROGRAM LOGISTICS AND FEE INFORMATION

*Madison Starlings Volleyball Club offers programs for many different ages and skill levels. We use age charts provided by USA Volleyball to determine teams, ie. U13's, U14's, etc.*

### **Season Length**

- ◇ October through April/May season depending upon age/start of the season

### **Practices**

- ◇ Two dedicated team practices per week
- ◇ Open gym practices when possible

### **Tournaments**

- ◇ Minimum 4 tournaments
- ◇ Travel to the greater Madison area, Whitewater, or Waukesha areas

### **Team fees cover:**

- ◇ Tournament entry fees for guaranteed 4 team tournaments  
Practice facility expenses
- ◇ Equipment for general practice
- ◇ All training provided by coaches, etc.
- ◇ Uniform
- ◇ Practice Jersey

### **Additional fees that will be covered by the player\*:**

- ◇ Travel expenses, including food, transportation & hotel if desired Shoes, socks, knee pads, other personal practice equipment
- ◇ Warm ups or other clothing that a team decides collectively to purchase
- ◇ \*please contact financial support committee if you need help with these items. More information is available at [starlings.org/madison](http://starlings.org/madison).



## FEE INFORMATION

Fees for the 2025-26 season:

- ◆ **\$800 in club dues which includes a uniform**

Payment deadlines:

- ◆ **\$400 due December 6, 2025**
- ◆ **\$400 due February 2, 2026**

Funds raised at a player's team serve-a-thon will be counted towards the first payment. These funds must be turned in to the treasurer by December 15th, 2025 to count towards the \$400 payment due.

The actual cost per player to Madison Starlings is approximately \$1,214. Those who are able to pay the actual cost are encouraged to do so. Payment of your dues on time or even early is greatly appreciated.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Anyone needing and requesting financial assistance must proactively inform Madison Starlings and Madison Falcons of this need **and** communicate in writing a plan by December 15th, 2025. If individuals wish club assistance in submitting a request to Starlings' national organization, they need to:

1. Inform the financial support committee of their intent to apply to Starlings national organization through the [starlings.org](http://starlings.org) website for the cost of their dues & uniform.
2. Attend a zoom meeting for financial assistance announced on the website [starlings.org/madison](http://starlings.org/madison) **OR** contact one of the committee members to meet with them individually. Contact information is provided on the website.
3. Submit their unique completed request to Megan Allen.
4. Inform Madison Starlings of the submission date, and any response from the Starlings.org organization.

## **PAYMENT OPTIONS:**

1. Credit card, PayPal, Venmo on the website: [starlings.org/madisonfees](http://starlings.org/madisonfees)
2. Checks may be mailed to the club treasurer:

Karie Cunningham  
17327 W Church Rd  
Brodhead, WI 53520

## **REFUND POLICY**

1. When an athlete accepts an offer to participate, they accept the financial obligations for the entire club fee for that season. When teams are established, money immediately goes towards uniforms, tournament entry, facility expenses and other fees.
2. Due to our nonprofit status and budget requirements, we do not offer refunds. Refunds will not be given to athletes who choose not to play because of conflicts, team, or coaching assignments, or an individual's amount of playing time. Prorated refunds for cash payments only will be considered for extenuating circumstances. One example could be an athlete who suffers a season-ending injury while playing on a Madison Starlings Madison Falcons Volleyball Club team, on a case-by-case basis with a physician's letter. Injuries occurring outside of Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not be considered for a refund. Volunteer hours will not be "refunded" or ever "paid" in monetary form. Numerous fundraisers, including adult volleyball tournament concessions, UW Concessions, candy bar sales, and more have always been an expectation of players of the club in order to pay for the start of the next season's gym costs. No funds will ever be paid out for volunteer hours worked towards fees.
3. Badger Region membership fees are NON-REFUNDABLE for ANY reason, even in the event that your daughter/son quits, is suspended, or injured at any point in the season.

## **BADGER REGION VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION'S POLICY ON UNPAID PLAYER DUES**

A Junior Club player must remit all club fees as specified by their Club/Team, within the club's scheduled time frame. If fees are unpaid at the end of the Club's season, the Club Director may use any legal means necessary to obtain payment, i.e. collection agency. Nonpayment will result in the athlete's name being submitted to the Badger Region Office, resulting in the athlete being placed on a list as delinquent on payments that all club directors in the region are able to view. A letter requesting payment that includes the parent's name, the player's name, player's age level and notification of this policy must be sent to the family and a copy to the region office.

## **COACH STATUS WITH BADGER REGION**

All coaches on the coaching staff of the Madison Starlings Volleyball Club are members of Badger region and IMPACT-certified.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Each player will participate in a serve-a-thon where all proceeds go to support player dues. Players are encouraged as part of their volunteerism to raise funds beyond the minimum to support other players' expenses and fees.
2. Players are encouraged to participate in club fundraisers, as organized, planned and announced during the season. These fundraisers will be considered and approved based on the benefit to our community.

## **TRYOUTS**

Each year we evaluate a large number of athletes during tryouts, and every athlete is evaluated every year, even if they are returning. Each athlete must come to the tryouts ready to compete for a place on one of our teams. An athlete with a limiting physical or medical condition should contact the club prior to tryouts. Players should never assume because they are on a team one year they will automatically

make a team the following year. Each year athletes' skills improve and each year the pool of athletes to choose from will change. Some athletes have extensive playing experience while others do not. Athletes go through a physical evaluation; coaches evaluate their potential as well as intrinsic traits. Our gym culture is important. We base our selections on what the athletes do during the tryout period and what we perceive their potential to be.

## **TRYOUT PROCEDURE**

All players of the same age group will be evaluated by several members of the club staff. Even if these coaches aren't standing directly on the court, there are people watching for skills and leadership and communication skills from each athlete, on and off the court.

## **TEAM COMPOSITION AND PLACEMENT**

- ◇ Teams typically will consist of between 10 to 14 players. Total team participants are left to the discretion of the club director and team coach.
  - The number of teams within each age group is dependent upon: The number of players trying out.
  - The number of available coaches.
  - The number of available practice courts.
- ◇ Teams will be chosen in an effort to maximize the advancement of ALL players.
- ◇ It is up to the discretion of the coach and club director if they would like to move a player to a different age group ("playing up").
- ◇ Teams will be divided into single age groups: 11s, 12s, 13s, 14s, 15s, 16s, 17s, and 18s.

## **OFFER PROCESS**

All offers to play with Madison Starlings Volleyball Club (Starlings and Falcons) will be made via email, unless a different means is agreed upon in writing by the player and evaluating coach.

## **BADGER REGION COMMITMENT POLICY**

Directly from the Badger Region Website: <http://badgervolleyball.org/tryoutcommit-policy-dates/>

Specific dates and times available at the [Badgervolleyball.org](http://Badgervolleyball.org) website

## **ACCEPTANCE PROCESS**

After you have received an offer and have decided to commit, the official acceptance policy is to respond to that coach and offer in writing/email as well as accept the club assignment in Sports Engine. All free or reduced lunch scholarship athletes are designated with Madison Starlings Volleyball Club through our membership lists sent to Badger Region. Free or Reduced lunch athletes still need to accept the club assignment in Sports Engine.

## **PRACTICES**

Only IMPACT-certified adults with current USAV memberships and properly background-checked club volleyball personnel are allowed to provide instruction and on-court contact with players during practice or tournaments.

Parents/Guardians are allowed to attend practice if they so choose (or not), however, parents are not allowed to "shag" balls during practices or tournaments unless they are registered with USAV/Badger Region. Parents/Guardians will be asked to leave the gym if they are disruptive to the practice.

We expect players, parents/guardians, and coaches to keep all our practice facilities clean while we use them. Players are asked to keep their cell phones away and in their bags during practice.

## **PICK-UP & DROP-OFF INFORMATION**

Parents/Guardians of players age 12 and under are asked to come into the facility to pick up your athlete.

This is for all of our players' safety, as various organizations use the facility at the same time. We do not know all of these people and want to err on the side of caution.

Parents/Guardians are reminded to be timely to pick your athlete up at the end of practice. If this is a consistent problem, parents/guardians of the player(s) will be contacted by the Club Director.

Several of our facilities close at the end of our practice, so please respect their need to close the facility and have your transportation be on time.

## **PRACTICE STRUCTURE & ATTENDANCE**

Scheduled practice time is the start time. Please arrive early enough to be dressed and completely ready for practice by the designated start time, which **usually requires 15 minutes before the start time**.

IF A PLAYER CAN NOT BE AT THEIR REQUIRED PRACTICE, THE ATHLETE IS EXPECTED TO CONTACT THEIR COACH. It is the athlete's responsibility (not the parent/guardian) to reach the coach before the practice starts. If unable to attend due to a previous commitment, **let your coach know at least a week in advance**.

All athletes are expected to attend every practice for their team. Only an illness serious enough to keep the athlete home from school, or a genuine family emergency, are legitimate excuses for missing practice. Regardless of the reason, if an athlete misses practices, playing time may decrease and roles may be reviewed. Club dues will not be refunded for missing practices.

## **PRACTICE CANCELLATIONS – WEATHER-RELATED CANCELLATIONS**

Please be aware that Madison Starlings Volleyball Club may have to cancel practice at the last minute due to weather, coach unavailability, personal emergencies, and scheduling conflicts.

### **WEATHER-RELATED CANCELLATIONS:**

If schools are closed or school events are canceled, so are our practices. If the morning/afternoon forecast calls for bad weather late in the day, keep an eye on your email. Any canceled practice will be announced on the website, Facebook, and via email. Players are encouraged to use their best judgment when attempting to travel to practice. The safety of the athlete and their family is our first concern and priority. If you will not be making practice due to the weather, please contact your coach ASAP.

## **PLAYING TIME**

### **DETERMINATION OF PLAYING TIME**

The determination of playing time takes into account demonstration and commitment to the Madison Starlings and Madison Falcons gym culture, skill execution, and the best interests of the team. The club and coaches will do their best to clearly establish expectations for playing time but each player and situation may be unique.

### **COMMUNICATION REGARDING PLAYING TIME**

We highly encourage open communication between families/athletes and coaches. Questions and concerns about playing time and coaching philosophy should be expressed during a meeting at least 24 hours after a competition day. Please see the full communication policy below.

## **COMPETITION AND TOURNAMENTS**

### **SCHEDULING AND OBJECTIVES**

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will work to make a competitive schedule possible with the athletes on each team. Each team will be entered into a minimum of 4 tournaments between January and April or May. These tournaments may be in the greater Madison area, or places such as Whitewater, Wisconsin Dells, or Waukesha, where many tournaments are held.

Non-refundable tournament fees are paid by Madison Starlings Volleyball Club prior to December to the respective tournament hosting clubs. Tournaments are RARELY if ever, canceled because of weather. We are expected to make every effort to attend. However, if we decide that the safety of the participants is at

risk, a recommendation will be made not to attend. However, we will NOT be refunded for this fee, hence, the participants will not be refunded in money or volunteer time.

## **DAY-OF SCHEDULE**

Each tournament format is determined by the organization hosting the event. Tournament hosts will provide actual day-of scheduling details no later than Wednesday or Thursday prior to the tournament date. This will be emailed to the team once it is received from the tournament director. The hosting club may post it on their website as well.

Until we receive the actual schedule, please plan on being at the tournament early in the morning and remaining there all day. Teams do one of three things at a tournament: play, officiate, sit out (time to eat and watch other teams, especially those in our club). Players are expected to participate and stay with the team for all three of these events. Players should not leave the grounds of the tournament until the tournament ends and our entire team has completed its duties. Tournaments can run ahead of schedule or (more often) behind schedule. Please be prepared. Please also be aware that there could be additional charges for spectator entry and/or parking, and many facilities have rules regarding outside food and beverage. We as a team/club can/will be penalized for breaking these rules.

## **UNIFORMS**

Players are required to have matching jerseys and the same color bottoms for tournament play. For the 2025-2026 season, all players will receive new jerseys. The uniform will include a short sleeve jersey, black bottoms, and a t-shirt.

Should a player forget or lose their uniform, or not have it available on the day of a tournament, they would not be able to play.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club is grateful to teams and organizations who have donated uniforms, and previously we have only been able to participate in tournaments because of these generous donations. Some of these jerseys will be available to purchase as practice gear.

## **SCOREKEEPING AND OFFICIATING DUTIES**

All players are expected to help officiate in one of these capacities:

- ◇ 2 Line judges
- ◇ Scorekeeper (visual and paper) Libero tracker
- ◇ 2nd referee (down)

All club members must complete all of the USAV Academy training videos prior to the first tournament to be eligible to participate. No player is exempt from officiating duties.

It is also important to note that oftentimes when you lose your last match of the day, you will be expected to officiate the next match. **NO PLAYER MAY LEAVE THE TOURNAMENT IN ADVANCE OF THE ENTIRE TEAM, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY ARE ASSIGNED AN**

**OFFICIATING DUTY OR NOT.** Under certain extreme circumstances, permission may be granted by the coach for a player to leave early.

No cell phones or electronic devices will be at the scorekeeping tables or used by any player with a reffing assignment. If seen by the coach, they will be confiscated and turned over to the parent/guardian(s). If a parent/guardian is not present, the phone or device will be held by the coach until the end of the day.

## **TRAVEL**

Many tournaments require travel time. It is the responsibility of the athlete to get to the tournament on time for warm-ups. This may mean traveling as a family or making arrangements with teammates. Coaches are NOT allowed to transport players unless that player is their child. Parents/Guardians must understand (as indicated in the forthcoming Agreement at the end of this handbook) and agree that when the team is traveling to tournaments, Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not act in place of a parent/guardian or assume any duty of supervision including at hotels or in the course of transportation to or from the event.

There are different types of events that we will travel to:

- ◇ Scrimmages that last a couple of hours on a Saturday or Sunday, times varying.
- ◇ One-day events are held on a Saturday or Sunday, with play generally starting around 8:00 a.m.
- ◇ Two-day events are held on Saturday AND Sunday.

Two-day tournaments may require overnight lodging that is not included in the team fee. Players are required to stay with a parent/guardian or other designated adult (unless team rooms are reserved). You will need additional funds for food, t-shirt purchases, etc. Players may be allowed to return home, returning the next morning to play.

Although we will provide site directions given to us, please double-check with other sources. Please make sure you know where you are going and allow more than enough time to get there. Getting lost is not an acceptable excuse for being late and could jeopardize playing time. Traffic and parking can be heavy and time-consuming around a volleyball venue.

All Madison Starlings Volleyball Club players will demonstrate good behavior at tournaments, which includes:

- ◇ No discussion with officials concerning calls. Officiating when asked by your coach.
- ◇ Return balls to the ball bag after warm-ups and keep track of the medical kit. Food is to be eaten in the designated area.
- ◇ Clean up the bench area and team camp areas of empty bottles after every match. No stealing or vandalism.
- ◇ No smoking, drugs, or alcohol.
- ◇ If staying at a hotel, players must adhere to the lights-out policy (as established by the coach), even if staying in a room with adults.
- ◇ An adult needs to be present at any time that multiple players are congregated in a hotel room - any guests must be pre-approved by the coach(es).
- ◇ Do not leave the court or facility until the coach releases you
- ◇ Any violations of these policies may result in the suspension of play and possible dismissal from the club. Serious offenses will also be reported to the appropriate authorities, the Badger Region, and middle and high schools.

*Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not be responsible for any athlete's personal items while participating in an event. All athlete's personal items will be their own responsibility while playing or during hotel lodging. It is advised that no jewelry be brought to tournaments as it cannot be worn. It is also advised that cell phones be left at home or turned off, as tournaments are a time for competition, not texting. Take care to secure money and valuables.*

## COMMUNICATION

### CLUB COMMUNICATION POLICY & GUIDELINES

Parenting/being a guardian and coaching are important and complementary roles and by working together we are able to better provide benefits to the athlete. Since the athlete is beginning to move into the adult world, one of our goals is to make them responsible for their own actions.

- ◇ Communication Coaches Expect From Parents
  - Advanced notification of any schedule conflicts. Preferably an email, text or call.
  - Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectation, only after the concern has first been discussed between the coach and athlete outside of practice.

- Injury notification and progress updates.

Since our goal as a program is to move each athlete forward in their development as a player and a person, it is our request that you encourage your athlete to discuss any of the issues first with their coach. If your athlete is unclear of the resolution, please feel free to contact the coach or Club Director with your athlete present.

◇ Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches

- The treatment of your athlete – both mentally and physically. Ways to help your athlete improve.
- Concerns about your athlete’s behavior.

Our coaches are professionals who make tough decisions based on what they believe to be the best for the team and athletes involved. Certain things can and should be discussed with coaches. Other things, such as those in the following section, must be left to the discretion of the coach and will not be discussed, either in person or via phone or email:

◇ Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches Team Strategy

- Play Calling
- Other Athletes or Coaches
- Playing Time (unless framed such as “what can my athlete do to earn more playing time?”)

Situations may arise that may require a conference between the coach, the Club Director, and a parent/guardian. These are to be encouraged, and it’s important that both parents/guardians of the player have a clear understanding of the other’s perspective.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The following guidelines have been established to protect the athletes, coaches, and parents/guardians from awkward and inappropriate situations when it comes to the professional discussion and handling of grievances. The coaches within Madison Starlings Volleyball Club have been instructed to adhere to these guidelines to better maintain the club/player/parent/guardian relationship.

The procedure to discuss concerns about the policies and actions are as follows:

1. The athlete should speak with the coach regarding the matter.
2. If the matter remains unresolved and there is a legitimate concern, the parent/guardian AND athlete should request to meet with the coach. Coaches will ONLY meet with parents/guardians when the athlete is present, and not at a tournament or in the middle of a practice.
  - a. Please do not confront a coach before, during, or after an event. Arrange to meet with your coach at a convenient time for all parties, including before or after practice.
  - b. If a parent/guardian approaches a coach during a tournament, we have instructed our coaches to refuse to discuss the situation, to refer the parent/guardian to the Club Director, and walk away.
  - c. We also instruct our coaches not to get involved in a texting conversation.
3. If the matter still remains unresolved, the parent/guardian can request a meeting with the Club Director, along with the coach and the athlete. **THE ATHLETE MUST BE PRESENT AT THE MEETING.**

It is important that athletes and parents/guardians alike understand that conversation with a coach is allowed and encouraged at any time throughout the season as long as it is civil and respectful. However, when problems arise, we will all need to be rational and calm before the discussion occurs.

Also please note that Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not acknowledge or act upon any negative emails. While convenient for conveying details, email can also leave room for interpretation of feelings and misunderstandings. To initiate the grievance process, please contact the coach by phone or schedule an in-person meeting.

## **CONSTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION**

If a player acts in a manner that is not team focused or repeatedly violates the policies or procedures of the club, the club director working with the coach may suspend a player for a period of time. In some severe cases the club director may remove the player from the club for the season. In these cases a refund will not be offered to the player for club dues.

## **REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OF CLUB STAFF OR OTHER CLUBS**

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club vigilantly maintains a policy that places the safety of the young athletes entrusted to our care and instruction as our highest priority. We watch team activities and interactions closely to try to prevent miscommunications that cause discomfort to any of the athletes or parents/guardians.

If you see the behavior of a Madison Starlings Club Volleyball coach/volunteer that you believe to be inappropriate, report it immediately to the Club Director. All complaints will be investigated. Any coach/volunteer found to be in violation of the club's policy would be subject to discipline, which may include dismissal. There will be no retaliation against any complainants and/or witnesses who participate in an investigation. If you have any questions regarding the Madison Starlings Volleyball Club policies or procedures, please do not hesitate to contact the Club Director.

If you see what you believe to be inappropriate behavior of another club (player, coach, or anyone associated with it) while attending a tournament or other function, report it immediately to the coach and/or Team Parent/Guardian(s). Do not engage in this behavior. The Club Director will be informed of what occurred, if anyone was contacted, and what the resolution was, or what is in process. If the Club Director is involved, then the Board of Directors or Designee will be informed.

## **TEAM CONTACT LIST, WEBSITE, AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

Our primary and official method of communication will be through email. The email listed on your tryout registration form is the default email address for the club. If you would like us to include or switch email addresses please contact us.

Other information may be posted on our website. Regularly check out the Madison Starlings Volleyball Club website ([www.starlings.org/madison](http://www.starlings.org/madison)) as this is where a majority of the answers to questions will be posted – locations, dates, and times of practice and tournaments, etc.

Phone calls and text messages between athletes and their coach may occur to get information out in a timely manner. All of these communications will be free of any abusive, threatening, or otherwise inappropriate language by all parties involved. If an athlete or coach receives inappropriate communications, report it directly to the Club Director.

Social media is also popular, however, we urge coaches not to accept "friend" requests from their players, nor any other current players under the age of 18. We will utilize our Madison Starlings Volleyball Club Facebook page, however, official communication and information will be via our website.

At events, cell phones are not allowed at the scorer's table and can be a distraction throughout the day. Face-to-face team communication and bonding are favored over texting or playing games during off-times.

## **TEAM PARENT/GUARDIAN(S)**

The role of the team parent/guardian(s) is to assist the coach with some administrative duties and communications as assigned by the coach. We would like to have at least one parent/guardian to volunteer for this role on each team. Some duties of the team parent/guardian:

- ◇ Organize team dinners or meals at tournaments
- ◇ Make sure that everyone has a ride to/from a tournament or practice
- ◇ Special events (team bonding on overnight/weekend trips, birthdays, etc.)
- ◇ Help communicate changes to practice schedule or tournament schedule

## END OF SEASON ITEMS

### PLAYER END-OF-SEASON RELEASE

At the end of your team's season, Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will release you to another club to continue to play at a season-ending event should the opportunity arise. The other club director should contact Madison Starlings Volleyball Club to request permission. We will then discuss this with you, and alert the Badger Region that you have fulfilled your financial obligations to us and that you will be allowed to play with them.

### HOW TO BE A SUPPORTIVE PARENT/GUARDIAN

Youth programs cannot be successful without the support of parents/guardians. The following guidelines are for concerned parents/guardians as they strive to be supportive of their young athletes without being pushy.

1. Supportive parents/guardians focus on mastering sport skills and strategies rather than competitive rankings. Sport mastery focuses on performance, which can be controlled by the athlete, while competitive ranking focuses primarily on winning and losing, an outcome, which is frequently outside the athlete's control. An overemphasis on competitive rank and an under-emphasis on sports mastery is a primary cause of a dramatic drop-out rate in competitive sports by 12 to 18-year-olds.
2. Supportive parents/guardians decrease the pressure to win. Supportive parents/guardians realize that sport creates its own pressure to succeed. Additional pressure from the parent is likely to be counterproductive, particularly in the long run. Supportive parents/guardians avoid making the outcome of the game bigger than life. As a game or a competition becomes blown out of proportion, a youngster's self-esteem can become tied to winning or losing. A child should not feel less valuable or less loved when a match is lost.
3. Supportive parents/guardians believe that sport's primary value is the opportunity for self-development. The probability of achieving lasting fame and glory via sport is low. Many outstanding athletes never achieve professional status. However, their sports experiences have allowed them to develop life-long values, self-respect, and friendships.
4. Supportive parents/guardians understand the risks. Competition places the athlete on center stage. Competing is a willingness to risk failure. Giving your best is what athletics is all about.
5. Supportive parents/guardians communicate their true concerns directly with the coach/teacher. A positive working relationship is based upon clearly-communicated mutual goals among parents/guardians, coaches, and athletes. While a parent/guardian cannot control the behavior of a coach/teacher, they can communicate with the coach/teacher on a regular basis about the overall development of their athlete.
6. Supportive parents/guardians understand and respect the difference between parental/guardian roles and coaching roles. While parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for their athlete's development, once they have chosen a program/coach they must leave the coaching to the coach/teacher. Even though supportive parents/guardians often play sports with their athlete they avoid coaching "over the shoulder" of the coach/teacher and/or publicly questioning the coaching decisions.
7. Supportive parents/guardians control negative emotions and think positively. Few athletes wish to perform poorly. Negative reactions to poor performance only add to an athlete's pressures.
8. Supportive parents/guardians realize that even the athlete who "chokes" is trying to succeed. In fact, part of the problem with many athletes is that they are trying too hard to succeed. Criticizing such athletes does little to enhance their performances.
9. Supportive Parents/guardians KNOW HOW TO HELP YOUR ATHLETE DEAL WITH the FRUSTRATIONS OF TEAM SPORT - CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING: 1. How to deal with demanding coaches

and teammates. 2. How to be a cooperative team member. 3. How to make use of both positive and negative feedback. 4. How to cope with adversity. 5. How to achieve mental toughness. 6. How to be a gracious winner. 7. How to live with the eccentricities of coaches, teammates, and opponents.

## HOW TO BE A SUPPORTIVE PARENT/GUARDIAN

1. Be positive with your athlete. Let them know they are successful simply because they are a part of the TEAM.
2. Encourage your athlete to seek their own answers. If he/she is unsuccessful at working things out with his/her coach, schedule a meeting with the coach and have your athlete attend with you. (You may not be hearing the whole story - a very common occurrence)
3. Be supportive of the coaching staff. If you have questions or concerns please talk with the coach at the appropriate time. Never approach a coach with complaints after a tough game. Wait and schedule a visit after everyone cools off.
4. Be careful not to show animosity or jealousy toward any of your athlete's teammates. Many things will aggravate you that do not faze your athlete. Do not make something into an issue if it is not an issue. This type of attitude can rub off on your athlete and affect the whole team.
5. Please think before criticizing anyone connected with the club or your athlete's team. Criticism is contagious and openly harmful. The damage can be irreversible.
6. Do your physical part as a parent/guardian. Get your athlete to practice on time and pick them up promptly. Encourage your athlete to work hard, be smart, and to do his/her best in everything they attempt. You are a role model for your athlete.
7. Insist on your athlete's respect for TEAM rules, game officials, and sportsmanship. As a fan, you are entitled to your enthusiasm, but please do not be belligerent towards players, coaches or officials.
8. Visibly show that you enjoy watching your athlete perform; this will make them feel better about individual participation, no matter what the role.
9. Positions and talent sometimes do not match up. Coaches attempt to do what is best for the team, putting the best physical mix and best "chemistry" on the floor. That may mean that sometimes your athlete may be playing "out of position" in an attempt to strengthen the team. Stay positive and maybe your athlete will flourish.
10. Encourage your athlete to PLAY FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME, not for scholarship or something that is in the hands of college recruiters.





  
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