

Crossfire VBC

Parent/Player Information Manual

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The purpose of having a parent/player manual is to have you become familiar with Crossfire VBC policies, procedures and guidelines. Most of your questions can be answered in this manual. Keep this as an electronic copy for yourself, refer to it on-line at our club’s website, and/or print your own hard copy for your personal files.

Crossfire VBC Board

WELCOME and CLUB HISTORY

Welcome to the Crossfire VBC, which is a local, non-profit organization. The club functions under the guidelines of Badger Region Volleyball Association. The club is designed to meet the ever-changing needs of the area junior volleyball players, who want to play at various competitive levels and love the sport of volleyball!

Crossfire VBC was first established as a volleyball club in the fall of 2016. The previous name was Milton Aces Volleyball Club, which was founded in the fall of 2002 for the main purpose of promoting and developing competitive volleyball in the Milton area. This club started with two team age groups, one 14s and one 16s. Through the years, Milton Aces VBC grew from 20 female players and 3 coaches to over 100 participants. These past years we were able to offer different levels of play from developmental to highly competitive. During the 2016-17 season, we moved the club's status to a non-profit organization, and changed our name to Crossfire VBC for several reasons.

Our club uses the support of a volleyball Club Board to help the director and staff with club decisions and responsibilities. This board is made up of volunteers and parents who have an invested interest in the sport of volleyball and meet monthly. The club has an established website, crossfirevbc.com, club email, volleyball@crossfirevbc.com and a Facebook page, which is maintained throughout the year. This helps keep their members and local community informed of volleyball opportunities and activities within and outside of our club. Crossfire VBC donates money and/or equipment to area schools, where we practice, to improve facilities and equipment in appreciation for the use of their school gym space.

Crossfire VBC offers competitive levels of volleyball within each age group, from instructional to competitive traveling teams, starting at 12U to a 17/18 team. Teams compete against other club teams in the surrounding areas, from Madison to Wisconsin Dells to Milwaukee area, mostly within the Badger Volleyball Region Association. Teams also compete in the Rockford/Northern IL area, with occasional tournaments in other neighboring states. Tournaments allow for players to apply their talents and skills in a competitive setting against other highly skilled teams, players and clubs. Most tournaments are a full day commitment with multiple matches throughout the day against a variety of teams and competition level.

TEAM SELECTION AND TRYOUTS

Tryouts for 12-14s and under travel teams are scheduled in early October. The age groups of 15-17s (18s) must be the weekend following the state high school tournament. Tryout days will be used to determine the teams, and athletes should make every effort to be present for scheduled date(s). There is a separate Crossfire club tryout fee that is paid to Crossfire VBC, where the athlete receives a numbered tryout T-shirt. Badger Region **requires** all athletes trying out for Wisconsin volleyball clubs to register with Badger Region for their membership, and pay an initial \$10 (tryout) fee to their organization prior to any and all tryouts.

Our Crossfire VBC managers, tryout evaluators and coaches will make every effort to thoroughly and fairly evaluate all players. At the end of each day of tryouts, a team offer will be given to athletes selected to participate in the club, following Badger Region guidelines. "Initial Team Placements" will be notified by e-mail or handed a written offer at the tryout. The athlete will then have a few days to decide to accept/decline the offer with our club by contacting the club director, Bonnie Stalker, by email or text. Badger Region has strict tryout acceptance guidelines that every club must follow. Refer to their website for these dates of importance at badgervolleyball.org.

Once you accept our club's offer, this commits your child to our club for the season. You will need to go back to Badger Region's website, upgrade the full BR membership fee, and change your club of choice to Crossfire VBC. This is the only way Badger Region accepts your club commitment, so it must be done in timely manner following the email or text acceptance.

Registration, payment of fees and apparel/uniform orders are received at the required Kickoff' meeting, which is held following tryouts are completed. This is the first team meeting for the player, her/his team and their coach. It is important that the player and, at least, one parent be present. Tentative tournament and practice schedules will be handed out here.

ELITE/BLAZE vs REGIONAL/HEAT TEAMS

Crossfire VBC may offer a more competitive level for certain age groups. Crossfire presently offers "Elite/Blaze" teams at age groups 14s, 15s, 16s and 17s. These teams require an increased commitment of practices and tournaments, along with additional costs. Season length will be Dec-March/early April, with 4-5 single day tournaments combined with 2-3 multi-day tournaments, equaling 9-10 tournament dates. Sometimes more dates are added at an additional cost. Two practices a week (or a tournament plus one practice) will be scheduled for these teams.

Regional teams, or Crossfire "Heat" teams, are offered at all age levels, which offer minimum of one practice a week. 5-6 tournament dates for 12s & 13s, and 6-7 tournaments are scheduled for all others, from Jan-March. This is a great option for players with multiple commitments. Once tournaments begin in January, it may replace the weekly practice. Efforts will be made to add practices, whenever possible.

IGNITES DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

Our newest program is our Ignites program, which is for 3rd to 7th graders, who have a desire to develop their volleyball skills. This group will be a non-travel, but may host 1-2 scrimmages later in the season. They meet weekly for approximately 10-12 weeks from Dec-Feb. Individual competitive volleyball skills that are introduced and guided, include: overhand serving, passing, setting, spiking, and court play.

DUES, FEES, AND METHODS OF PAYMENTS

Once a player accepts the offer to our club and upgrades their Badger Region membership with Crossfire VBC as their club of choice, parents (guardians) are responsible for **full payment of all club dues and fees for the entire club season**. Accepting a spot with the club means acceptance of that financial responsibility to the club. There will be two payment dates for Regional teams. A third payment is added for the "Elite/Blaze" teams in early February. Each of these payments will be presented to the club in separate checks or payments at the Kickoff meeting in October/November.

Failure to pay on time may result in non-participation by the athlete. If you need an alternate payment schedule, please contact Bonnie Stalker, Club Director. The athlete will not participate in practices or tournaments until dues are paid up to date.

All travel, food, and lodging expenses are the responsibility of the individual families and are not covered by club fees/dues. All coaching fees are included in the club cost.

NO REFUND POLICY

When you accept an offer to participate, you accept the financial obligations for the entire club fee for that season. When teams are comprised, monies immediately go directly into jerseys, tournament entry, and other club fees. Our club's budget is based upon the number of participants per team to assist in covering the cost of coaches, practices, jerseys, tournaments and administrative fees.

Due to our non-profit 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 will be considered for athletes who are injured during the club season, on a case-by-case basis with a physician's letter. A written request must be given to our club director, Bonnie Stalker, prior to Feb 10, 2018, to be considered.

Badger Region Volleyball Association's Policy On Unpaid Player Dues

This is directly from the Badger Region Volleyball Association's Club Director Handbook:

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 restricted from registering or participating with the Region until the fees are paid. A letter requesting payment that includes the parent's name, 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. Club directors must notify the region office immediately when payment has been made and the hold will be taken off the player's membership in Webpoint.

UNIFORM POLICY

For the Elite/Blaze teams, two jerseys will be included in the club dues and sized at the beginning of each club season. One jersey is included for Regional/Heat teams. For tournament competition each player will be required to wear a team jersey, team matching spandex/shorts, team matching socks and court shoes. These items are available at various vendors, online and in sport stores. Any apparel accessories can be ordered at the parent/player fall Kickoff meeting. We recommend court shoes or volleyball shoes. Running shoes are considered unsafe for court play.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

We encourage our coaches and players and their families to communicate with each other on a regular basis. The use of electronic communication should be kept to the realm of volleyball, pertaining to practices, tournaments, and/or volleyball opportunities. **Personal issues or discussions should not be the topic of any communication**, via the use of cell phones (including texting), emails, and/or social networks, like Facebook, Snapchat or Twitter.

Communication between a player and a coach via electronic devices, such as phone or computer, should be kept professional and in no manner, at a social level. GroupMe, for example, is a great method to text to everyone at once, to save time and make sure everyone is receiving the same information. Any concerns and/or questions about playing time, coaching decisions or critiques, and/or emotional release should be avoided via these electronic methods. Refer to the Conflict Resolution Guidelines to follow appropriate procedures, if there are concerns.

SINGLE DATE AND OVERNIGHT TOURNAMENTS

Transportation to and from tournaments is the responsibility of the families. The team parent rep may arrange for car pooling, as needed. Coaches are not allowed to transport players, unless they are parents of the players.

Teams may have some overnight tournaments, but not required to stay overnight. The team parent rep in coordination with the club director, will set aside a block of rooms at a hotel for team families. It will be up to the parents to call, confirm and pay for their own rooms. Players are expected to stay with their parent/guardian or parents must make arrangements for their daughter/son's accommodations with another family.

Under no circumstances should a player stay overnight with a coach, unless that coach is a parent. A coach should never be alone with a player at any time. Use the "3+" rule, 2+ adults and a player or 2+ players and an adult. This is for the safety of all parties.

Coaches and/or team parent reps may set curfew times, team meetings, team meal time, site directions and distribute schedules for tournaments. The following actions may result

in serious consequences, and may include possible removal from the club and the Badger Region Volleyball Association:

1. alcohol, drug, or tobacco abuse
2. curfew violations
3. members of opposite gender in rooms (except for family), without supervision
4. repeated foul language, fighting and vandalism
5. unlawful conduct such as shoplifting or disorderly conduct
6. leaving the hotel or tournament without consent of the coach or without parents

PRACTICES

Practice sites include Milton High School, Milton Middle Schools, Northside Intermediate School and Edgerton Middle School. (Occasionally other practice sites may be added.) All athletes will have the opportunity to learn basic techniques for passing, setting, attacking, overhand serving, blocking, and digging skills. Movement and footwork patterns will also be emphasized. As the players move up in age divisions, strategies will expand and the athletes will learn more advanced offensive and defensive techniques.

Practices will be approximately 1½-2 hours and will include strength, agility, jump training, volleyball skill development and game play strategies. Many times the length of practice is dependent on the group using the gym before or after practice, along with athletes and teammates arriving ready to practice on time. Every effort will be made to hold a minimum of one practice each week for the regional teams, and twice a week (or a tournament plus a practice) for the Elite/Blaze teams.

Absences from practices **must be excused ahead of time**. The player or parent must contact the coach, **in advance**, if a practice must be missed. **Do not** send this information with another player to inform the coach. In case of injury, players are encouraged to continue to attend practices. When he/she is able to return to full participation, the player will be well informed and won't be so far behind her teammates.

Good attendance and participation in practices and tournaments is expected. Missing practices may influence a player's playing time, but more importantly, she may lack the confidence and knowledge necessary to perform on the court. It may also cause a great deal of frustration for the player and her teammates. Crossfire VBC has limited gym time available to them, which allows for very little flexibility. Practice and tentative tournament schedules will be presented at the Kickoff meeting and updated throughout the season via the coach and the website to assist in your master schedule. Please plan accordingly.

SCHOOL SPORT ATHLETES

Athletes who participate in school sports or other activities and also wish to play club volleyball have an added challenge of balancing these activities. It requires a special person to be organized and committed to these activities, but it can be done. Coaches expect that the athlete be honest and open about school sport/activity conflicts, so he/she can plan accordingly.

PLAYER MOVEMENT TO OTHER TEAMS

Movement between teams and/or levels within the club may be presented to the player and parents by the Club Director and coaches based on the following reasons:

1. Player on a top team cannot meet the expectations of that team either by attendance, work ethic, commitment, conflict with other commitments and/or attitude.
2. A player's skill level has risen to the next level and space is available on a more competitive team for a tournament or for the remainder of the season.
3. Teams are in need of players because of injuries or commitment changes.
4. Players may benefit from additional playing time or playing at a different level.
 - *Note: Movement is contingent upon available space and parent consent since such a movement may involve a change in fees.*

PLAYING TIME

The goals of Crossfire VBC are to provide an opportunity for athletes to improve individually and as a team player, to be competitive, and to have fun. Volleyball has evolved through the years, and there is a lot to learn. This is taught through practices and team competitions. The tournaments will give athletes the game playing experience that is vital to the development and understanding of the game as well as to apply the skills learned in practice. Athletes and parents should see growth as a volleyball player, which may not be reflected in the team's win/loss record.

It is the decision of the coach, with additional input from the club staff, who earns a spot in the line-up on his/her team and how he/she develops each player into becoming an integral part of the team. Each player's role on the team is different, but all are important. We keep 9-11 players on each team to ensure repetition and quality coach attention with each player. With that being said, it is our professional experience that often, the younger players are more closely matched in skill level and ability, thus it is easier to substitute players. As teams advance, some positions, due to the nature of volleyball, will have more playing time than others. Other factors that are taken into consideration include attendance, effort in practices and games, level of performance, and receptiveness to coaching. Playing time is up to the coach's discretion and not based upon the dues you paid.

Parents and your daughter/son are encouraged to talk to the coach, if there are questions about playing time, skill progress, etc. Concerns by parents, player and/or coach should be brought forward following procedures under Conflict Resolution Guidelines and **always** away from the rest of the team. A conference can be arranged, if necessary, after discussion/decision by the coach is not satisfactory. Parents should then contact the Crossfire board parent rep, followed by the director, who will decide if further action needs to be taken.

BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS

In the event that Milton or Edgerton schools close due to weather conditions, all club practices for that evening will be cancelled. Please check the school district's web page, listen to WJVL-WCLO, WSJY, or TV channels 3, 15, or 27 or gazettextra.com for school cancellations and/or these radio, and TV or websites. If a weekend practice or tournament is cancelled, each team's coach and/or team parent will also contact each player and/or family member. We will post any information on the club website, crossfirevbc.com and our Facebook page, as soon as it is communicated to the webmaster and FB manager. It is rare that a tournament is cancelled, but if travel is dangerous, most tournaments will not penalize clubs. **Please use your own judgment when no information is received or available. Safety is of the utmost priority.**

FUNDRAISING and SCHOLARSHIPS

We will do our best each season to try to have opportunities for individuals and teams to raise funds toward helping defray the individual's or team cost of club dues and fees. This is dependent on who will help and coordinate options for players and their families. Any other club fundraisers, during the season, would help keep the cost of the club to a minimum or to purchase equipment for the facilities that the club uses. Suggestions and ideas are welcome. Fundraising events can be a part of team/parent bonding and fun for all! These type of activities will vary from year to year.

Sponsorships by businesses are always welcomed by the club, at various levels of donation, such as, advertisement on backs of t-shirts, tournament programs, Facebook and/or club website. **Donations** can be accepted as a tax deduction, since we are a non-profit organization. Individuals and/or businesses can request our tax ID number with a donation to Crossfire VBC.

If your family is in need or wishes to discuss options to "**scholarship**" your child or extend your payments, please speak with one of our directors, confidentially, as soon as possible. We do want a child to not participate due to inability to pay fees! We can make arrangements for additional time to volunteer (parent or player) at our tournament, assist coach with the younger players/teams, or spend extra time at fundraiser events to defray the cost of participation. Some seasons we offer opportunities to sell merchandise and/or coupon cards for individual profit toward their fees. See our club director for more information or to make arrangements for these volunteer activities.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

Being part of a club is a big responsibility not only for the athlete, but for the parents as well. Parents are expected to pay dues on time and make sure the athlete is at practices and tournaments, prepared to play. This may be accomplished by car-pooling and communicating with the team's parent rep and coach, but ultimately the parent is responsible for the athlete's transportation.

As parents, you are role models for your children. **Good sportsmanship** should always be the number one priority by the player AND the parents/families. ***All players are expected to stay the full day at tournaments until the team's responsibilities have been fulfilled, which includes officiating responsibilities. Any player leaving without consent of her coach will be sanctioned by reduced playing time at the next tournament.***

All parents need to read and sign the USAV/Badger Region Volleyball Spectator-Parent Code of Conduct in order to attend tournaments. These behavioral guidelines help to address the expectations related to being a parent and/or spectator at volleyball events. It is a commitment to support a positive environment for all players, coaches, referees and other spectators. We want everyone to be able attend these activities without concerns of negative comments or actions that can get out of hand. It is the healthiest way to encourage good competition and a positive playing environment.

Crossfire VBC also requires some volunteer time during the season, assisting the coach, team parent rep, board member or toward the annual tournament that is hosted in Milton.

VOLUNTEERING & TEAM PARENT REP

Crossfire VBC requires that parents volunteer their time during the season, toward the annual tournament that is hosted in Milton. The club hosts a tournament every year over a weekend, all day Saturday and Sunday. This tournament is a huge fundraiser for the club that allows the fees and dues to stay low and reasonable. It is the responsibility of parents to help in some way, either before the tournament or at the tournament. See list below to consider other volunteer options.

If you cannot volunteer your time, or choose not to, there is a \$75 waiver that can be paid in lieu of. A postdated check will be collected at the parent/player Kickoff meeting in October/November, that will be returned upon completion of the obligation. Procedure for this will be explained at the fall meeting.

Another opportunity to volunteer is as a team parent or a member of the club's board. Please consider becoming your team's parent rep (see below) at the parent/player Kickoff meeting at the beginning of the season.

At the season Kickoff parent/player meeting, each team **MUST** select a PARENT REP before the end of the meeting. If you are interested in helping out as a team parent rep volunteer, then complete the Team Parent Rep form available through your coach. Hand into the club designee, Scott Moe, our Board's Parent Rep.

TEAM PARENT RESPONSIBILITY EXAMPLES:

- **communicate** often with the club's parent board representative and coach(s)
- organize a calling/text/phone tree and e-mail connections for team
- organize car-pooling, as needed
- help out with sending photos and team pictures to our webmaster
- distribute handouts to players/parents (e.g. forms, tournament information, travel information, etc.)

- assist coach as needed and/or requested by coach or director
- assist in distributing apparel and uniform packages to your team
- team events, dinners and/or parties, as needed
- help make hotel arrangements for the team's families for overnight tournaments
- assist at tournaments, as needed
- other duties to assist the coach with communication
- assist in organization of end of the season celebration/fundraiser
- bring any team/parent concerns to the board parent rep, confidentially

CONFLICT RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

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

The following guidelines have been established to protect the players, coaches and parents from uncomfortable and inappropriate situations when it comes to the professional discussion and handling of grievances. The coaches within Crossfire VBC have been instructed to adhere to these guidelines to better maintain the club/player/parent relationship, which is of the utmost importance!

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

1. The athlete should speak with the coach regarding the matter, whenever possible;
2. If the matter remains unresolved and there is a legitimate concern, the parent AND athlete should request to meet with the coach. Coaches will ONLY meet with parents when the athlete is present, and not at a tournament.
3. Please do not confront a coach directly before, during or after an event. Arrange to meet with your coach at a convenient time for all parties. It is recommended that it be directly before or after practice;
 - a. If a parent approaches a coach, emotionally, during a tournament, we have instructed our coaches to refuse to discuss the situation at that moment, to refer the parent to our club director, Bonnie Stalker, or Board Parent rep, Scott Moe, and walk away;
 - b. We also instruct our coaches not to get involved in a texting conversation or negative emails. Each of these can be misinterpreted with hidden feelings and misunderstandings, which can create a bigger problem. You may send an email that you have concerns, followed by a request to meet with your coach, in person.
4. If the matter still remains unresolved, the parent can request a meeting with the club director, along with the coach and the player. **THE PLAYER MUST BE PRESENT AT THIS MEETING.**

HOW TO BE A GREAT FAN

We are asking parents and fans of the Crossfire VBC program to:

- ✓ *encourage good sportsmanship*
- ✓ *honor and understand the commitment*
- ✓ *be supportive, but not critical*
- ✓ *promote hard work*
- ✓ *not coach from the sidelines*
- ✓ *use only positive words and phrases to cheer during matches*
- ✓ *help to create a positive sports climate*
- ✓ *communicate concerns privately and directly to the coach and club leaders*

USAV/Badger Region Volleyball SPECTATOR/PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

You are required to **read and sign the Badger Region Spectator/parent Code of Conduct**, which was developed by our USA Volleyball national and state organizations. Print your name and sign at the bottom of the sheet and turn this document into your team parent rep or coach during the Kickoff meeting at the beginning of the season.

Thank you for being supportive of your daughter/son, her/his team and our club!

If you have questions, concerns or comments, please see your coach, your team parent rep, a board member, or the club director, Bonnie Stalker. Our webmail via the website, volleyball@crossfirevbc.com is a confidential contact for Crossfire VBC.