

SMJ Handbook

2019 - 2020



About Us

Southern Maryland Juniors (SMJ) Volleyball is a non-profit Junior Olympic Volleyball club that began in Calvert County, Maryland over twenty years ago. Two people with a passion for Junior Girls Volleyball, Cheryl Lord and Dave Rodeffer, began a program designed to improve the skill level of young girls, bolster the high school volleyball programs, and prepare players for college level play. That philosophy continues today at Southern Maryland Juniors. Coaches selected for SMJ's have had previous experience either as players on the collegiate level or prior coaching experience in the secondary schools. SMJ's is affiliated and insured with the Chesapeake Region Volleyball Association (CHRVA) and USA Volleyball (USAV). Coaches must have IMPACT and SafeSport Training through USAV and are strongly encouraged to pursue training beyond the minimum requirements.

The goals of our club are to:

- Improve the skill level, sportsmanship, and character of young girls involved with volleyball
- Bolster the high school volleyball programs in Southern Maryland by focusing on volleyball fundamentals and competing in USAV tournaments
- Develop positive relationships between players, coaches, and parents

SMJ's Mission Statement

We believe that every child should be offered the opportunity to develop skills that will enable them to excel and compete successfully at the interscholastic, regional and/or national level. We are a community-based non-profit organization committed to training and developing student athletes through competitive participation in the sport of volleyball. We strive to provide a solid foundation of fundamental and technical skills to help participants develop, not only as athletes, but also as individuals. Teaching positive lifelong character traits including sportsmanship, leadership, and cooperation are important to the success of our teams. We are committed to providing the best possible environment for our volleyball players to reach their maximum playing potential through excellence in coaching and community support. Our players will be challenged to excel not only for their own personal growth, but also for the betterment of their team, the organization and their communities.

Team Selection

Teams will be comprised of selected players who are willing and able to contribute and subscribe to the rules, philosophies and goals of each team. An average of 11 players will be chosen based on skill level, athletic ability, attitude, and ability to understand roles as well as the concept of being a team player.

Tuition

The tuition each player pays covers expenses related to the operation of the team and entry into tournaments. SMJ's bases its fee on the expected cost of running a successful club volleyball program in a given year. The membership fee covers the following:

- Facility rental costs
- Tournament entry fees
- Travel and rooming expenses for coaches
- Uniform (warm-up jacket, 2 jerseys, 2 pair of spandex)
- Coaching Staff
- Training equipment
- Administrative costs and supplies
- Web site maintenance fees
- Miscellaneous expenses

In addition to membership fees, players will be required to pay for:

- \$25 tryout fee
- USAV membership
- Travel & miscellaneous expenses
- Scorekeeping and refereeing certifications

Fees will not be refunded for players who choose to leave before the end of the season. Fees do not cover expenses for travel, hotel accommodations or food a player may need during a tournament. SMJ's will accept credit card payments online via our web site.

Age Group	Upon Acceptance	January 15	February 15	March 15	Total
13 and Under	\$450	\$450	\$350		\$1,250.00*
14 and Over	\$450	\$450	\$450	\$400	\$1,750.00*

*** A \$100 credit will be applied for players who pay in full by January 1st.**

This would therefore reduce the tuition down to \$1,150 (13 and Under) and \$1,650 (14 and Over).

Any payment received after the 15th of the month will be considered "late" and a late fee of \$25.00 will be applied to the balance. Any checks returned due to insufficient funds will be charged a \$30.00 fee. All accounts must be current for players to participate in any practices or tournaments.

Coaching and Playing Philosophy

It is our philosophy that practices are the time to improve skills and work on new concepts. The fundamentals, which are emphasized initially through positional training and small group work, are used to develop proficient offensive and defensive tactics. Teams will be staffed with coaches who promote fairness, high work ethic, integrity and good sportsmanship. Coaches are responsible for establishing this environment and supporting the enhancement of players' volleyball skills, leadership abilities, teamwork and individual development on and off the court.

A continual source of frustration for players and parents alike is the issue of playing time. The reality is that equal playing time is not a guarantee. It is important that players and parents accept the principle that **players pay to train, not to play. Playing time is not a given; it is earned first by hard work, positive attitude, and display of skills on the practice court.** This is USA Volleyball, not Parks and Rec. Playing time will often be determined based on the skill level of players at their respective positions.

During tournament play, the coach has the right to determine the line-up that he or she determines is best-suited to meet the goals of the particular level of participation. An "equal play philosophy" does not apply in many situations. It is each player's responsibility to perform at a level that is consistent in keeping with the goals of the team. If the player does not fulfill their obligations on the court, it is the coach's right to substitute them so that the team may achieve its goals. Players are expected to perform certain roles on the bench as well, which greatly contribute to the success of the team.

If a player believes that she is not being treated fairly and playing an appropriate amount, the **PLAYER** should discuss this with the coach. In reaching our goal to educate players in life skills outside of volleyball, we feel it is important for players to create and maintain a good dialogue with their coaches, regardless of age. We believe that the parent's role is one of support to the players, coaches, and club. Parents should not "coach" from the sidelines, criticize players, coaches or game officials, or try to influence the makeup or operation of the team at any time.

- Parents are not to approach coaches regarding team issues. We encourage player communication with their coaches.
- If a parent feels that he or she must address a situation, they are permitted to contact the coach 24 hours after the last game of a tournament to discuss their concerns. Parents should schedule an appointment with the coach at a mutually agreeable time, typically before or after a practice.
- At no time should a parent approach the coach during a game. No parent should come onto the court for any reason during competition.

Tournament Information

Tournament information will be communicated to players and parents by coaches or a parent representative. It will also be posted on the SMJ website as teams are approved for entry. Pool play schedules will be made available as soon as possible, but typically this will only be a few days prior to the tournament. A head coach may elect to utilize a Parent Rep for the team, and one of the responsibilities of the Parent Rep will be to disseminate this information to the team.

Officiating & Scorekeeping

Officiating and Scorekeeping is the shared responsibility of the entire team. Based on USAV rules, athletes are required to attend a scorekeeper and/or referee clinic and to help with line judging, scorekeeping, and officiating. The team must remain at the tournament site until all work assignments are completed and/or they are excused by the coach. Exceptions will only be approved by the coach prior to the tournament date.

Conduct at Tournament/Practice Sites

As a member of the volleyball community, it is the intent of SMJ's to lead by example. These guidelines are set forth to protect the safety and integrity of the athletes, parents, coaches, and the club. Please note that not all circumstances can be accounted for and some situations may be addressed individually by the Club Director.

- "Conduct Unbecoming of an Athlete" will not be tolerated at any SMJ function. This covers a wide variety of circumstances. For example, not being a team player, fighting with fellow team members, the use of foul language or rude gestures towards teammates, other athletes, parents, coaches, officials or opponents.
- Officiating is the shared responsibility of the entire team. Based on USAV rules, athletes are required to attend a scorekeeper or referee clinic and to help with line judging, scorekeeping and officiating. We want to officiate other teams the way we would want to be officiated. This means no headphones or cell phones use. **Pay attention to the game and take your work assignment seriously.**
- The team must remain on site until all work assignments are completed, and everyone is excused by the coach. Exceptions will only be approved by the coach in advance.
- You are to support your teammates at all times while on the team bench, whether you are playing in a particular match or not.
- Parents are to be supportive of the entire team at all times. Parents are not to engage in any behavior that would reflect negatively on SMJ's. Guidelines for parents are no different from players in this regard, and the same consequences can be put into place for an athlete due to parents' behavior.
- Only the Team Captain (under the direction of the Head Coach) or the Head Coach may question an official.
- If multiple SMJ teams are playing at the same tournament site, they are encouraged to watch and cheer for each other.

Team Representative Responsibilities

Each team may have a representative who serves as the liaison between the club director, coaching staff, and parents. Please let the head coach know if you are interested in being the Team Representative. Listed below are some of the responsibilities of the Team Rep.

- Act as a liaison between the coach and the parents. Communicates regularly with the coach and informs the team of changes in practice times, tournament schedule changes, and any other information that needs to be distributed to the team.
- Assists in the ordering and distribution of team uniforms and apparel.
- Prepares and maintains a team directory for all parents with names of players and parents, address, email addresses, and phone numbers.
- Coordinates the food list for tournaments (optional).
- Coordinates team parties, bonding activities, etc.
- Encourages team and club spirit!

Travel Policies

Transportation to and from all practices and tournaments is the responsibility of the parents.

- Players who have their driver's license may drive themselves to practices and single day tournaments (with parental approval), but may not drive alone to multi-day tournaments.
- Be sure to bring all jerseys and spandex, kneepads, socks, shoes, large water bottle or jug. Single day tournaments are held on weekends at various sites in MD, DC, VA & DE and typically last all day.
- Playing venues for single-day tournaments are normally within two hours of the Prince Frederick.
- Coaches will set arrival times, but plan to arrive before 8:00am and play or work until at least 5:00pm.
- Some multi-day events are Stay-To-Play events, meaning the girls are required to stay in event-approved overnight accommodations in order to play.
- SMJ's will secure blocks of rooms for the entire team and their families. If the parent is not able to attend, it is his/her responsibility to find a chaperone for their child and inform the coach in advance.
- If your team is attending a multi-day tournament that requires overnight stays, there will be rules set up by the coach and team rep. It is expected that you will abide by all of the rules, curfews, etc. that are made and that you will respect the coaches and parents who enforce them.

Club Rules for Practices and Tournaments

This is a general list of SMJ rules. Players and parent must also abide by rules established by CHRVA, USA Volleyball, and AAU. Teams may have their own rules which will be established by the coach and approved by the club director.

- Do NOT bring valuables to practices or tournaments. SMJ's is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- **Parents are responsible for the behavior and conduct of all minors accompanying them to practice locations** or any other venue that SMJ teams may play, including compliance with all rules and regulations of the facility.
- Only plastic water bottles and sport bottles are permitted in the courts area.
- No food or chewing gum is permitted on the court areas.
- NO ONE is allowed on court surfaces except participants who are current CHRVA members.
- Trash, garbage, and refuse shall be placed in the containers provided for this purpose.
- Footwear for all participants must be NON-MARKING rubber soled sports shoes.
- No foul, abusive, racial or derogatory language or inappropriate physical behavior will be tolerated.
- Any participant or spectator exhibiting inappropriate behavior will be ordered to leave the facility.
- Conduct within the facility should be in the spirit of good sportsmanship in the stands as well as on the court. Players or parents caught exhibiting poor sportsmanship will be asked to leave the facility immediately.

- Any person causing damage to the property of any of our rented facilities shall be held accountable and must reimburse SMJ's, in full, for all repair or replacement expenses arising from such conduct.
- Players must have appropriate health insurance throughout the season.
- Any person injured during an SMJ-sanctioned activity must notify a Director or Coach prior to leaving the facility.

Grievance Procedures

This procedure is designed to help athletes and parents with questions, concerns or problems that may occur during the course of the season. It ensures open and honest communication between all parties involved.

- **24-hour rule:** If a parent has a concern arising from a tournament or practice that needs to be addressed they must wait at least 24 hours after the conclusion of the event to discuss the issue with the coach. Under no circumstance should a parent approach a coach or other club staff at a tournament site.
- The athlete must first ask the coach for a meeting to discuss the issue at hand. In the case of players on 13's or younger teams, the parents may request the meeting.
- If the issue is unresolved, the parents may ask for a meeting between themselves, the athlete, and the coach to discuss the issue. The meeting should take place at a location and time agreed upon by both the parent and coach – NOT at a tournament or during a practice.
- If the issue is still unresolved, the parent may ask for a meeting with the club director, coach and athlete. A scheduled time away from practice or a tournament is appropriate. The decision of the Club Director at this point is FINAL.
- The athlete should be present during these meetings.

Attendance

We understand that not all players can be at every practice, but it is important to player and team development to attend every possible practice. 24-hours (or more) notice to your coach is expected when you know you will miss practice. Missing practice will be considered excused for events which are out of the control of the player's family such as school and religious events and illness. Injured players are excused from participating in practices and tournaments, but they should attend to learn and support their teammates. Players are allowed to play school sports, but they should provide their coaches with practice times and game dates. Attending school sporting events on club tournament dates may affect a player's participation at future club tournaments. It must be understood that missing practices and/or tournaments does not signify full commitment to the team and its goals. Missing practices will also prevent players from improving, and that could ultimately playing time at tournaments. Coaches may establish additional requirements and consequences for tardiness and absence.

The SMJ Web Site

The club's website is www.smjrvbc.org. Facility closing and cancelations will be posted to the website by 4:00pm on the day of practice or event. Coaches will typically also notify the players/parents via email or text. If Calvert County Schools are closed or if after school activities are cancelled due to inclement weather, SMJ practices will also be cancelled. In addition to the website, we have found that email/text is an effective way to communicate information. We ask that you provide coaches with email addresses and cell phone numbers for parents and players. All tournament and practice schedules will be posted on our website and we recommend getting in the habit of checking the website on a daily basis. It will be every player's responsibility to check the website and their email DAILY to look for changes/cancellations that may occur.

Southern Maryland Juniors and its coaches will assist college-bound players who wish to play volleyball at the collegiate level. Please let your coaches know if you are interested in pursuing volleyball in college.

Parent/Player Signature Page

Parent

My daughter and I have read the "SMJ Parent/Player Handbook" concerning the policies and practices of SMJ. We have read the information provided and understand the time and commitment involved with the practice and competition schedule. **I have reviewed the fee schedule and agree to pay my daughter's tuition in full regardless of the duration of her participation this season.** Understanding the stipulations and having discussed these with our child, I agree to and will support her participation in the Southern Maryland Juniors program.

By signing below, I confirm that I have read, understand and will abide by the rules, guidelines and policies of the SMJ Parent/Player Handbook. I agree to make tuition payments in the amounts and per the schedule outlined herein. I understand that the failure to meet this financial obligation will affect my daughter's participation in SMJ practices and tournaments. I understand that my signature is required by the SMJ coaching staff for my child's participation and to ensure an enjoyable and successful USA Volleyball season.

Parent Name (PRINT): _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Player

I, as the athlete of Southern Maryland Juniors, have read the "SMJ Parent/Player Handbook" concerning the policies and practices of SMJ Volleyball and agree to follow these policies. I understand the commitment I am making to SMJ and that if I should choose not to follow the policies as expressed above and any additional boundaries set forth by my coach, my playing time may be restricted and I risk further consequences with SMJ.

Player's Name (PRINT): _____

Player's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Photograph Consent

By signing above, I also authorize the use of my photograph or likeness on the Southern Maryland Juniors website. I agree to waive any present or future claim for compensation or consideration. I also waive my right to inspect or approve the finished product.