

2014 PRE-SEASON INFORMATION

TO: *Great Plains Region Members*

8-28-13

Below is a synopsis of changes for the upcoming season. Refer to the handbook for a complete listing of all regulations.

The 2014 membership season begins on September 1, 2013. The 2013 season ends on August 31, 2013, but your 2013 membership is valid through October 31, 2013.

All forms, documents and information noted below will be available on the Great Plains website on September 1.

New for 2014:

1. The **2014 Great Plains Region handbook** will be available on September 1 on the Great Plains website under the General tab.
2. **UPDATED COMPETITION DIVISION NAMES** – Tournament names will revert to Gold, Silver, and Split Session as the level of tournaments we offer. See the 2013 Great Plains Region handbook for more detail.
 - (1) **GOLD** tournaments will play match play. **Entry fee - \$175**
 - (a) Match play is best 2 out of 3 sets to 25 points. (Deciding set to 15)
 - (b) Teams must be guaranteed a minimum of four (4) matches.
 - (c) All matches (best 2 of 3) will require a coin flip to determine the serving team.
 - (d) All tournaments will have region assigned **paid referees**, unless the tournament requests not to have referees.
 - (2) **SILVER** tournaments will play 2 sets of 18 points in round robin pool play. **Entry fee - \$110**
 - (a) Teams must be guaranteed a minimum of eight (8) sets.
 - (b) Each team will start with seven points.
 - (c) All sets will end at twenty five points with a team needing a two point advantage to win.
 - (d) If a deciding set is necessary in bracket play, the set shall be played from 0 – 15 points.
 - (e) Determination of the serving team for pool play in Silver tournaments can be determined at the tournament director's discretion as stated on the tournament information sheet.
 - (f) There are no tie breaker matches played after pool play to determine pool finish or bracket placement in Silver.
 - (3) **SPLIT SESSION** (Saturday only) tournaments will offer a morning and an afternoon session. **Entry fee - \$80**
 - (a) Teams are guaranteed a minimum of six (6) sets.
 - (b) Pool play may or may not be followed by a tournament bracket.
 - (c) If sets are played to a lesser number of points, each team will start with seven points.
 - (d) There are no tie breaker matches played after pool play to determine pool finish or bracket placement in split session tournaments.
 - (e) All sets and tournament brackets must be finished within a 6 hour time frame.
 - (f) Teams are not guaranteed to play in a specific session.
 - (4) All tournament directors are required to notify the Great Plains Region office of any changes in published format prior to the beginning of the tournament. All changes will be posted on the Region website.
3. All **GOLD** tournaments will have region assigned **paid referees**, unless the tournament requests not to have referees. The price per tournament does not change if paid referees are not used. Tournaments not using referees will be noted in advance on the printable tournament schedule.
4. **NEW TOURNAMENT REQUEST APPLICATION** - There is a new tournament request application that will reflect the new levels of tournaments being offered.

- a. Deadline to request tournament dates is September 27.
 - i. Tournament requests turned in before the deadline require a \$10 application fee.
 - ii. Tournament requests turned in after the deadline require a \$25 fee.
 - iii. NO DEPOSIT CHECKS REQUIRED FOR THIS SEASON
 - b. Further information is available in the Tournament Directors pre-season letter.
5. The **Regional tournament** for 10's - 14's will be held on **Saturday March 29**. The Regional tournament for 15's - 18's will be on **Sunday March 30**.
 6. The **Bid tournament** for 12's – 18's will be on **Sunday May 4**.
 7. All **teams that qualify for the USA Junior National Championships** (whether through the region bid tournament or at a USAV National Qualifier) will receive some reimbursement from the region. A specific amount has been budgeted. The exact amount each team will receive will be determined based on the total number of teams that qualify. Reimbursements will be sent at the conclusion of the National Championships.
 8. There is a **NEW rulebook** (Domestic Competition Regulations, formerly the USAV rulebook) for the 2013-2015 seasons. (Two year cycle)
 9. The use of the Libero has been modified per the new 2013-2015 rulebook. The following options will be available when designating your Libero(s) for a match:
 - a. A team may choose to use either two(2) Liberos for the **MATCH OR**
 - b. A team may choose to designate one(1) Libero per **SET**.
 - c. The Libero may serve in one position.
 10. **Solid colored uniform requirement** – It is recommended now and required beginning **September 1, 2014** (next season), the Libero and/or his/her teammates shall wear a solid colored uniform top. For further explanation, refer to page 58 in the 2013-2015 DCR (rulebook).
 11. For all Great Plains sanctioned tournaments, a **rostered adult** (coach or other rostered adult member) **must be the R1 or R2** on every match.
 - a. If the rostered adult is the R1, then a player may assist in other roles.
 - b. If the rostered adult wants to be the R2, a player may be the R1.
 12. Each team that is planning to attend a qualifying event will be required to have **players that are certified as referees and scorers**. More information will be sent out around October 1st with coach officiating requirements and player certifications.

CONTINUING REGION POLICIES

Note to all 14 & older high school players:

1. Many clubs and facilities are offering scrimmages, clinics and training opportunities during the fall High School season. If you are in high school and play on any level team for your school, make sure you know the NSAA policies on outside participation during your sport season. (www.nsaahome.org)

2. The **registration fee for junior players** (12-18) will be \$63. The registration fee for all adults affiliated with a junior team is \$62, if paying by credit card. The fee for any coach or player paying by cash or check is \$60.
3. **IMPACT CERTIFICATION FOR ALL COACHES** – All Junior age and adult coaches must be IMPACT certified before they are eligible to coach.
4. **TRYOUT POLICY** - The Great Plains Region tryout policy was revised last season. The tryout date was replaced with a signing/commitment date. Players cannot formally commit to a club/team until they have signed the official Letter of Intent that will be sent out just prior to the signing date.
 - a. The **commitment date for 10 – 14** age groups is the first Saturday in November (which this year will be November 2, 2013).
 - b. The **commitment date for 15 – 18** age groups is the Sunday after the completion of the Nebraska State High School Volleyball Championships (which this year will be November 17, 2013).
 - c. If a club holds tryouts and want it posted on the website, tryout information should be completed and returned to the office prior to the club's tryout date. There is no fee for reporting your tryout date. A club does not need to have tryouts.
 - d. Tryouts may not start before 8:00 am. The facility may open one hour prior.
 - e. Commitment forms or letters of intent cannot be signed by players or parents/guardians (and therefore are not binding) until the first tryout/commitment date for a specific age division.
 - f. A sample letter of intent for use by clubs/teams can be found on the Great Plains website in the forms section.
 - g. Clubs do not have to use the form to commit their players, but no other contract/form will be recognized by the region.
5. **PRE-SEASON CLUB DEPOSITS**

Great Plains policy states the Region is not responsible for any financial transactions between a player and a club at any time. If a club chooses to accept a deposit from a player to hold a position in a club, that is a transaction between a parent and the club. Parents should use due diligence in deciding which club is the best for their child before putting down a deposit. Additional club assurances are also not controlled by the Region. (For example, additional practices required before being placed on a team, no prior knowledge of assigned team or coach, etc).
6. **USA VOLLEYBALL INSURANCE**

One of the benefits of your Great Plains Region/USA Volleyball membership is liability insurance coverage for players and facilities while participating in a sanctioned USAV event. Sanctioned events can include, but are not limited to tryouts, practices, and tournaments. Travel to and from a sanctioned event is also covered. Injuries that occur at sanctioned events are covered by a secondary sports accident policy. This policy normally covers additional costs related to the injury that are not covered by your primary insurance coverage. Incident report forms and medical claim forms are posted on the Juniors Forms page of the Great Plains Region website. These forms need to be completed by the club director or tournament director at the time of the incident. Only registered members are covered by these insurance policies.
7. **SANCTIONED EVENTS** – Any event may be sanctioned by the Great Plains region. This includes open gyms, clinics, practices, and tournaments. In order for your event to be

sanctioned, ALL participants MUST be registered with the region or a region of USA Volleyball. The Great Plains Region must also KNOW of this event. See the Great Plains Region handbook for more information.

- a. For insurance purposes, all facilities used by a club/team for practice, open gym, clinics must be listed on the club profile form.
- b. Tournaments in the Great Plains Region may not start before 8:00 am and must end by 8:30 pm.

8. **CLUB AFFILIATION DATE** – Club affiliation for the current season begins when the player signs a letter of intent or commits to a club and ends after the last day of competition for that age division at the USA Volleyball Girl's Junior National Championships. Membership with the region remains through the end of October of the current season.
9. **Club Directors** must be registered members before their Club profile is accepted.
10. **Member Registration for Preseason Clinics** - As long as you have completed your online registration application, you are not required to pay your region membership before tryouts/commitment date. You may print your registration confirmation to take to clinics or tryouts/commitment date. Once you have been selected for a team, you will then log back into your account and pay for the membership. You can also go back to your main info tab and select your club name if you initially chose 'undecided'. You may still pay for the membership when you register. All refund policies are still in effect.
11. The Region is still offering the 2 new registration categories from last year: **8 & under, membership is free** and college player (only), membership is \$15. (An adult player that registers under the college player membership must be currently enrolled in a college. This membership is for players only. If a college player wants to coach a junior team, they must upgrade to a full membership.)
12. All players and coaches must be registered before participating in sanctioned events. If a member realizes they cannot begin the season, a refund may be requested by using a form on the Great Plains website under the General Information tab. Requests for refunds must be made by December 31. Requests for refunds after December 31 may be granted, if requested within 30 days of membership activation.
 - a. Any registered player that has participated in practices is not eligible for a refund even though they were not able to play during the season.
 - b. The entire refund policy can be found on the Great Plains website under the General Information tab.
13. The charge for a background screening is included in all memberships and is not an additional cost paid by the individual member. Memberships that require a USAV background screening are adults affiliated with a junior programs, officials and chaperones/parents. Anyone registered as a Chaperone/Parent may not sit on any team bench during competition, but may help the team with officiating duties and team warm-ups. Background screenings are required every two years.
14. Some tournaments will charge an **admission fee**. If a tournament charges an admission fee, the fee must be stated on the tournament sanction request form when the tournament is sanctioned. The admission fee will be noted on the tournament schedule.

15. Team Name Requirements – Attention Club Directors. When deciding on your team name for this season, you must include the following minimum information in the team name. Club Name and Age Level. If the team rank is used in the team name, it must match the team rank in the team code. Example: Club Name 14-2 (or 142). You may include other identifiers in the name (i.e., coach's name, team name, etc.) if you want.
16. A team cannot be reactivated if it has the same team code as a currently activated team.
17. If a club has a considerable number of teams, the club director can contact Bill Stanley, the registrar, to assist in setting up the team names and team codes. Just send an email with the team names and the respective team rank.
18. Team names cannot change after January 1, 2014.
19. **Uniform numbers** are required when adding a player to a roster
20. There is a section on the website for clubs and facilities to list **pre-season clinics, open gyms and tryouts**.
21. **Tournament Directors** must be registered members before tournament applications will be accepted.
 - a. All tournament staff and personnel must be registered members.
22. **Coaches officiating requirements** will be sent approximately October 1. Excellent videos and other information for your training your players how to officiate can be found on www.volleyballreftraining.com

REGISTRATION

1. The start date for the 2014 USA Volleyball season is September 1. When you register, you will be able to print your membership card once the membership is activated. Activation is immediate if using a credit card. When paying by cash or check, the membership will not be activated until the money is received. Make sure to print this card or membership confirmation if you are attending tryouts. Memberships expire on October 31, 2014 regardless of when you registered for the current season.
2. ALL individuals are required to register and pay their membership fees directly to the Great Plains Region office. This includes players, coaches, chaperones, club directors & officials. Checks will not be accepted from clubs to pay for multiple player or coach registrations. There are no papers to print or send to the office. If a check is mailed for an individual's membership, the check should include in the member's name in the memo section. If mailing a check, don't forget to deduct your \$2/3.00 cash discount.
3. Registration fees:
 - a. Credit cards will be accepted for membership registration. Instructions for use can be found on the website. A discount will be given for cash payments.
 - b. The registration fee for junior players (12-18) will be \$63. The registration fee for all adults affiliated with a junior team is \$62, if paying by credit card. The fee for players or coaches paying by cash or check is \$60.
 - c. There is a reduced registration fee of \$25 for age 11 and younger junior players (based on USAV age definition).
 - d. All members who register in the 8 and under age division or younger are free.
 - e. The registration fee for boys of any junior age is \$25.

4. Players and coaches should register before attending tryouts. A current 2014 membership card or membership confirmation should be presented at each tryout.
5. During the registration process, each individual has the ability to opt out of receiving emails or mailings from the Great Plains Region, USA Volleyball and/or third parties. If an individual chooses not to receive these emails or mailings, they may not be informed of important region or USAV information.
6. All adults affiliated with a junior team are required to sign the National Club Personnel Code of Ethics form when registering. This signature will be processed electronically in the same way as your signature for the Waiver and Release of Liability.
7. All signatures required for a background screening will be processed electronically. If a background screening has lapsed, each member who requires a background screening will be asked when applying for membership to complete the background screening application. An electronic signature will be accepted and the background screening process will begin as soon as the membership is paid and processed. No paper application is needed.

CLUB DIRECTOR ACCESS

1. Tryout information can be included on the Club Application. Club applications are due prior to the start of each year. In order for a club director to gain access to their club administration, they must be registered with the region and have turned in their club application/profile for the current season. If a previous club director is not registered by October 31, 2013 or has not turned in their Club Application for the current season, club administrator access will be disabled.
2. Club directors must have a current membership and must submit a completed Club Profile form before club director administrative access can be granted.
3. The club director access function in the online database allows the club director/administrator to view information about each individual in their club; i.e., address, phone numbers, birth date, etc. The system also has the capability of storing uniform sizes, athletic abilities, etc., for each player and will allow the club director/administrator to send group or individual emails to members.
4. After coaches and players have registered and the registration fee has been paid, and the membership has been activated, club directors/administrators can build team rosters from their club's paid members. A club administrator can also view unpaid memberships (when a member has registered for their club, but the fee has not yet been received). Club directors/administrators can move players from one roster to another for different tournaments.
5. Once the club director's membership is active, a certificate of insurance for your club will be sent. If the practice/tournament facility you use requires a separate certificate, you need to request the certificate from the office using the Insurance Certificate Form on the Juniors Forms page of the website. Do not make a copy of your certificate. The certificate must be sent directly from the office to the facility.
6. It is imperative that all coach's information in the on-line database is current. The region office uses the system to send out information emails to specific groups of members.

COACH REQUIREMENTS

1. All adult coaches for junior teams must have a current membership and a current background screening before they can coach at any practice, tryout or clinic.
2. All coaches must be IMPACT certified before they are eligible to coach.
3. An IMPACT schedule will be posted to the Great Plains website. A limited number of IMPACT clinics will be held this year. Plan accordingly.
4. If a coach needs an IMPACT clinic and one is not scheduled in the region, USA Volleyball offers IMPACT webinars. Contact the Great Plains Region office for further information or see the education tab on the USA Volleyball website (www.usavolleyball.org).

5. Junior age members (under age 18), who will be coaching **ARE** required to be IMPACT certified, **AND** must have an eligible adult coach on the bench at all times. However, if a junior age coach turns 18 at sometime during the season, all of the coach requirements (including background screening) must be fulfilled.
6. All coaches must meet **officiating requirements** each year. These requirements may include attendance at officiating and scoring clinics and/or passing scores on exams. Coaches officiating requirements will be sent around October 1.
7. Eligible coaches must wear their name badge at all times when their team is playing at a tournament.

WAIVERS

1. The region allows SAME GRADE waivers for any player in the region who falls in the 15 and under age category but is still in 8th grade. All other waiver restrictions are the same as previous years. No waived players are allowed to play in Gold tournaments.
2. A waiver form must be completed for ALL waived (same grade or older age) players.
3. Waivered players must be added to a team's roster by the region. Uniform numbers are required to add a player to a roster.
4. In most cases, only 3 or less waived players are allowed on one team.
5. Waivered players are not allowed to play in national events.
6. Eligibility for tournaments in other regions is at the discretion of the tournament director according to the policies of the sanctioning RVA.

SAME GRADE WAIVER

If a team of players, all from the same grade, want to play together, but do not all qualify for the same age definition, a same grade waiver form must be completed.

AGE WAIVER

An Age Waiver can be considered if a player is one age division too old and a team would not have enough players, since if they live in an area of the state with a limited player base. A player that has been granted an age waiver may not play on a team competing in a division in which the player would normally be too old in any competition leading to the USAV Junior National Championships. Age waivers are not 'skill' waivers.

TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

A current list of all qualifier and National Championship dates is posted on the Great Plains website tournament schedule page.

REGIONAL TOURNAMENT

The **2014 Great Plains Regional Tournament** is open to all teams. The tournament will have Gold, Silver and Bronze divisions. The tournament will be held on **Saturday, March 29 for 10's – 14's** and on **Sunday, March 30 for 15's – 18's**. The deadline to register is March 14. The entry fee is \$175 for Gold and \$110 for Silver and Bronze. Silver and Bronze divisions will play the format used by Silver division tournaments.

BID TOURNAMENT and TEAMS PLAYING at NATIONALS

1. The **Great Plains Bid tournament** (qualification for the region's allotted bids at the USA Volleyball National Championships) will be held on **Sunday, May 4** for 12's – 18's.
2. All teams are eligible to register for the Bid Tournament. However, only the eight highest ranked teams in the Region will be selected to play in the Great Plains Bid tournament.

- a. Teams wanting to be considered for possible inclusion in the bid tournament must register by Friday April 11, 2014.
 - b. The eight teams will be selected based on the region rankings on the Wednesday (April 16, 2014) following the Friday bid tournament deadline.
 - c. Teams selected to play in the bid tournament must complete all of the JNC paperwork on-line with AES and must submit copies (along with your check made payable to USAV JNC for the entire entry fee) to the region office by the following Friday (April 18, 2014) after the team is notified.
 - d. The entry fee for the Bid tournament is \$175.
 - e. The bid tournament format is double elimination.
3. **ACCEPTING A TRICKLE DOWN BID** - Teams that participate in the Great Plains bid tournament must be prepared to accept a bid if they should win or are next in line to receive a 'trickle down' bid. If a team does not accept the bid and does not play in the division in which it won the bid, each individual member of that team (regardless of the club/team affiliation for the next year) will be suspended from participating in all regional and national qualifying events for the following season.

ON-LINE TOURNAMENT ENTRY SYSTEM (OTES)

The tournament entry system will be used by all teams for entry into all sanctioned tournaments within the region. Use of this system allows viewing of currently accepted teams in each tournament. There is no additional cost to tournament directors or teams for use of this system. The tournament entry system will also allow tournament directors to send group emails to all teams entered. All tournament results will be reported to the region office.

All tournaments in the region will use the same format; i.e., same warm-up procedures, same coin toss procedures, same playing schedule, etc. All tournament rosters must be printed from the on-line membership database. No other tournament rosters will be accepted at tournaments.

Before a team can be accepted into tournaments online, a team roster (to include an IMPACT certified coach) must be built in the online registration system (the region currently uses two separate database systems – the tournament entry system and the USAV membership registration system). Teams cannot be accepted into tournaments in the tournament entry system until a team roster is built in the membership registration system. Rosters cannot be built until members are registered. Once a roster is complete in the membership registration system, the team will be approved in the tournament entry system as an 'accepted' team.

FORMS (See the website for copies of all forms.)

1. **Club Profile Form**
 - a. Must be completed before a club is listed as an approved club on the website.
 - b. Is used to assist parents looking for information about a club.
2. **Letter of Intent** form is available to any club that wants to use it.
3. **Certificate of Insurance Request**
4. **Refund Request**