

RED STORM VOLLEYBALL

OPERATIONS MANUAL

- Letter of introduction
- Mission statement & general program philosophy
- Goals and program philosophy by age group
- Coaches guidelines
- Player guidelines
- Parent guidelines
- Yearly schedule

PARENT MEETING AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. Program philosophy, structure and age group goals
3. Budget overview
 - a. Fundraising
 - b. Parent liaisons
4. Practice and competition schedules
 - a. practice expectations
 - b. competition expectations
 - c. travel expectations
5. Parent - Coach situations
 - a. Direct contact with club directors only please
 - b. 24 hour cooling period
 - c. avoid public confrontations
 - d. avoid calls to director or coach's home
6. Staff / Parent-Player meetings
 - a. please call director to schedule meeting
7. Understanding that this is a season long commitment.
8. Q & A session

November 2010

Dear parents, players & coaches,

We hope each and every one of you will take the time and put forth the effort to read the operations manual. We would like to welcome you and your family to the Red Storm Volleyball program for the 2010-11 season. We have had very good tryouts and expect the upcoming club season to be successful at all levels.

As we enter our 4th year we would like to share with you some lessons that we have learned along the way and will hopefully benefit your daughter as she strives to attain a certain level of excellence.

- We have learned that when a group of people make a commitment to do something great, success usually follows. Words such as sacrifice, dedication, hard work and TEAM have great value in not only athletics, but in all areas of our life.
- That winning is fun, but losing is much more valuable.
- That the lessons we learn from losing actually shape us into winners.
- That part of becoming a successful adult is learning to deal with failure as a child. That is how we grow and eventually prosper. There is nothing noble about falling down, but getting back up each and every time is possibly the most important quality we can teach.
- Finally, one of the key lessons is being comfortable in uncomfortable situations. By this we mean asking a little bit more of ourselves each day so we can continue to grow and improve. When the situations become difficult we are confident that we have done the work, paid the price and success will follow.

If you understand the core beliefs of this organization then it will be much easier to understand how and why we do things the way we do them. Athletics are something we participate in while we are young, but the lessons learned from athletics should last a lifetime. We want to welcome all of you to the Red Storm Volleyball program and we look forward to another exciting season.

Sincerely,

Donna Pixley

MISSION STATEMENT & PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The Red Storm Volleyball program is completely dedicated to providing its athletes with the technical, tactical and physical training to reach their highest possible potential. We will strive to help each and every player regardless of age or ability to achieve maximum performance. For the young player we want to develop a solid base of fundamental skill as well as a passion for the sport. As players get older and progress through the program we want to provide the path to a level of excellence that allows each and every athlete to test their own limitations. Only by constantly testing our limits can we truly find our potential. This is the true measure that separates greatness from mediocrity and determines who will be the Champion and who will fall short. Champions are not always the winner of the final match. But their effort and commitment to themselves and their teammates is the ultimate Gold Medal.

We want our athletes to understand what the term COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE really stands for. That it is not a part time endeavor to be turned on and off depending on the mood or feeling of the day. We also want them to understand what it means to be a part of a team and what the word TEAMMATE really stands for. A group of people who share a common goal together and the members of that group understand and agree to make the sacrifices necessary to make that goal become a reality. These people learn that individual needs are put aside for the good of the team or the team is destined for failure. We realize this goes against the "Sports Center" mentality where individuals have become bigger than their teams and making the 10:00pm highlight reel takes precedent over team success. But, we also know that individual glory takes a backseat to team success every time. Year after year we see one superstar after another wanting to be traded to a winning organization so they can finally realize their dream of playing on a championship team. Being a part of a team and making the sacrifices and commitments to help that team achieve success is possibly the greatest single lesson to be learned from athletics. It is truly a selfless commitment rather than a selfish one.

CLUB DIRECTORS (Donna Pixley)

Donna Pixley

The Red Storm Volleyball Club was started by Donna Pixley in 2006. In its first year, the club fielded two teams, a 13-and-under team and an 18-and-under team. The club was started in an effort to provide girls from all schools and backgrounds an opportunity to improve her skill in the sport of volleyball. In its second year, the club grew exponentially. We experienced a good amount of success with girls from many different schools competing together. In its third year, the club resumed using its original name of Red Storm and fielded twelve teams. Success was even greater this year, and the club continues to grow in terms of athletes, coaches and recognition.

Donna Pixley's contact information and volleyball resume follow:

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e-mail: redstormclub@gmail.com

1987-1991	Played for Tampa Preparatory School in Tampa, FL
1992-1995	Played for Samford University in Birmingham, AL – set the school record for assists
1992-1994	Coached for Birmingham Volleyball Club
1994-1995	Coached for Sojourners Volleyball Club – Birmingham, AL
1998-2001	Coached at Bishop Sullivan High School – Baton Rouge, LA
1998-2004	Club Coach for Volleyball Baton Rouge
2001-Present	Coach for The Dunham School – Baton Rouge, LA 2004 – State Runner-Up 2005 – State Champion Three top Four Finishes
2002	Coach of the 15-and-under National Champion team for Volleyball Baton Rouge
2005	All-Metro Coach of the Year, All-State Coach of the Year
2006	All-Star Coach of the West All-Star Team
2006-Present	Director of Red Storm Volleyball Club

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY & GOALS BY AGE GROUP

10's & 12's **(Grade 3-6)**

At this age young athletes are just starting to be introduced to the sport. Motor skills are just starting to develop and at times the players have a very hard time trying to master the fact that volleyball is a sport where the goal is continual ball movement and the ball does not stop from contact to contact as in other sports. The most important lessons learned at this age will be the teaching and training of the individual skills and the correct techniques of each skill. We also spend a great deal of time on sport specific movement to further enhance each athlete's ability to play the game at the highest level possible. The two primary skills learned at this age are serving and passing to develop control of the ball, but we also introduce all skills and start to practice them to give each player a full understanding of how the game is played. This is the age when fine motor skills can start to be developed with proper training.

While competition is a key ingredient at any level, it merely gives us feedback on how each athlete is progressing with his or her skill development. It should be emphasized as clearly as possible that there is little or no correlation between success at this level and success at the elite junior or collegiate level. Winning should never be the issue, only giving your best. Volleyball is a sport that takes many years and thousands and thousands of hours of training to reach an elite level. At this age we want to light the fire that will develop an interest and passion so these athletes will want to continue to put the time, effort and energy into pursuing the sport further. Coaches and parents are a key ingredient to keeping things in perspective at this level. Be supportive rather than critical, make it fun, stick to the basic fundamentals and teach that hard work and doing your best each time is the most important quality a young athlete can develop. Help us teach your children that there are no shortcuts at any level.

13's & 14's
(Grade 7-8)

This is the critical age group for athletes to start to develop and perfect their volleyball skills. At this age the female athlete has done much of her growing and will start to fine tune specific motor skills, as well as begin to develop the power and control necessary to play the game at a higher level. This is the age group where we can start to see the potential an athlete has and identify strengths and weaknesses that will allow each player to become the best player possible. This is also the age group that we like to choose the athletes who will be setters in our program. By selecting an athlete to set at this age they have plenty of time to develop the skills and acquire the experience necessary to be an elite level setter. The training emphasis also starts to change at this age from primarily serving and ball control to a well rounded training block that involves attacking & blocking as well as the fundamentals of offensive and defensive team systems. Again parents and coaches are key components in an athlete's growth and development at this level. Coaches must continue to reinforce and fine tune fundamental skills during training and competition since almost all success or failure will come from individual execution or lack thereof. They must be patient yet firm when teaching, since so many good or bad habits are developed at this stage and the bad habits are very hard to break as a player gets older. Support and encouragement from parents is also crucial at this level. Since players are starting to work harder and make more of a commitment there will be times of emotion and frustration when a parent can easily defuse the situation by keeping everything in perspective. "Hey, it's just a game the sun will come up tomorrow".

Encouragement for your child to do their best for themselves and the team is the most important quality you can teach them. We urge all parents to be a part of the solution rather than the problem.

15's & 16's **(Grade 9-10)**

Once a player enters high school the clock is running on whether that player is going to develop into an elite level player/athlete. The training and competition is accelerated and each player starts to develop their own personal goals in regards to why they are participating in club volleyball. At this level you will find three different groups of players.

1. Those athletes who are only playing to improve their chances of participation on their school teams, but have little or no chance of playing at the collegiate level. Usually they will only play club through the 9th or 10th grade year and often stop after.
2. The second and by far the largest group is made up of athletes who are using club as a way to see if they can develop the skill to play at the collegiate level. This group doesn't possess the most talented athletes, but usually those who are working the hardest to improve themselves.
3. This group is the smallest with the most potential. These are the elite athletes who use the club system to pursue scholarships to the elite Division I programs. They are very gifted physically and are working to develop the playing skills to play for the best collegiate programs.

At this level the athletes are much more physical than at the Jr. High level and the power of the game much more evident. Also, at this age players are introduced to weight training on a regular basis to help in the prevention of injuries and to enhance performance. Coaches at this level must start to develop a concept of training tempo as well as training intensity. The practice environment must resemble elite match play in both tempo and intensity. Players at this age must start to develop an independence of purpose and decide why they have chosen to participate in such a demanding sport. It is crucial that players start to learn the difference between internal and external motivation. Parents should allow children to develop a passion for the sport rather than living out their own passion through their children.

17s & 18's
(Grade 11-12)

As players enter this final phase of club volleyball most of them have decided that they will attempt to pursue the sport at the collegiate level. The recruiting process can be long and tedious and players must come into their junior year prepared to be on display to the collegiate coaches at all times. One bad match or tournament might be the difference between a university being interested or not. Many players think that the junior year is the time to get serious about volleyball. If much of the work has not been done in previous years it is very hard to make up for lost time in a single seven month club season. This is where many athletes run into trouble, especially when they get to college and do not have the skill or experience to compete successfully against better players. Collegiate programs are severely restricted on training time by the NCAA rules and players are never able to make up the time and experience they could have received at the club level, At this age players are involved in aggressive training and competition schedules that are similar to those of a collegiate athlete.

EXPECTATIONS

Players

When players join a program like Red Storm it is important that they understand what the expectations are for them as well as for their teammates. You will find specific rules and guidelines a little further back in this manual, but this section will deal in general terms. First and foremost we expect each player regardless of age to come into the gym with an open mind, a willingness to learn and to be taught. We are a teaching program and are constantly asking each athlete to refine or change their techniques to allow them to become better players. There is often early frustration when an athlete is changing a technique or motor pattern. It is the old adage of two steps forward and one step back. Players must be patient and give the training time to help them. Hanging on to old habits can be very damaging to a player who thinks they do not need to make changes. What works in grammar school or Jr. High is often ineffective against better players. Being coachable is listening to instruction and making eye contact when spoken to as well as acknowledging any instruction when the situation calls for it. It is simply good manners that at times seem to get lost. We also expect players to hustle and do their best at all practices and competitions.

While being dedicated to improving their own skills, players must also develop a parallel commitment to their team and teammates. We spend a great deal of time and energy emphasizing the importance of team goals over individual needs. Being a great TEAMMATE is what every player should strive to be. Those who are not, fall out of favor quickly with the other members of the team and come to be distrusted in crucial situations. Attitude, commitment and dedication are the cornerstones of any successful program and for the players and coaches who make up that program.

Coaches

First and foremost the coach is a teacher. Every coach must have the knowledge and the ability to translate that knowledge to each and every player. Coaches must take it upon themselves to study and understand all phases of the game to help each athlete reach his or her potential. Successful coaches seem to have a deep passion for the sport they coach and are able to instill that passion in their players. We want our coaches to be serious and task oriented. We do not expect them to be babysitters or best friends of the players. We want them to understand that parents are paying a fee for their services and have every right to expect ongoing improvement. We also expect them to act professional and not to humiliate themselves, their teams or the Red Storm program. Public temper tantrums, excess emotion or public criticism of team members is uncalled for. Making a fool out of your self in public serves no purpose and can be self-defeating. Coach smart as well as hard, play by the rules and ask your players to give their best each and every time. If you do all of these things, then good things will happen to you and your team.

Parents

The arena of athletics is often toughest on parents. It is hard to sit back and watch someone you love so much struggle to succeed and at times fail. More and more it appears that parents will do almost anything to prevent their children from encountering failure of any type. It seems we have forgotten that how we handle the struggles encountered during the journey are more important than reaching the destination. The one thing we must remember is that success in athletics is not a sign of self worth, but more often a sign of self effort. With parents, teachers and coaches emphasizing hard work, dedication and self sacrifice, we instill in our children qualities such as leadership, character and self reliance. We want our players to develop the ability to figure out how to get the job done and do it well in the process. As was mentioned earlier, the failure isn't in getting knocked down, but rather in refusing to get back up. From the parents we ask for cooperation on the following issues.

1. Avoid approaching a coach at a tournament about playing time. If you have an issue we ask that you wait 24 hours and then call and speak only with Donna. Coaches are only part time employees so we ask that you come to the people who are in charge. We will speak with the coach and be more than happy to meet with you once we have gathered all the facts. The 24-hour wait is a cooling off period where the emotions can die down a bit. Coaches will be instructed to avoid any type of confrontation with parents at tournaments.
2. Never call Donna at home. It is the only time we have to spend together as a family.
3. In the spirit of remembering who is the adult and who is the child we ask for the following considerations from all parents. Please practice good sportsmanship at all competitions. Public criticism of the officials, coaches or other players will not be tolerated. We realize there will be times when the intensity is high and the competition is fierce, but we ask you to refrain from any outburst that will embarrass you, your daughter or the Red Storm program.

PROGRAM RULES & GUIDELINES

1. Practices are mandatory and we expect all athletes to attend practice unless they are ill or have a scheduled conflict such as commitments for a school team. If you are unable to attend practice you must e-mail at redstormclub@gmail.com. At each practice we need to account for all athletes who are present or absent
2. Although our practices are not closed to the public, we would prefer that parents not attend practices. We want the players to have the freedom to make mistakes and not feel like they are being watched over at all times. When it is just the players and the coaches, the players are much more focused on volleyball rather than having outside distractions and proves to keep the practice setting a safe haven away from outside distractions.
3. All Red Storm teams will have work duties before or after practice. We feel that it is important that all athletes take ownership of the club and its facilities.
4. To promote harmony and team spirit we ask that all Red Storm athletes remain at a tournament until the last team in that age group has finished. There will be times at national qualifiers or championship events when teams will need to leave the gym to eat or get to bed for an early match the next day. These instances will be handled on a case by case basis.
5. If you are on a team that will be attending a national qualifying tournament, we ask that you not take your family vacation during this period and cause your daughter to miss practices or competition in preparation for these important events. It is unfair to a team when any member is missing for a prolonged period of time and that team is preparing for an important competition. All teams have their spring schedules in place so every player will know her spring break schedule when the teams are chosen in mid-December.
6. Drugs, alcohol and tobacco have no place in youth athletics. They are also a crime and will result in dismissal from the program.
7. The practice environment is a place to work and improve your skills. Our goal is to make you a better player and with that improved team play will follow. In accordance with USA Volleyball rules and also with standards we have established within our program the following guidelines will be strictly adhered to.
 - a. Any and all jewelry including ear rings prohibited.
 - b. NO gum at any time in any facility we play or practice in.
 - c. Volleyball shoes are only to be worn inside the gym. NEVER outside in the parking lot coming to or leaving practice.
8. We will be organizing fundraisers throughout the course of the club season. We ask that all parents and players be involved in these events in some capacity. These fundraisers will help offset the costs of gym/facility rental and help keep our costs to the parents as low as possible.