

Welcome!

2023 - 2024 PRE-SEASON INFORMATION

ATHLETES, PARENTS & GUARDIANS: PLEASE READ THROUGH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CAREFULLY

07.

About Us

Club Bison is a Junior Olympic Volleyball Program for girls in grades 5 through high school. We are located in Buffalo, MN and operate in association with Junior Volleyball Association (JVA) and USA Volleyball (USAV).



Our Mission

Our mission is to develop competitive volleyball skills in an inclusive, supportive, and confidence-building environment.

Our Season

We run lessons, camps and clinics year-round. Tryouts for club season are in October & November and practices start in early December. The club season runs from December - March, with approximately 2, 90-minute practices/week and 6 to 8 single day events on Saturdays or Sundays from mid-January through March.

Note: The 9th grade (15U) team will have 3 practices/week, along with film review and 1-2 multi-day events.

Meet Our Board

Board members and coaches dedicate endless hours year-round to develop a strong and competitive local volleyball program.





Jill Castle

- Club Budget
- Coaching Coordinator
- Gym Reservations
- Coaching Clinics
- Practice Plan
 Development
- Camps & Clinics



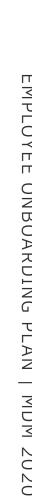
Kristin Stevens

- Player Registration
- USAV & JVA Registration
- Athlete Gear Packages (Uniforms, etc.)
- Spirit Wear Store
- Club Emails and Communication





- Event Registration
- Club Fundraising
- Volunteer Hours
- Officiating Clinics
- Club Marketing
- Social Media
- Athlete Awards



In Depth

04.

In addition to the Club Season, Club Bison offers year-round positional and skill development clinics, summer camps, popup clinics, open gyms, private and group lessons, youth development programs (grades 1 - 4), and more.

In addition to a team of skilled coaches, we partner with Division 1 and USA National Team Development athletes to lead specific instruction, camps, lessons, and more.

We care deeply about the athlete as a whole person. We care about inclusion, mental health, creating safe environments, having high expectations, and developing competitive skills.



We emphasize positive coaching attributes. Please do not mistake this for being weak or not competitive. We strive to create environments in which athletes feel safe, supported and truly belong. We also have high expectations of coaches, athletes, and families. We expect athlete attendance, participation, and full effort at practices and events. We expect positive attitudes and support of one another. We expect the highest level of sportsmanship at events and always.

Participation or <u>Commitment</u>?

Club volleyball is a competitive, off-season TEAM sport which requires a high level of commitment. This does not mean you have to be the most advanced player or have years of experience. It DOES mean that you are eager to learn, give full effort, are coachable, and support yourself and your teammates. It means you show up to practices and events on time (early), ready to learn and to challenge yourself to grow. Yes, placements are made based on skill, but also on potential, attitude, coachability and more.

Club Bison expects dedicated COMMITMENT from athletes.

INVOLVEMENT is...

- all about YOU
- showing up
- mediocre or INCONSISTENT EFFORT
- being INTERESTED
- NEGATIVE or APATHETIC
- doing what benefits YOU
- putting YOURSELF ahead of others
- COMPLAINING, pouting
- ANGER or FRUSTRATION when subbed out

COMMITMENT is...

- all about the TEAM
- showing up READY and EAGER
- ALL IN, every practice, every game, start to finish
- demonstrating PASSION
- POSITIVE and EAGER
- doing what benefits your TEAM
- putting TEAM FIRST
- listening, focusing, UNDERSTANDING
- CHEERING your teammate on and helping them play the position

LONG-TERM

O ROLES:



Simply Put...

Coaches Coach.

Players Play.



Parents <u>Parent</u> (Support).

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Player Expectations:



- Follow Club Bison, USAV, and JVA <u>Code of Conduct</u>
- Attendance and punctuality at practices and events is expected. Unexcused absences and tardiness WILL affect playing time. In the case of illness, vacations, etc., the ATHLETE should notify their COACH with as much advance notice as possible. Please do not show up to practice ill. Notify your coach, take the night off, and take care of yourself.
- Be respectful, positive, and inclusive. We don't just say this. This is the heart and core values of our Club.
- Go out of your way to welcome, support, and encourage teammates.
- Be coachable. Take risks. Learning and growing require vulnerability and challenging yourself.
- Support, do not coach, teammates. Correct yourself. Support others.
- **Self-Advocate.** It is the athlete's responsibility to communicate with coaches, ask questions, and respond to coach communication threads in a timely manner.
- Demonstrate **EXCEPTIONAL sportsmanship** ALWAYS. Never argue with officials or complain about calls. It is the coach's (or sometimes captain's) responsibility to speak with officials, do a score-check, etc. ONLY when necessary.
- ALL players must **complete the USAV officiating clinic** prior to the first event. EVERY athlete is expected to officiate (do book, libero tracking, line judge, or ref). Roles are assigned at the coach's discretion and support is provided to train athletes.

Parent Expectations:



RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Encourage your and ALL athletes, win or lose.
- Demonstrate excellent sportsmanship always.
- Focus on what is within your athlete's control: attitude, goal-setting, communicating with the coach, asking questions, effort, communication, personal commitment to improve and grow.
- Be positive role models.
- Teach your athlete to self-advocate.

RESPECTFULLY...DO NOT:

- Criticize teammates, coaches, officials, or opposing teams. Speaking negatively in the stands does nothing to develop a cohesive team atmosphere or constructively resolve the situation.
- Make disparaging comments about players or coaches. We have heard countless stories from athletes years later, about a negative comment another parent or spectator made about them that has stuck with them. KNOW the power of your words. The impact is profound and has a ripple effect. Make it a positive one.
- Interfere with coaching or confront coaches at practices or events.
- Challenge the score or officiating team. Many officials are young athletes, learning as they go. Be kind and understanding. Your child may be officiating the next set and will appreciate the same grace and kindness from others.
- Coach your child from the sidelines. Do not tell them to jump serve, where to be on the court, or how to fix their form. This is the coach's responsibility and the athlete's focus should be on the court.

Parent Expectations:



DO:

- Follow the 24-hour rule. Unless there is an immediate safety issue, wait a minimum of 24 hours before contacting coaches or the club with a concern.
- Encourage and empower athletes to communicate with coaches directly to address questions or concerns. Athletes should be the first person to contact a coach (with the exception of sensitive concerns, harassment, injuries, or physical limitations). Teach them to reach out to the coach in advance and ask for a time to talk.
- Ensure athletes are well rested, have a full breakfast, lunch and snacks. Events take a LOT of fuel & hydration. Athletes are often HUNGRY by 9/10 a.m. and between matches.
- After the athlete has contacted the coach, and if unsuccessful, contact the coach PRIVATELY to schedule a time to discuss concerns. Do not challenge or confront a coach at a practice or play event. Contact a board member only after attempts to resolve a situation with a coach are unsuccessful.
- Support and encourage your athlete and the team. A word of encouragement, cheering for all team members, and your support goes a long way in developing confidence.

Coach Expectations:



Coaches are expected to:

- Lead by example.
- Be honest with athletes about their role on the team, expected playing time, and feedback.
- Communicate with athletes and the team proactively to share expectations, goals, and practice plans.
- Provide contact information, be approachable, and encourage athletes to self-advocate.
- Respond to athlete's questions respectfully and in a timely manner.
- Foster an inclusive and safe environment.
- Develop individual and team skills via a step-by-step process, starting with fundamentals and advancing each week.
- Teach a specific offense(s) and rotations. The offense will vary by team and ability.
- Communicate regularly with parents via a text or email, sharing what the team is currently working on, practice themes for the upcoming week(s), and goals for upcoming events. This may be weekly, or every couple of weeks depending on the team and development.
- Make decisions regarding positions, offenses, playing time, and roles on the team.
- Adjust positions, rotations and playing time based on what is best for the team. For example: if a team is in stride and having success in a 2nd set, the coach may opt to carry the line up from that set into the 3rd. If an athlete is not showing up to practice or is negatively contributing to the team environment, coaches are expected to have an honest conversation with the athlete and reduce playing time at the coach's discretion.
- Make substitutions or changes based on their best judgment at the time.
- Celebrate successes, share expectations, hold athletes accountable, and challenge athletes to grow.
- Refer parents to the 24-hour rule if/when approached at a practice or event.

Playing Time



- Play time is balanced, not equal. Equal playing time is impossible due to positional play, rotations, getting stuck in a rotation, etc.
- In general, athletes should **expect to play at each event**. Exceptions are made in the case of absences, lack of effort, negativity, or lack of coachability each of these will reduce or eliminate playing time at an event.
- Coaches strive to balance play time with team needs and competitiveness.
- Play time tends to be more balanced at the younger ages, and more positional/competitive at the older ages.
- If a player is getting down on themselves or others, expect them to be subbed out until resolved.
- Not adhering to Club, JVA, and/or USAV Code of Conduct will affect playing time and/or eligibility.
- Coaches develop line-ups based on positions, rotations, game strategies, and team cohesion.
- Coaches have the discretion to adjust line-ups in situations where the game is tight, winning the next set advances the team to a higher level of bracket play, when playing for a championship, etc.
- Coaches determine who will serve and when. Our goal is to develop every player's serve and have them serve in a game when ready. However, coaches will sub in a stronger server when needed.

Uniforms

Club Provides:

- Short-Sleeve Jersey (provided by the club)
- Long-Sleeve Warm-Up (provided by the club)

Athlete Provides:

- Solid black spandex, athletic shorts, or leggings.
- Knee pads (any color)
- Arm sleeves (optional, any color. Note, when ordering arm sleeves, they are usually sold as a single sleeve, not as a pair).
- Court shoes (any color, shoes that are not worn outside. Most low top volleyball or basketball shoes work well).
- Socks (100% cotton recommended for comfort, any color)

Other:

- Hair must be tied back. Elastics and ribbons are permitted. Avoid metal clips.
- Some jewelry may be worn; however, know that this is up to the tournament director or official's discretion. In general, stud earrings and light weight necklaces are permitted, provided they don't create a hazard (such as getting caught in the net). Please do not bring valuable jewelry to an event or practice.



3 Coaching Staff



Coaches are carefully selected and expected to be compassionate and strong leaders, communicative, foster inclusive and supportive environments, and align with club philosophy and goals.

Expect 1-2 coaches per team. Most teams will have a head coach and an assistant.

Coaches may be adults who have played, coached, or have trained in volleyball and leadership roles. Coaches may also be high school and/or collegiate players or former players with strong leadership skills.

Coaches are hired through a selection process with an interview, references, and a background check. All are experienced and skilled in volleyball, coaching, and officiating.

Coaches are SAFESPORT and IMPACT trained.

Coaches often help lead camps and clinics throughout the year. Many have other coaching or managing positions with school teams.

Coaches attend ongoing coaching clinics led by directors, collegiate athletes, and seasoned coaches.

Directors support coaches through practice plan development, support at events and practices, and mentorship roles.

4 Tryouts



Each grade will have 2 tryout dates. Attendance is expected at both tryouts.

Tryout dates/times can be found at: www.clubbison.org/2024season

A player may be invited to attend additional tryouts, if evaluators see the potential for them to play up.

What to Expect:

- Arrive when doors open to check-in, submit payment (if needed), and to receive a nametag.
- Get court-ready (change shoes, put on kneepads, fill water bottles).
- Begin warm-ups (led by varsity athletes) when gym doors open.
- Athletes and evaluators are the only people allowed in the gym. Parents are welcome to wait in the lobby or hallway.
- Athletes will be led through skills and games. Coaches will demonstrate before beginning each skill.
- Evaluators will have clipboards and will be taking notes throughout the session.
- Water breaks will be frequent throughout the sessions.



5 Tryouts



What to Bring and Wear:

- \$150 Down Payment in cash or check (payable to Club Bison), if not already submitted
- Court shoes (shoes that are not worn outside)
- Spandex or athletic shorts or athletic leggings
- A comfortable, athletic shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Knee pads are required
- A filled water bottle (or 2!)
- Have hair pulled back
- No jewelry
- A POSITIVE ATTITUDE & ENTHUSIASM



How Teams are Placed



Team placements are determined by a **collective group of evaluators**, with insight from coaches and board members. Most tryouts will have 5-7 evaluators.

Evaluators are a combination of club coaches, board members, coaches from other programs/clubs, school coaches, and current/past high level athletes.

School and previous club teams do not determine current placement.

At this time, we are striving to place 4 to 5 teams: 12-1s, 13-1s, 14-1s, 15-1s. There is a high demand for a second middle school team and we are working hard to try to make this happen. **WE NEED 2 COACHES to be able to place a Middle School 2's team (13/14s or 14s).** Please contact us if you are interested or have a recommendation.

How Teams are Placed



Players are Evaluated on:

- Skill and Potential
- Positional Needs
- Attitude and Effort
- Coachability
- Game Situations

In general, the older the team, the greater competitive skill sets and positional needs factor into placements.

Unfortunately, not everyone trying out will be placed on a team. Encourage your athlete to try their hardest, hustle, be positive, work in coaches' advice, and give it their all. For those not placed, we do offer skills clinics, lessons, open gyms, and camops throughout the year which are open to all.

Expect team placement announcements to be posted at www.clubbison.org 1-2 weeks following tryouts. We strive to place teams as quickly as possible. Once a placement is made, you and your athlete will need to sign a **Letter of Commitment**. Look for an email with this information once placements have been posted.

Practice Schedules



Please note! Practices schedules will change at times due to court availability, non-school days, holidays, etc. Coaches will update teams of any changes. There are no practices during winter break. Practices run December 4 - March 28. Please arrive 15 minutes early to set up nets, change shoes, etc. Practices start promptly at the designated time. Late practices may run 15 minutes long due to taking down equipment.

12-1 (5th/6th Grade)

Mondays & Thursdays 6:00 - 7:30 PM St Francis Xavier School, Buffalo (STFX)

14-1 (8th Grade)

Mondays & Tuesdays 7:30 - 9:00 PM St Francis Xavier School, Buffalo (STFX)

15-1 (9th Grade)

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays Mon/Fri: 7:30 - 9:00 PM, Wed: 7:00 - 9:00 PM (film review at 7:00 PM) BHS West Gym

13-1 (7th Grade)

Mondays & Tuesdays 6:00 - 7:30 PM Mondays @ STFX, Tuesdays @ BHS West Gym

14-2 (8th Grade) TENTATIVE

Need 2 coaches to place this team.

Thursdays & Fridays
7:30 - 9:00 PM
Thursdays @ STFX, Fridays @BHS (court tbd)

Play Events (12-14U)



Each team will play in 6 to 8 events throughout the season. These are typically single day events on either a Saturday or Sunday between mid-January to late March. We are currently scheduling events and will have the schedule posted soon.

We participate in a mixture of **Play Dates** and **Tournaments**.

Play Dates are typically 4 hours long and involve a pool of 3 to 4 teams, in which each team plays the other once. Once the pool is complete, we are done. Play Dates may start at approximately 8:00 AM, 2:00 PM, or 5/6:00 PM.

Tournaments are full day events (6 to 8 hours) and involve a morning pool of 3 to 4 teams, followed by a break while tournament directors seed teams into bracket play. After a short break (10-20 minutes), teams begin bracket play. Bracket play is single or double elimination and usually involve 3 additional matches. Most tournaments start at 8:00 AM (7:20 arrival) and end between 4:00/4:30 PM.

All athletes must stay on site until released by their coach. Teams often have to stay to officiate a future match after their own game play is complete. All team members must stay to officiate and leave as a team.

Spectator fees apply when attending events. Fees are usually between \$6 - \$8 per adult. Most events have reduced fees for youth/seniors.

Save the Date!



Sunday, March 3, 2024

Buffalo will be hosting our first home tournament on Sunday, March 3. This is a critical fundraiser for the club and has the potential to offset fee increases in future years. We need volunteers for this event (admissions, concessions, helpers). Shifts will be approximately 1.5 hours, so you have the opportunity to watch your athlete play in addition to volunteering.

More information will be sent to athletes and families in the coming weeks, including a volunteer sign-up form.



Play Events (15U)

15U will play in approximately 6 to 8 events between mid-January and late March. Most are single day, local events, with the addition of at least one multi-day local event, and one travel event (midwest location).

The goal of the 15U team is to develop a competitive team and participate in competitive events. This team will be pushed to play in more challenging environments. We are looking to place the highest level athletes who are **ready and excited** to rise to the challenge.

This team will be highly focused on positional play, running a structured offense, and developing competitive line-ups. Players should expect to play at every event (unless consequences have been applied due to not following Club Expectations/Code of Conduct), although playing time and positions will be adjusted based on competitive needs.

Play time is not equal at events. Athlete's develop skills and advance their game through practices, film review, **and** games.

22. Club Fees (12U - 14U)



\$1,150 Registration Fee | \$60 USAV Membership | \$150 Volunteer Deposit (returned when hours are completed)

Down payment may be made by cash or check (payable to Club Bison). Venmo will be available for future payments.

Fee Schedule:

Sunday, October 29: \$150 Down Payment

Thursday, November 30: \$60 Payment to USAV

Paid directly to USAV, instructions to follow after team placements

Friday, December 1: \$250

Monday, January 1: \$250

Thursday, February 1: \$250*

Friday, March 1: \$250*

*February and March payments <u>may be reduced</u> by fundraising initiatives. More information in future slides.

23. Club Fees (15U)



\$1,750 Registration Fee | \$60 USAV Membership | \$150 Volunteer Deposit (returned when hours are completed)

Down payment may be made by cash or check (payable to Club Bison). Venmo will be available for future payments.

Fee Schedule:

Sunday, October 29: \$150 Down Payment

Thursday, November 30: \$60 Payment to USAV

Paid directly to USAV, instructions to follow after team placements

Friday, December 1: \$400

Monday, January 1: \$400

Thursday, February 1: \$400*

Friday, March 1: \$400*

*February and March payments <u>may be reduced</u> by fundraising initiatives. More information in future slides.

24. Included in Registration Fee



Athlete Gear Package (Player Keeps):

- Short Sleeve, Club Bison Jersey
- Long Sleeve, Personalized Warm-Up
- Practice Tee Shirt
- Personalized, Club Bison Backpack

Court Time & Coaching:

- Average of 2, 90-Minute Practices per Week over 4 Months (3 Practices/Week for 15U)
- 1-2 Coaches per Team
- Practice Plan and Skill Development
- Team Entry Fees for Events
- 6 to 8 Competitive Events
- Film Review (15U)

Other:

- Officiating Training for All Athletes (Required by USAV Prior to Event Play)
- Team JVA & USAV Registration
- Club Insurance
- Board and Coaching Support

25 Overview of Expenses



Club fees vary significantly between organizations and are dependent upon a number of factors. Club Bison fees are based on **break-even budget projections** and fall in the **mid-range of comparative club registration fees**. Some clubs range between the upper \$300's to \$700's (subsidized, fewer expenses, or operate at a loss which is covered by sponsorships or established tournament revenue). Other clubs (such as competitive, travel clubs) run upwards of \$4,000 - \$6,000 per season, plus travel costs (MN Select, Northern Lights, etc). **For comparison, Club Bison fees are similar to STMA's program and slightly less than Velocity (in Rogers).**

Why do expenses vary so much between clubs?

Club Bison is an independently run organization (as many clubs are), in partnership with JVA & USAV. Clubs with lower registration fees may be supported by Community Ed, have partnerships with schools in which they don't incur gym/building staff fees, have shared uniforms/jerseys, may not offer a gear package, may run a shorter season (some start Jan. 2 or end the end of Feb), have fewer practices, fewer coaches, and/or fewer events.

Club Bison has grown significantly and has become a leader in JO volleyball in the west metro. We offer skilled coaches, ongoing coaching clinics, highly-trained and invested leadership, partner with D1collegiate athletes, and strive to develop strong skill sets both individually and collectively as a team and club.

26 Increases from 2023



We strive to limit fee increases and to operate on a break-even budget. It was necessary this year to true-up fees in alignment with continuing increased operating costs.

In recent years, we moved from dual-registration with USAV/JVA to JVA-only to save costs; however, the reality is we are unable to enter comparable competitive events without USAV (USAV requires all teams to be USAV members to participate in their sanctioned events, whereas JVA allows any affiliation to participate in their events). Most local, town tournaments are sanctioned by USAV. Overwhelming feedback we received from families last season was to participate in more town-style events, where we are competitively matched with opponents. To do this, we had to return to a dual-registration status with USAV and JVA. This doubles our club and team registration fees and requires a \$60 membership from familes. We feel strongly this is the right decision for our club and will provide great opportunity for competitive events.

The reason for the increases are many, but mostly it comes down to increased event fees, court and building staff fees (required by BHM), dual membership with USAV & JVA this season, increased apparel and gear prices, and ongoing equipment needs (new balls, carts, training equipment, first aid kits, etc.) While event entry fees used to be \$100/\$125 per event, they are now upwards of \$200/\$260. Additionally, court and staff costs have increased, and we added a personalized backpack (\$55) to the athlete gear package (requested by athletes).

What are We Doing to Reduce Fees?



1. Fundraising

Two fundraising opportunities are available this season for athletes in which a portion of the proceeds credits their account and reduces their February and March payments, depending on the amount sold.

Kwik Trip Gift Card Sales

- November/December Sales
- Excellent Holiday Gifts and Stocking Stuffers
- Great Gift for New Drivers & Grads
- 5-Pack Ultimate Car Wash Card
- Sells for \$36
- Athlete Receives \$8 credit for every card sold

Softener Salt Sales

- Late January/Early February Sales
- Very Popular Item
- More Information to Come

What are We Doing to Reduce Fees?



2. Hosting a Home Tournament

- Sunday, March 3, 2024
- Revenue secured through:
 - Vendor Contracts (food trucks, photographers, merchandise)
 - Spectator Admission
 - Team Registration
 - Concession Sales
- Volunteers Needed! (Opportunity to complete a portion of volunteer hours for the season)
- Revenue will help offset future expenses and cost increases.
- Note: We have attempted to have a tournament for many years; however, gym availability is extremely limited in Buffalo. This is the first year we are able to obtain a weekend date before the end of the club season.

3. Soliciting Corporate Sponsorships

- Sponsorship letters are being sent to local businesses, asking for their support.
- If your organization or company offers sponsorship support, please let us know!

Volunteer Requirement



A \$150 volunteer deposit is required of every athlete by the first practice (December 4, 2023). **This check will not be cashed and will be returned when volunteer hours have been completed (5 hours per athlete).** The check will be cashed if the required volunteer hours have not been completed by the end of the season. There are ample opportunities to volunteer. A sample listing is below, though many more are to come.

Cub Foods Bagging for Tips

- Saturday, December 16, 9:00 AM 2:00 PM
- Adult Supervisor and Athlete Baggers Needed
- 1.5 Hour Shifts
- Sign Up Sheet will be Available After Team Placements

Jersey and Gear Package Distribution

- Early January
- o Organize Jerseys, Warm-Ups, Practice Shirts, and Backpacks by team and individual
- Deliver to a Team Practice in Early January

Photography / Videography

- High Quality Photographs of Athletes at Events
- High Resolution, Close-Up, Good Lighting
- Send Photos to Club Bison within 24 Hours of the Event (for timely social media posts)

Office / Document Support

- Create/Manage Documents and Spreadsheets
- Create Informational Binders for Coaches (Documents Provided)
- Share File with Club Bison
- Maintain Confidentiality

3 Volunteer Opportunities



Equipment Management

- Create Equipment Checklists
- Inventory Equipment
- Fill Balls to Correct Pressure
- Package Coach/Team Equipment Bags
 - 6 Balls
 - 1 Ball Bag
 - 1 Electronic Pump
 - 2 Electronic Whistles
 - 1 First Aid Kit
 - 2 Ice Packs
 - Clipboard

Set Up / Take Down Equipment

- At Skills Clinics
- Set Up / Take Down Nets
- Place Ball Carts on Each Court
- Place Hitting Block on Each Court
- Place Setting Eye (when needed) on Each Court

Additional opportunities will be available, especially at the March 3 tournament. A sign-up sheet will be shared following team placements.

Spirit Wear



Spirit wear will be available for purchase for athletes, family, and friends. **This is entirely optional.** Store dates, link, and products will be shared with families after team placements. The store typically opens in early December.

Sample Products from Past Years:



If you have any questions at all

Please ask!

Email: clubbison@gmail.com

Facebook & Instagram: @ClubBisonJO

Website: ClubBison.org

