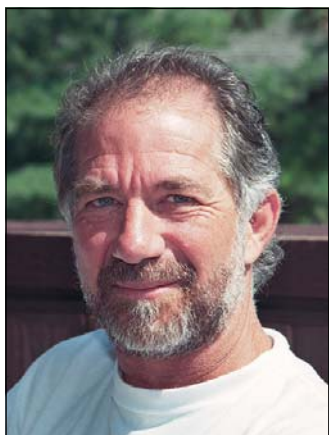


The Juniors' Page

Bill Zehler, Juniors' Program Director



The Ohio Valley region has arrived! Not only are we the region with the most female junior athletes, five of those athletes were selected to participate on the USA Volleyball Youth National team! We are truly a region that tries to serve its grassroots programs and develop an elite program as well. Our High Performance teams did well in Utah also.

The tryout season for juniors' clubs is now upon us. Athletes (and their parents) are making every effort to make the club that is the best fit. Clubs are trying to attract the best athletes to form the best teams possible. We hope this is a positive experience for everyone involved. Families are cautioned to do their homework when looking for a club. We ask club directors to use common sense when trying to attract athletes to their organizations.

The first day clubs may host tryouts for athletes in grades 9-12 is the day *after* your state's volleyball championships. Tryouts for athletes in the 8th grade or younger may be held no earlier than the last Sunday in October (provided the middle school season is over in your area). State high school athletic association regulations mandate that athletes from member schools may not try out for off-season teams while their high/middle school teams are still involved in competition. Failure to adhere to these dates may jeopardize the eligibility of the athletes we are trying to serve. Please make sure your season is over before attending a tryout.

Tryouts may be of two types: open to anyone, or by invitation only. It is the responsibility of each club to act responsibly when trying to attract athletes to their tryouts. Clubs may advertise through the media and distribute information regarding their tryouts to the coaches of the schools in their area at any time. It will be considered inappropriate for any member of a club (director, coach, or athlete) to try to recruit a member of another club. Clubs may respond to anyone interested in trying out for their program.

There are many types of tryouts. Some clubs have mandatory meetings the athletes and parents *must* attend before tryouts. Some offer a clinic and give each athlete a T-shirt for participating. Others simply do physical and skills tests and

evaluate athletes based on a 2-3 hour session. Some bring athletes in for more than one session. Clubs are urged to give value for the dollar in the fees they assess. The consumer is advised to know what they are receiving for the fees they are charged!

The Ohio Valley Region provides secondary tryout insurance for all clubs that register their tryouts with the region. Clinics and open gyms *are not* covered by this insurance. Clubs offering these events are advised that they may not be a mandatory part of their tryout procedure. You must provide your own insurance coverage for these events. Clubs need to register their tryouts with the region. The recommended cost of tryouts is \$10.00. Permission is granted to charge more when proof of expense or value is documented.

Clubs may offer contracts to athletes at the end of their tryout sessions. The parents of an athlete *may* sign a contract as soon as it is offered if they wish. Clubs may not require a commitment on-site. The parents of an athlete invited to join a club *must* be given a period of no fewer than seven days from the date of the tryouts to agree to sign a contract with the club.

All club directors and coaches conducting tryouts must be registered members of USA Volleyball. We strongly recommend registering anyone working at your tryouts to cover personal liability for injury of an athlete. Failure to obtain insurance for unsanctioned events will result in all responsibility for injury being placed on the club. The OVR accepts *no* responsibility for claims against directors or coaches who are not registered members of this region.

There will be an increase in fees of \$5.00 for female junior members for the 2004 season. There will not be any increase in tournament entry fees for female juniors' events. The USA Volleyball Regional Operating Division (ROD) did not mandate background checks for anyone involved in juniors' volleyball. There is still the possibility that the program will be put in place for the 2005 season. There is no need to put this expense in your club's budget for this season.

Several educational programs will be offered to club directors and coaches. All club directors must complete the ASEP Sports Club Director course. This course will be offered in the region on December 5, 2003. There will be several sites available to attend the IMPACT course. The USA Volleyball CAP I and II coaching courses will also be offered in early January. Check the OVR website for sites and dates.

Have a *great* season!