

**LIGHTNING
VOLLEYBALL CLUB**

**Player/Parent Handbook
2009-20010 Season**

MISSION STATEMENT

Lightning Volleyball Club is a non profit organization dedicated to developing athletes of all ages and ability. The purpose of LVC is to promote interest in the sport of volleyball, provide training in skills and techniques, and foster teamwork, sportsmanship, self-discipline and motivation. We believe everyone should be given the opportunity to succeed, both on and off the court.

PHILOSOPHY

LVC supports the idea that participation in any sport is good for the physical, mental and social development of young people. Thus, **we will not encourage our players to give up another sport** in order to play volleyball. We feel very strongly that it should be up to players and their parents to choose the sports and activities in which an individual should be involved and we WILL NOT interfere with those choices.

School studies must come before anything else. LVC requires its team members to maintain passing grades and appreciates the support of the parents in enforcing this rule. We encourage you to use time management skills in order to schedule your school, volleyball, and other activities. ***While we think school is important, we don't believe it should be used as an excuse to miss practice if you are using proper time management skills.***

Each season LVC teams participate in Rocky Mountain Regional (RMR) Power Tournament Power tournament schedule. These tournaments give players an opportunity to enjoy some exciting and challenging volleyball in other cities. The travel also gives our older players more exposure to college recruiters, enhancing their opportunities for scholarship offers. We want to emphasize that one of the more important selection criteria for our club's teams is the player's dedication and enthusiasm for volleyball. Travel to some of the more distant tournaments sometimes means vigorous, tiring schedules, homework done on the road, and missed social activities. This all leads to development of discipline and good social skills, as emphasis is maintained on scholastic achievement and good interpersonal relationships along with the athletic performance of each individual and team. We realize the commitment we ask of our players and parents is not a small one, but the challenge, opportunity and fun make it well worth the extra effort.

Everyone is given every opportunity to improve at practice. Depending on the age group, players will practice from 84-126 hours during the season. Playing time at tournaments will be determined by the coach. While it is true that everyone improve with the opportunity to compete, coaches are expected to put the team's goals ahead of the individual. Players are expected to prove themselves in practice before it is expected they will perform in matches.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

The RMR Volleyball Season

The official RMR Volleyball Season begins in December. All teams in the club will practice and compete from November 15, 2009 through May 2, 2009 depending on the team.

- Friendship, power, and regional tournaments occur on Sundays. Crossroads, RMR Showdown and other invitational tournaments can be from 1-3 days usually Friday-Sunday or Saturday-Monday.
- The typical one-day tournament schedule starts on Sunday at 8:00 AM with "pool play" consisting of three or four "round-robin" matches.
- Some tournaments follow "pool" play with single elimination "bracket" play for top pool finishers. (Bracket play for one-day tournaments starts in the afternoon ending with tournament finals sometime that evening). (Teams making it to the finals will add another two or three matches to their day).
- A few tournaments and special events involve two or three days of pool play, as described (three or four matches per day), followed by single elimination bracket play.
 - In a two-day tournament, bracket play sometimes starts immediately after the second day's pool play, and wraps up that evening.
 - In the longer tournaments, bracket play (usually multiple brackets with team position within the brackets dependent upon performance in pool play) starts early the day after completion of all pool play. Teams making it to bracket finals in these larger competitions add another three to four matches to their tournament total. Counting three to four matches per tournament day, and adding another two to four matches per bracket (if played).

One season can, therefore, easily provide experience equivalent to two or three high school seasons of competition.

Because the length of volleyball matches can be unpredictable and tournament formats and management varies, as discussed above, it is difficult to pinpoint the time a tournament may end. Also, exact tournament schedules or final confirmations are often not available until just before the tournaments begin. This is partly due to late entries, withdrawals or team changes, all of which impact the actual tournament playing schedule and match-ups. LVC has no control over the administration of these tournaments, but we do make suggestions, as do other clubs, to those who run the tournament for incorporation in their next one. Since team entry fees must be paid weeks in advance, and the large amount of planning required for travel and lodging, it is extremely important that team coaches are notified as far in advance as possible of any tournament a player cannot attend. Parents and players should closely review the tournament schedule provided and notify the coach of any conflicts. We understand that situations such as illness do cause short notice conflicts; it is the ones known in advance of which we must be informed as soon they are identified in order to best adjust to the situation. Player's cost beyond fees already scheduled is kept to a minimum; the only thing the

players are responsible for paying during an average one-day tournament is their individual meals and snacks. Trips requiring more significant meal and snack costs are planned and discussed with the parents ahead of time.

The website will be updated to have a web link to the tournament information provided by the tournament hosts. The girls are not required, but encouraged to stay at the same place as the team. We strive not only to teach the concept of team play but of total team involvement. These trips are for your daughter's volleyball experience and training as a member of a team.

PARENT/COACH/PLAYER RELATIONSHIP

Volleyball can teach many good traits, such as the spirit of cooperation, and the regard for physical fitness; but it is difficult for these and other desirable traits to take root in young players when the adults around them fail to set a proper example. We ask that parents refrain from criticizing opposing players, other parents, coaches, officials, or teammates. In spectator enthusiasm we are often prone to issue several instructions to the players that may be contrary to those of the coach, leaving the players confused and upset. Please let these athletes follow their coach's instruction and **leave the coaching to the coach.**

The coaches are giving their time, energy, and best efforts to teach your child the sport of volleyball and we will not tolerate condemnation of the coaches. Understand that you will not agree or like every coaching tactic, comment, or suggestion that is made by the coaches, but this does not warrant criticism or rudeness. This is certainly not intended to reduce spectator enthusiasm. Please continue to cheer and encourage the actions you like and ignore those you don't. Please do not interfere with your child's coach, especially during play, or do anything else that will detract from the enjoyment your child deserves to get from volleyball. Parents must ally themselves with the coach in teaching their children how to cope with the frustrations of being a member of a team. Sports provide an excellent opportunity to teach young women about the realities of highly competitive situations. They must be taught how to be a cooperative team member, how to make use of both positive feedback and constructive criticism, how to cope with adversity, how to achieve 'mental toughness', **and how to be a gracious winner or loser.**

The most effective way to establish a rapport with a coach is to display a high level of commitment to the activity. Players need to learn to display their commitment by coming early and staying late, doing extra preparation, being enthusiastic about the activity, and actively and publicly supporting their teammates. A parent who is successful in teaching these skills will never have to worry whether the coach is giving their child a fair break.

If a player has a concern with a coach, parents have the responsibility for teaching their child steps to remedy the concern.

The following steps **MUST** be taken if any player has a concern with a coach. If the first step does not resolve the problem, move to the next step.

1. Player should discuss the concern with the respective coach and try to arrive at a solution or submit a hand written note to the coach
2. Hand written letter to the coach and director.
3. Meeting with the coach, parent, player and director.

None of the coaches should be considered unapproachable. They are all very willing to listen to a player's concern and try to arrive at a mutual solution. Until the coach is made aware of the concern nothing at all can be done to alleviate it. Do not wait until the end of the season to voice your concern.

We ask that parents do not approach a coach to discuss a concern before or after practice or a tournament.

Parent Expectations

Respectfulness

1. Show respect to athletes, opponents, officials, and spectators regardless of the outcome of a competition. I will avoid excessive displays of emotion and will teach my child to respect opponents and to pursue victory with honor.
2. Listen to my child's views and use positive words when discussing his or her participation in sport. I will avoid using negative words to criticize performance and outcome and will instead praise effort and encourage my child's enjoyment and improvement.
3. Speak respectfully about and avoid criticizing athletes, coaches, and officials.
4. I will accept decisions without arguing and support the efforts of coaches, officials, and other athletes.
5. Respect the coach and trust his or her decisions about training, game strategy, team selection, and discipline.
6. Make an appointment with the coach if I wish to speak with him or her.
7. Discuss with the coach only issues relating to my child and recognize that it is inappropriate for me to discuss playing time, team selection, game strategy, training drills, and team members other than my children.
8. Use positive words, even when being critical, and avoid using vulgar or offensive language or gestures or aggressive or taunting actions or language at any sport activity.
9. Not talk directly to or give instructions to any athlete, including my own child, at any time during a game.
10. Not talk directly with officials or opposing players or coaches at any time before, during, or after a game or match.
11. Be ejected from practice or games and barred from attending practice or games if I disrupt practice or games by being abusive or using obscene language or gestures.

Responsibility

1. Actively support my child's education and encourage him or her to be a student first and to achieve academically. I will support the enforcement of team rules on academic eligibility, including rules on attendance and grades.
2. Inform the coach of any change in family circumstances that might affect my child's punctuality or attendance at practices, games, matches, or meets.

3. Share responsibility with my child for caring for the team uniform and equipment and pay the cost of repairing or replacing uniforms or equipment lost or damaged beyond that expected by normal use.
4. Actively teach my child to exercise self-control in all sport-related activities; discourage my child from displaying excessive emotion, anger, or physical or verbal aggression; exercise self-control myself when watching competition.
5. Accept the coach's decisions on disciplinary action without question.

Caring

1. Encourage my child to cooperate with teammates in practice and games.
2. Encourage my child to lead a healthy lifestyle and to be fit and healthy enough to participate in sport.

Honesty

1. Be open and honest with the coach, the school, medical and support staff, and recruiters. I will volunteer relevant information and will not lie or withhold information.
2. Teach my child to be loyal to the team and to put the needs of the team ahead of personal glory and goals. I will model this behavior myself.

Fairness

1. Actively encourage my child to play by both the written and unwritten rules and within the spirit of the rules. I will encourage my child to avoid bending or knowingly breaking a rule or cheating to gain an advantage and will applaud fair play and excellent performance of all players, including those on the opposing team.

Good Citizenship

2. Encourage my child to continually improve and strive for excellence. I will focus on and acknowledge my child's efforts, improvement, and outstanding performance regardless of outcome (e.g., winning or losing).
3. Support the enforcement of team rules on tobacco use and substance abuse. I will actively discourage my child's use of tobacco and controlled substances and will accept the coach's disciplinary actions in breaches of the team's policies on tobacco and substance abuse.

HOW TO BE A SUPPORTIVE PARENT

Youth programs cannot be successful without the support of parents. The following guidelines are for concerned parents as they strive to be supportive of their young athletes without being pushy.

1. **Supportive parents** focus on mastering sport skills and strategies rather than competitive rankings. Sport mastery focuses on performance, which can be controlled by the athlete, while competitive ranking focuses primarily on winning and losing, an outcome, which is frequently outside the athlete's control. An overemphasis on competitive rank and an under emphasis on sport mastery is a primary cause of a dramatic dropout rate in competitive sports by 12 to 18 year olds.
2. **Supportive parents** decrease the pressure to win. **Supportive parents** realize that sport creates its own pressure to succeed. Additional pressure from the parent is likely to be counterproductive, particularly, in the long run. **Supportive parents** avoid making the outcome of the game bigger than

life. As a game or a competition becomes blown out of proportion, a youngster's self esteem can become tied to winning or losing. A child should not feel less valuable or less loved when a match is lost.

3. **Supportive parents** believe that sport's primary value is the opportunity for self-development. The probability of achieving lasting fame and glory via sport is low. Many outstanding athletes never achieve professional status. However, their sports experiences have allowed them to develop life-long values and self-respect.

4. **Supportive parents** understand the risks. Competition places the athlete on center stage. Anytime you attempt to succeed publicly, you risk failing where others can judge you. In the long run, competing is willingness to chance failure. Giving your best is what athletics is all about.

5. **Supportive parents** should communicate their concerns to the Director. A positive working relationship is based upon clearly communicated mutual goals among parents, coaches and athletes. While a parent cannot control the behavior of a coach/teacher, they can communicate with the Director on a regular basis about the overall development of their child. **Again we ask that parents do not approach a coach to discuss a concern before or after practice or a tournament.**

6. **Supportive parents** understand and respect the difference between parental roles and coaching roles. Both parents and coaches need to understand their different roles in supporting the young athlete. While parents are ultimately responsible for their child's development, once they have chosen a program/coach they must leave the coaching to the coach/teacher. Even though **Supportive parents** often play sports with their child they avoid coaching "over the shoulder" of the coach/teacher and/or publicly questioning the coaching decisions.

7. **Supportive parents** control negative emotions and think positively. Few athletes wish to perform poorly. Negative reactions to poor performances only add to an athlete's pressures. **Supportive parents** realize that even the athlete who "chokes" is trying to succeed. In fact, part of the problem with many athletes is that they are trying too hard to succeed. Criticizing such athletes does little to enhance their performances.

8. **Supportive parents** avoid the use of fear. The use of punishment and withdrawal of love can pressure kids to perform better. Unfortunately, such strategies tend to trade short-term performance gains for long-term emotional risks to the youngster's health and well being. **Supportive parents** recognize that a love for sport is rarely fostered by fear of the consequences of failure.

9. **Supportive parents** avoid criticizing. Nagging parents often confuse support with constantly reminding the children that they need to practice, condition more and concentrate. Overly involved parents frequently lose their objectivity. They are unable to provide critical emotional support, which children often need before and during highly competitive contests.

10. **Supportive parents** recognize and understand expressions of insecurity. Youngsters who express high anxiety, more often than not, have parents who are insensitive to their symptoms. When children are nervous, uncertain, or feeling pressure, insensitive parents may trivialize the child's fears or see such concerns as signs of weakness. **Supportive parents** realize that such expressions are normal and are a call for emotional support.

11. **Supportive parents** avoid the use of guilt. "We've done so much for you," or "The family's given so much for you, the least you could do is take advantage of what we've provided for you" are typical remarks of UN **Supportive parents**. They use guilt to manipulate the child to perform the way the parent's desire. We believe that each player needs positive support and remember you receive positive attitude with every positive statement.

REMEMBER THE PLAYERS ARE HERE TO PLAY, LEARN AND HAVE FUN. AS PARENTS ENJOY THE TIME YOU GET TO SPEND WITH YOUR DAUGHTER AT THESE EVENTS FOR THEY WILL BE GONE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

PLAYER'S STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

There is a lot more expected of our players other than their volleyball skills. Players are expected to participate in all scrimmages/practices as scheduled. Failure to do so may result in less playing time in the next tournament. It is the player's responsibility to notify the coach of their team if they cannot attend. If a player needs to miss several practices because of extra-curricular commitments, they are required to provide their coach with a schedule to allow for proper practice planning.

Players are expected to sign up for the full season and to make all tournaments. Players will be played at the discretion of the coach based on skill level and team needs.

Players are expected to consistently work on their own to raise the levels of their physical condition and skill. All players will sign a code of conduct form as part of their membership with USA Volleyball. The following standards must be observed for one to continue as an active member of LVC; violation of standards marked with (*) mean suspension or dismissal from LVC.

1. *Alcohol and drugs including marijuana are prohibited at all times.
2. *Smoking is prohibited.
3. As a representative of LVC, no actions that will hinder the player's performance, game, or scholastics will be tolerated. The player's actions and behavior should always be such as to reflect positively on the player, their team, and LVC.
4. Players must be on time for all team commitments. Early is best.
5. Players must call their team coach when they are going to be late or absent from a practice or tournament.
6. All players are required to pursue all physical conditioning activities and drills unless excused by a doctor or the coach.
7. Players must report all physical injuries or illness to their head coach immediately.
8. Players prohibited from supervised practice are expected to actively pursue physical conditioning and skill improvement on their own.
9. Equipment and uniforms issued to each player must be cared for properly.
10. All other equipment must be properly cared for. Players are expected to help set up and take down equipment at each practice. Players are to also assist in accounting for volleyballs.
11. Players are required to take proper care of practice equipment, keeping in mind that the equipment is the property of the host school.
12. All players must abide by the rules established for scrimmage and tournament facilities, both locally and in other cities.
13. Players are expected to help as requested during LVC hosted tournaments and are not excused after any tournament until released by the tournament director/coach.
14. Each player will keep their coach informed of their presence at tournaments.
15. Each player is expected to treat all other players, teammates, coaches, referees, and fans with courtesy and respect.

16. If players are involved in a dispute, they must immediately work out problems between them. If they are unable to resolve their problem immediately, they must meet with the coaches until their problems are resolved. Problems between players must never be left unresolved.
17. During any overnight travel, curfew will be 10pm on all nights prior to a match unless amended by your coach.
18. Any player who violates the law and or school rules may be suspended and or released from the club. Lightning players are expected to represent the club positively at all times.

All Actions and Consequences will be discussed with the player, the coach, and the director. Appropriate action that fits the conduct by the player will be determined by the coach/director. Consequences of actions could result in:

- **Dismissal from team**
- **written warning and loss of playing time**
- **missing matches**
- **Immediate removal of match**
- **sit out for one game**
- **one tournament suspension.**

PRACTICE RULES

1. **Players are required to be ready to begin practice at the designated start time.** Please allow yourselves enough time to put on kneepads, change shoes, be taped if needed, and do routines. Players are expected to assist in practice set up such as setting up and taking down nets and standards, and putting away volleyballs and other equipment that may be used that day. Begin practice mentally prepared. All players are required to have a notebook to set personal goals for all practices. A good time to think about goals is during warm-up.
2. **If a player must miss a practice,** a telephone call to their respective coach is mandatory at least three hours before practice.
3. **Advance notice is mandatory if a player cannot make a practice or tournament due to vacation, family commitment, etc.**
4. **Each practice session is very important to the development of our athletes.** Players need to make every effort to be at every practice so they don't miss too much instruction that could affect their performance at tournaments. Also, coaches prepare practice plans according to whom and how many are attending. They need to know in advance if someone will have to miss a practice. It is important to note, if players do not attend practices on a regular basis, playing time may be compromised.
5. **Please bring your own plastic water bottle to practice and tournaments.**
6. **There will be no jewelry allowed at practice or tournaments.** Please leave your jewelry at home, you will not be permitted to wear it on the court, and your coach is not responsible for it when you take it off.

Practice Expectations

- 1.) No sitting down in practice unless announced by the coach.
- 2.) Practice always starts on time.
- 3.) Any overt display of displeasure or frustration will not be tolerated. The team cannot afford losses of emotional control during practices or competition.
- 4.) Players will not wear clothing depicting the logo of other programs in their age range. Exceptions are: Collegiate wear; or programs from another state or country.
- 5.) Mentally prepare for practice coming into the goal-setting phase with a serious and focused attitude. Start to prepare yourself mentally for a great practice session *before* any physical activity occurs.
- 6.) Last one into a called grouping or line-up does push-ups. Push-ups are good exercise. Exercise is good for you. Consider it a gift. Enjoy this gift.
- 7.) Except for a water or rest break called by the coaches, players jog and run everywhere during practice.
- 8.) Players shag their own balls during practice unless a drill is structured otherwise. Never allow a ball to roll through a drill, as this puts your teammates at risk. ALWAYS watch out for your teammates.
- 9.) Passers and diggers should always call "Mine" when going for the ball.
- 10.) There is *never* a reason for not going for a ball.
- 11.) Always be encouraging to your teammates. In practice, on the bench, in games. Always.
- 12.) Players will assist in set up, take out, take down and put away equipment.
- 13.) Players must report injuries or sickness to the coaching staff Immediately upon detection.
- 14.) Carry yourself with your head up, shoulders back and look
coaches and teammates in the eye when listening/speaking.

Hotel Rules

1. It is up to the team parent to coordinate their rooms for tournaments.
2. Contact the team parent to let them know if you want them to include you in the room reservations.
3. If you agree to chaperone other team players other than your own child, you must coordinate with the player's parents of their portion of the room payment.
4. Players are not to stay in hotels without adult supervision.
5. Girls must use the buddy system when going to the vending machines, lobby, swimming pool, etc. Your supervising parent must know where you are at all times. After curfew, no girls are to be out of their rooms without adult supervision. No boys in girl's rooms!!!!

6. When out of the room proper attire must be worn at all times.
7. No pay per-view movies, room service or long distance telephone calls unless you use a pre-paid calling card, as it is often difficult to sort this all out in the morning when many calls have been made.
8. Lights out and to sleep by 10:00 P.M. No exceptions! If players stay up half the night they do not perform well the next day.
9. Noise will be kept a minimum at all times with respect to hotel guests. If an individual damages something in the hotel room they will be responsible for it.
10. Players are to adhere to these rules. If a player violates the rules they are subject to disciplinary action from the club and their coach.

Remember you are here to play volleyball and do the best you can for your team.

COSTS FOR 2009-2010 SEASON

For the 2009-2010 Season, the athlete will be required to give their first payment of the tuition, and a payment schedule plan at signing night. Either a series of post dated checks or credit card number is required for future payments. If possible, the athlete may pay the entire fee at signing night.

Fees can be paid by **Credit Card**, Cash, or Check.

All players are required to register with RMR Volleyball prior to tryouts or participation in open gym. There are no exceptions! This is an RMR volleyball rule. Players must show proof of registration at tryouts.

Payment Schedule:

In order to get tournament dues in on time, the following payment schedule is listed below. Payments more than 5 days late will incur a \$25 late fee. Players are not eligible for practice or tournaments if payments are not paid.

- 50% payment due on signing night
- 35% payment due Jan 1, 2010
- 15% payment due Feb 1, 2010

Practice Players pay \$350

Costs for our 12's, 13's and 14's will be \$1,300 per player.

Costs for our 15's, 16's and 17's will be \$1,500 per player.

Cost of the Club Includes:

4-6 hrs of training a week (depending on team)
5 RMR Power Tournaments
Colorado Crossroads National Qualifier Tournament
Hotel rooms for Crossroads
RMR Showdown
Volleyball Uniforms
Club practice T-Shirt Volleyball Equipment
Coaches Equipment
Coaches Fees
Assistant Coach Fees
Coaches Hotel expense
Coaches Continuing Education
Facilities Rental
Scorekeeping and referring clinics
Administrative Expenses

Uniforms

LVC will provide uniforms (jersey and shorts). The cost of the uniform is included in your initiation fee. Uniforms tops must be returned at the end of the season or pay \$45 replacement fee.

Credit Card number or post-dated check required for uniform deposit. Players may purchase warm-ups or leave a deposit. Jersey deposit is \$45 and jersey/warm-up, bag deposit will be \$150. \$45 or \$150 will be charged if uniform/warm-up is not returned within two weeks of the end of player's season.

Fundraising

We don't want money to be the reason your daughter doesn't participate in club volleyball. Therefore, each team will be required to raise money through fundraising efforts to help keep club cost down. Each team is required to have a parent as a fundraising representative. They will discuss options for both individual and team fundraising opportunities. All fundraising must be approved through the fund raising chair and director. Lightning Volleyball Club will present ideas to each team. Everyone, parents, players and coaches is expected to take part in the clubs two major fundraisers: The Parent Player Volleyball Skills Challenge and the Lightning Golf Tournament. There are many ways to assist in the fundraisers: solicit sponsors, give donations, participate, etc.

Scholarship/Hardship

There are scholarships/hardship funds available through the Vail Valley Youth Foundation and RMR Volleyball Association. Anyone seeking aid should contact the Youth Foundation at sdavis@theyouthfoundation.org or call 970-763-7002. They will set up an appointment to discuss need. RMR also has money available. Those interested need to fill out the form @ <http://rmrvolleyball.org/10/forms/hardship.pdf>

TRAVEL COSTS

Each player is responsible for their travel, hotel and food costs. Most teams go down the night before a tournament due to their early start times, however it is not required. The exception is Crossroads. Our acceptance into the tournament requires that we reserve 4 rooms per team. This cost is included in the player's fees. Most tournaments require one night at a hotel. The exceptions are Crossroads and the RMR Showdown which will require 2 or 3 nights at a hotel.

The following will be signed at signing night with first payment due.

Participant Agreement & Consent

I, _____ have read, understand, and agree to the policies, procedures and obligations set forth in the Lightning Volleyball Club **Player's/Parents Handbook**. As evidence by my signature, I certify that I have read and understand all of the foregoing and consent to abide by the rules as set forth herein.

Participant's Signature

Date

Parent's Agreement & Consent

I, _____ have read, understand, and agree to the policies, procedures and obligations set forth in Lightning Volleyball Club **Player's/Parent's Handbook**. As evidence by my signature, I certify that I have read and understand all of the foregoing and consent to abide by the rules as set forth herein. In addition, I certify that as Parent or/Guardian of this participant, have explained to my son/daughter the aforementioned stipulated conditions and their ramifications, and I consent to his/her participation in the programs conducted under USA Regional Volleyball Association and Lightning Volleyball Club in which he/she is a member. I agree to pay the fees (see page 8) set forth by the Lightning Volleyball Club, allowing my child to participate in the program. I understand that there are no refunds.

Parent/Guardian Signature/Relationship

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature/Relationship

Date