

The Capital Volleyball Academy Club Philosophy

Capital Volleyball Academy prides itself as an educational program built upon the fundamental skills of volleyball. We believe the life lessons and values we teach are essential to a players' development as athletes, students, and young people. With the goal in mind to develop individual and team skills to place our teams in a position to compete at the highest level possible for that group, we recognize the most important lessons we teach athletes stretch beyond the volleyball court. We believe that hard work is a core value that goes into everything we teach and train. Here are Capital's core values that we aim to instill in our athletes:

1. There is inherent value in hard work.
2. The club volleyball experience should be challenging, fun and educational.
3. Every member of the team must put their own interests second to the betterment of the team.
4. Capital athletes should strive to be among the nation's best and exemplify true sportsmanship.
5. Capital athletes should win and lose with equal grace.
6. Each time a Capital athlete takes the court, it is an opportunity to better themselves.
7. Athletics should complement academics.
8. To give your best effort each day takes courage. Courage is habit-forming!

Which is more important, winning or having fun?

There is no need to choose between the two. Capital believes in winning and enjoying the club volleyball experience. These are both components and by-products of a team's common goal which is more immediate and more far-reaching: "hard work". There are many things an athlete can't control, your level of effort and your attitude are not among them. "Fun" is a by-product of hard work. When you work hard in a team setting you will experience individual and team improvement, you will win a high number of matches, your chances of being recruited by a college volleyball program increase, you get the satisfaction of know you've challenged yourself, and the self-confidence of knowing that you were up to the challenge.

The social experience and off court fun of club volleyball happens spontaneously in the context of a cohesive group bound together by working hard towards a common goal. Consistent with this, we focus on providing the structure where a team can feel proud of its efforts. For Capital, the fun we seek is the deep satisfaction of knowing that you have given your all each time you take the court...win or lose.

Winning and enjoying the process are components of hard work.

Desire to win, or competitive spirit, is one of the main motivating forces behind hard work. Desire to win makes it easy to put the effort in, but that is only the beginning.

It is essential to enjoy the feeling and satisfaction of working hard, and to maintain a positive attitude throughout. You have to love the challenge in order to put in your best effort. It's not always "fun," but if you dislike hard work; you'll never reach your potential. In a team sport, lack of hard work will increase the chance of holding the team back. If you love the process, and not just the result, your pleasure will increase exponentially. Rarely is desire to win a strong enough motivator. If winning is all you care about, then you've got almost no chance to be satisfied in life, unless you sell yourself short by looking for situations where you're less likely to risk losing. You must be willing to take risks and push to work hard outside your comfort zone... only then can you truly be satisfied with the results. Put winning in its proper place: it's a result of hard work. Do the work, and the results will take care of themselves. The best you can hope for is to work hard enough that you win every match you're capable of winning.

What's the Capital philosophy on playing time?

The rule is that the team comes first. With that said, we understand that no team can reach its potential without every player on the team having a role in the team's success. All playing time is at the coaches' discretion, but we realize that every family has a financial investment made in club volleyball. Every Capital player is given the chance to increase their playing time through the practice environment. Capital's Select Program does carry the 30% rule where each player on the team shall play in 30% of the team's games during the course of a tournament. The 30% rule is adherent to the coaches' discretion on playing time based on injury or sickness, player attitude, player performance and club/tournament rules.

"The Disease of Me leads to the Defeat of Us."

This means that everyone on the team is working towards the same common goal, and they have to put their personal agendas aside when they interfere with the team's goals. If that cannot be accomplished, then the team's chances for success decrease greatly! Every coach is looking to get the most out of the team, and to do that they will try to get the most out of every player. Competitive players all want to play as much as possible, but the attitude we're looking for is "what can I do to help the team?"

The importance of every team member.

For a successful team, the coach must consider each player as part of the whole. In an ideal situation, every player will be proud of her contribution to the team's success. What are the components of this?

Every player gets opportunities. There are at least two kinds of opportunities. First, as mentioned above, the opportunity to earn a playing time is always there; every player gets the same opportunities in practice to earn playing time. Whether in match situations or in the practice environment, the coach is responsible for identifying the strongest line-up, which means constant re-evaluation. The second type, opportunities to compete in game situations, varies from team to team, along age lines. The older the team, the more it is true that playing time is earned, not given. Whoever is playing best will play the most, but this is always subject to change based on what a player does with the opportunities in practice.

Every player has a role. Those players who play less than others are vital parts of a team's success. First, they always have the opportunity to show they can help the team improve. No starting line-up is ever permanent. Also, they can raise the level of practice, maintain the level of play when called upon, or raise the level -- thus earning more playing time. When a player isn't happy with her role, the appropriate response is to be sure she understands what she needs to do, then work as hard as possible to effectuate the change.

College Program Exposure.

By the time a player gets to the 16 & under elite program, recruiting is an important part of club volleyball. Coaches are aware of this, and will look for appropriate opportunities to give every player exposure in positive situations. Keep in mind, however, that most recruiting in volleyball is player-initiated. When a player has been corresponding with a program that is in attendance, our coaches will look for opportunities for exposure, provided that it is not at the expense of the team.

What does Capital care about besides volleyball?

We recognize that there are values more important than winning which we must follow as we pursue volleyball excellence. We believe our philosophy allows us to remain true to our principles and develop great teams and players. Doing things the right way and doing them well go hand-in-hand.

While we do not expect players and their families to put volleyball above everything else in their lives, we know what it takes to be successful as a team or an individual. Time management, prioritizing, making tough choices, and self-discipline are all skills which will allow players to grow as athletes and people. Capital teams are the most successful, and individual players have fulfilling experiences, when the commitment level is at its highest. Here are some examples:

(con't.)

1. Academics, Family, & Social Life

As a club volleyball program, we are preparing players for success as student-athletes. That's student first, athlete second. One of the reasons we have coaches who have played for, or worked with college is to provide role models who understand just how difficult it is to balance academics, sports, family, and social life. The emphasis on school does not mean that players are encouraged to miss practices for academic reasons. The lessons student-athletes must learn include how to plan ahead, so we expect that players won't miss practices due to a lack of foresight. In the end, however, we'd rather you miss a practice and invoke a modest penalty than fail to turn in an assignment.

2. School Sports

We believe as long as a player decides to play a school sport, it is up to the player to set her priorities. What we expect, however, is the player will do everything possible to fulfill her commitment to her Capital team. The consequences for missing a practice or tournament for a school sport are no different than for other legitimate reasons. Sometimes these consequences are not as direct as sitting out a game or a match at a tournament. When you miss an opportunity to practice, you won't improve. This affects individual & team performance, team morale and thus playing time. Club volleyball is a long season, and there have been plenty of multi-sport athletes who miss some training, but when they are at practice full-time, they're in great shape and ready to catch up quickly.

3. Club Volleyball Economics

We understand that club volleyball can be expensive with dues, travel, apparel and driving to and from practice on a weekly basis. Capital will always do what it can to help cut costs for our families as much as we can without sacrificing in our beliefs. Any extra travel costs will always be accompanied with a detailed cost break down. Any major decisions concerning extra travel costs will always be discussed with the team parent group before going into effect. Club volleyball is a financial investment, but it is a worth-while investment where parents and players will see returns on that investment with positive life lessons, the opportunity to face adversity with teammates who have a common goal, growth in self confidence, increased physical fitness, opportunities to travel the region or parts of the country, new friends and possibly an opportunity to play for a college volleyball program and earn a college education.

Why should I play Capital if I don't make the #1 team?

Choosing a team shouldn't be based on whether it's the best team in the club. Instead, a smart decision will consider the quality of the team, the coaching, your role, and the program in general. At Capital, our approach can best be described as "no second teams." This doesn't only mean we name our teams with words and colors rather than numbers. It means the approach to every team is the same. We expect a high degree of commitment from every player and coach on every team. This year, we are making renewed efforts to narrow the gap between first and second teams. We changed the practice schedule to maximize the opportunities for teams in the same age group to train together.