

10-28-11

Memo: Regarding Commitment to Club before Tryout Date

From: Commissioner Sue Mailhot

To Parents and coaches of Great Plains junior players,

It has come to my attention that some clubs are hosting 'pre-tryout' clinics and open gym sessions. Our thought is that these clinics and open gym sessions would help prepare players for the skills needed for actual tryouts which will be held in November. But it seems as if some of these events are actually 'tryouts', where a club is offering a player a position on a team. The pre-tryout clinics and open gyms are not in conflict with any Region policy. However, clinics and open gyms may not be held during the Region's 'no contact period' (see 5B below). For further information regarding the NSAA (Nebraska School Activities Association) high school participation policies, you can view their website at www.nsaahome.org/by-laws.

In a way, pre-tryout clinics are the best way for a parent to see what different clubs have to offer. Who the coaches are, how practices are run, how much it will cost, etc. If you only have one chance to attend one tryout on one day, it's difficult to find out how this works. But you must remember that if a club is holding pre-season and pre-tryout clinics, they are doing so on their own.

It is also worthy to note that per Great Plains regulations, no contract is binding between a player and a club until the specified date of tryouts for that age division. If a club offers your child a position on a team, you can accept that position anytime, but you have the right to change your mind until the tryout date. The club also has the right to change their mind until that date.

A club does not have to have tryouts. Players for a team can be selected in advance of the tryout date. Some clubs will have tryouts only for a specific number of positions. The club should indicate the number of positions that will be offered at the beginning of the tryout.

The Region has a Letter of Intent which is a document meant to protect club interests as well as the rights of a player with regards to the level of team the player is placed on and which club a player registers with. Once a player has signed the Region Letter of Intent on the specified tryout (or signing) date, a player cannot be released from that club until after the season. The Letter of Intent is to be signed after the player knows which team she will be on. This information from the letter of intent would be used in the decision making process should either party (club or parent/guardian) decide a specific club is not for them. A player does not have to sign a region letter of intent, but by not doing so, forfeits the right of having the region intervene on their behalf should a dispute arise. The letter of intent is used only for the purpose of releasing a player from the club. (There can be some extenuating circumstances in which two teams can agree to a switch, but that does not happen very often.)

The Club might also have you sign a club contract which gives you information about payment, practices, etc. That document is between the club and the player and does not involve the Region responsibilities.

A sample copy of the letter of intent is attached.

After a position on a team is accepted by a player and a letter of intent is signed, the player needs to choose that club in the registration database (if not already chosen). To change a club designation from 'undecided' to the specific club name, a player must log-in to their Great Plains/USAV database account,



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click on the 'My Info' tab on the left side. If you are not on the 'Main Info' tab listed at the top of the page, make sure you click there. Then select your current club from the drop down menu (located towards the right side of the screen). Then scroll to the bottom and click 'Edit Contact Info' button to complete the addition of the club. If you encounter problems with these instructions, please email registrar@gpvb.org for further assistance.

A pre-selected club name can only be changed to a different club by the Registrar.

The Region's current policies are:

1) TRY-OUTS

- A) Clubs/teams do not need to have tryouts. If a club is having a tryout for only a specific number of player slots or specific positions, that should be disclosed prior to the beginning of the tryout.
- B) Try-outs may not start before 8:00 am and must be completed before 8:30 pm.
- C) Players must have completed a membership application before they attend a tryout.
 - (1) A copy of the player's current season membership card must be presented at the tryout.
 - (2) Or a copy of the player's membership application confirmation page may be presented.
- D) Players may choose to attend multiple try-outs,
 - (1) If a player signs a Letter of Intent/Commitment Form at one tryout, he/she may not attend another try-out.
- E) Each club may assess a try-out fee.
- F) Players may not formally commit to a team until the specified tryout date.

2) TRY-OUT DATES

- A) Junior try-outs for age groups 10-14 may not be held until the first Saturday in November.
- B) Junior try-outs for age groups 15-18 may not be held prior to the first Saturday following the conclusion of the Nebraska Girls State High School Volleyball Championships.
- C) Per NSAA rules, a player, who has participated on any level of a high school volleyball program, and by USAV age definition falls into the 14 and under age category, may not tryout until all teams associated with that high school program have completed competition in high school districts and/or the state volleyball tournament.
- D) Individual club try-out dates are posted on the website as they are received from club directors. If tryout dates for certain clubs are not listed, contact the club director directly.

3) LETTER OF INTENT

- A) At the try-out, the following statement, regarding the letter of intent, must be read to all parents of players attending try-outs:
 - (1) "Completing this form commits said player to said club for the upcoming season. Commitment must be written. Failure to live up to the commitment will result in a player being ineligible for the upcoming season unless commitment is waived by said club."
- B) Players will not/cannot sign the letter of intent until **after** a tryout and with the knowledge of the exact age division and level of the team they will be assigned to. A position on a team may be offered to a player by the club director and/or coach at the end of try-outs. Players and parents may sign the Junior Letter Of Intent at that time or may take the chance that the player's position may be offered to an alternate player willing to commit. The player may then accept a position from the club at a later date. If a player signs a letter of intent, they may not attend other tryouts.

4) COMMITMENT FORMS

- A) Commitment forms may not be signed by players or parents/guardians (and therefore are not binding) until the first specified tryout date for your specific age division. Team meetings of players are not authorized until the first specified date of tryouts.

5) RECRUITING POLICY

- A) Club personnel cannot initiate contact with an athlete outside of their club at any high school volleyball event or high school or middle school venue.
- B) Club personnel cannot contact (i.e. phone calls, letters, flyers, emails, and face-to-face) a player from another club after the Sunday (midnight) before NSAA district competition begins until the established tryout dates. (This rule applies to high school volleyball coaches who hold meetings to talk about club volleyball at high school practices, etc.)

We hope this information is helpful to you in making a more informed decision. However, if you have further questions, do not hesitate to contact Commissioner Sue Mailhot at sue@gpvb.org or 402-598-4782. Thank you for your participation in Great Plains Volleyball.