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2019 Oak Park
YMCA Instructional Volleyball League

Player, Coach and Parent Information

Instructional Volleyball League teams are organized by each school, recreation department, or Community Education Program to meet the needs of their local site. The playing schedule is coordinated by the Oak Park YMCA. The purpose of the Instructional League is to provide opportunities to practice and play volleyball in the local community at a lower cost, less time commitment and less pressure than the Lansing Area Volleyball Association (LAVA) Travel Programs. As the name implies, the Instructional League emphasizes learning the game of volleyball.

What can parents do to help their child be a better volleyball player? The parent should encourage their child to attend all practices, pay attention to the coach and to try to do the skills the best they can. The player is responsible for their own improvement. If the player has questions or doesn't understand what the coach wants them to do, the parent should encourage the player to talk to their coach. Even very young players must learn to talk to their coach.

It is not helpful for parents to yell instructions or criticism during matches, complain about calls, or cheer for opponents errors. After the game, parents should ASK the player how they felt about the game, not criticize the play of the player and teammates or second guess the coach.

What will playing days be like? The playing dates will consist of modified games with a short warm-up between each game. Teams that are not playing will be assigned to help keep score, call lines and shag balls. Teams from the host site should assist with net set-up and take-down. ALL TEAMS should assist in keeping the area clean; respect the school property by NOT hitting balls in the hallways; and be quiet and well-behaved in the halls (often there are other classes or activities going on at the school). Games will have modified scoring to promote learning. If you have questions about the rules, please ask your player or the coach at an appropriate time.

What about sportsmanship? Good sportsmanship is expected of all participants, including spectators. The Instructional League games are low-key, intended for instruction more than competition. The games are for learning: players, coaches or referees should not be yelled at or criticized. Players may not use foul language or talk through the net in an unsportsmanlike way. I expect that the coach of the offending player will handle the problem in an appropriate manner. Spectators are encouraged to applaud good plays and good efforts. Parents should remain in the bleachers unless specifically asked to come to the court. This program is for the kids - they need to be allowed to have this be their experience, the good and the bad. **The gym is our classroom: Would you scream at a student who added incorrectly at the blackboard? Or yell out from the audience at a young person who forgot a line in the school play? Please treat our "students of volleyball" with the same respect.**

NOTICE: If a player, coach or parent wants to play highly competitive matches using regular rules and paid referees, they should not participate in this program. More experienced and highly competitive players, coaches and parents should enroll in the appropriate LAVA Travel team to obtain the competitive experience they desire.

"WASH" RULES

Oak Park YMCA, 900 Long Blvd., Lansing, MI 48911 Phone 517-827-9700

Instructional League games consist of modified games, commonly called "wash", which is explained below. All registration information clearly states that modified games will be played. All participants must understand the rules and purpose of the "wash" scoring. Players, parents or coaches who do not wish to play "wash" should participate in a different program. **Since there are generally no referees, coaches will call the fouls of their own team. They may use their discretion about how tight, or loose, the calls should be. Since the goal is to play the game, and keep the ball in play, hand calls and net calls will be fairly loose, especially for the younger teams. Spectators should keep their opinions of the calls to themselves.**

What is "wash"? This practice game was developed by coaches of the National teams to enable the players to work on all aspects of the game during a scrimmage situation. This form of play is used extensively in practice and scrimmage situations by men's and women's Olympic teams and by most collegiate teams.

How is "wash" played? We will play a version called "two-ball wash". Play will start with a serve and that ball is played out. Then a free ball is tossed over the net (like a free ball) by the coach of the serving team, to the serving team, and that ball is played out. Then a second free ball is tossed to the serving team, and that is played out. After all three balls have been played, the team which won two of the three balls gets a point. If the serving team wins the point, they serve again. If the receiving team wins the point, they rotate and serve. All three balls will be played in each turn of service.

The "toss" should be a coach or other adult from the serving team, who can toss balls accurately to facilitate play. They may toss to a particular player so that everyone is involved in the play, or toss to challenge the team, or toss to a good passer to get a play started. The ball should be tossed fairly quickly to simulate a continuation of play. **Do not stop play to give instructions or cheer.**

A "finger score" official (player from the work team) will indicate the result of each play, and the flip score will be used to indicate each point.

How will "wash" help us? It will help our players in the same way it helps the men's and women's Olympic teams - by forcing the players to become proficient in all aspects of the game, including free-ball, defense and offense, not just serving and receiving.

Why don't we play "real volleyball"? Most elementary and middle school volleyball consists of teams trading serves which are missed or not returned. There is no real volleying of the ball, and no offense or defense since the ball is in play for more than a few seconds. Wash enables the players to experience the phases of the game which make it "real volleyball", including "pass, set, spike," not just finding out which team has the best servers.

Some players feel that wash is a simple game for "babies". In fact, "wash" is a more difficult game, requiring the use of more skills, more team work, and a longer competitive attention span. College coaches of both men's and women's teams use "wash" in practice because it is more challenging than a regular scrimmage and makes the real game seem easier. As an Instructional League, our goal is to help players learn to play better. Playing "wash" will help us reach that goal.

All games for 6th grade and younger will be played using "Wash" rules.

If parents or players have questions about the rules, schedules or program,
contact your child's coach or local program director.