



## Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club Handbook 2011-2012

*Starlings is girls coming together from different cultures, religions, and backgrounds. Where everyone is equal but recognizing that we are all one in a million. Starlings are stars from different universes put under one sky. Starlings are strangers on a team that become sisters. And last of all, Starlings is chasing your greatest dream and becoming an unforgettable athlete. We are all Starlings.*

*- Jessica Alim (9<sup>th</sup> Grade) Starlings Otay Ranch, CA*

## **Introduction**

The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club was founded in November 2007 for the 2008 Southern California Volleyball Club (SCVA) competition season. We started that year with 10 girls on one team. The 2012 SCVA Season will be our fifth year of providing an affordable club volleyball experience for female junior volleyball players in the Ridgecrest area. This year the Ridgecrest Starlings Club plans to field four teams for girls from 12 to 18 years old that will compete in the Southern California Volleyball Association tournament system.

We have aligned our club with the nationally recognized Starlings Volleyball Club, USA. The Starlings Volleyball Club is the largest junior's volleyball club in the USA. The Mission Statement of the national Starlings Clubs is:

“To provide the equal opportunity for girls from diverse, lower socioeconomic environments to train and compete at USA Volleyball's Junior Olympic level; to encourage teamwork, health, positive life skills, and academic achievement; to establish member clubs throughout the nation that are community-based and self-sustaining.”

Ridgecrest's remote location, small population and extremely limited volleyball opportunities for younger athletes, makes the goals of the Starlings organization a good fit for our club. Additionally, membership in the Starlings offers certain discounts and incentives that will allow us to keep our club costs lower than most other Southern California Clubs.

## **Mission Statement – Ridgecrest Starlings**

The Mission of the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club is to:

- Instill a love for the game of volleyball in younger athletes.
- Teach teamwork and cooperation as a member of a competitive volleyball team.
- Teach individual volleyball skills and individual athleticism.
- Teach teams how to be competitive in the Southern California Volleyball Association tournament system and at tournaments such as Starlings National Championships.
- Give older players the opportunity to be recognized and recruited by college teams.

*There is teaching and coaching, and if you have a choice, you'd rather be a better teacher than a coach. – Hugh McCutcheon – head coach U.S. Women's National Team*

## **Contacts**

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Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club's website is <http://www.ridgecreststarlings.com> all the latest news, schedules, photos and other information will be posted there.

## **Teams**

Due to limited availability of court time and qualified volunteer coaches, we are limited each season to only four teams. The ages of these teams each season will depend on the number of girls interested in playing in each age group. It is our club policy to place all girls on an age appropriate team (i.e. 14s on U14s, 15s on U15s, etc). Depending on the distribution of player's ages, we may have to combine different age groups onto an older team. If we have more than one team in an age group, we may hold tryouts to determine who plays on each team.

**All Ridgecrest Starlings Teams are competitive teams that compete in the Southern California Volleyball Association (SCVA) tournament system.**

**Local Teams** are teams that only practice, or compete in an occasional Starlings Tournaments but not SCVA tournaments. Sorry but the Ridgecrest Starlings is not able to offer a local team option.

**Practice Players** are players who only practice but do not go to tournaments. Anyone interested in being a practice player (or participating in other sports while playing club volleyball) should see our club policy under Practice Players and Multiple Sport Athletes on page 5.

*I am a member of a team; I defer to it and sacrifice for it, because the team, not the individual is the ultimate champion. – Mia Hamm*

## **Tournament Information**

All teams are competitive teams and will compete in the full SCVA tournament season. Since we are a Starlings Club, in addition to a normal SCVA competitive season, we will also participate in selected regional Starlings Tournaments (High Desert, Tehachapi, etc.). All teams will compete in the three day Starlings National Championships in San Diego in June.

Our U17/U18s teams will also compete in the Las Vegas Classic on Presidents Day weekend and Junior National Qualifier in March. These are two of the largest college recruiting tournaments in the western United States. Additional expenses for tournament entry fees and travel expenses for each player and coach will apply.

All teams will have the option to compete in the three day – Junior National Qualifier Tournament in Anaheim in March or April. All teams will also have the option to compete in an end of the season Volleyball Soiree in Anaheim or the Volleyball Festival in Phoenix. Competing in any of these additional tournaments will result in an additional expenses for tournament entry fees and travel expenses for each player.

All Ridgecrest Starlings teams will compete in the following tournaments during our season:

- Three SCVA Qualifier Tournaments.
- Five SCVA Mandatory Tournaments. (Only four Mandatory Tournaments for U17/18s)
- 2 day SCVA Regional Tournament.
- 3 day Starlings Nationals Championships.
- Various regional Starlings Only Tournaments. These tournaments may include, but are not limited

to tournaments hosted by the High Desert Starlings in early January and the Tehachapi Starlings Tournament in March.

## **Travel to Tournaments**

The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club encourages teams to carpool to most tournaments. However individual or team travel plans will be left up to each team's members and their volunteer travel coordinator.

Players should bring their own breakfast, snacks, drinks and money for lunch on the way home. Make sure that all your food, water and personal items are marked with your name.

## **Tournament Schedule**

The tournament schedule for the various aged teams is available online at:  
[http://scvavolleyball.org/girls\\_schedule.htm](http://scvavolleyball.org/girls_schedule.htm).

## **Ridgecrest Starlings Tournament Rules**

All players are expected to attend all tournaments. If an athlete cannot attend a tournament, it is the responsibility of the player to inform their coach as soon as possible. The earlier the Coach knows you will not be at a tournament the better, so that the line-ups can be adjusted for your absence and the team can practice the new lineup.

The Ridgecrest Starlings expects all coaches, athletes, parents, and supporters to be good representatives of our club by treating opponents and supporters from other teams, other parents, and officials with respect.

Parents are expected to provide transportation for their athlete to and from tournament sites and practices unless prior arrangements have been made.

*Athletes are NOT allowed to leave the tournament site until excused by their coach.*

Often a team has officiating duties for the last match of the day. All players whose team has an officiating assignment must stay until the assignment is completed. All members of the team and their coach will be present for all officiating assignments, matches and team meetings. In extraordinary circumstances, a player may request to be excused early by her coach.

*Concentrate on the things you can control – your attitude, your effort, your communication, your conditioning and your serve. Do not waste time worrying about things you cannot control.*

## **SCVA Tournament Gym Rules**

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The SCVA Parent Handbook details, among other things, SCVA Tournament Site Rules. The Parent hand book is available at [http://www.ridgecreststarlings.com/forms/Parent Handbook 2012.pdf](http://www.ridgecreststarlings.com/forms/Parent%20Handbook%202012.pdf)

## **Officiating**

Officiating is a shared responsibility of the entire team. At each tournament the team will have to provide scorekeepers, linesmen and maybe a second official for at least one match. Ridgecrest Starlings players will be trained in how to keep score and call lines during practices. All players will be expected to become proficient at these skills. All players on a Ridgecrest Starlings team will be expected to help with line judging, score flipping, score keeping, and second officiating. All players are required to stay until the entire team can leave. Please do not ask the coach if you can leave early. You are expected to stay with your team even if you are not working that game!

Officiating requires significant focus and concentration by everyone involved. Do not take this task lightly. Most players and parents get very upset and angry when they are playing a match where the officiating team is not paying attention. Do NOT be the team, or the player, that the other teams complain about when their match is over.

## **Attendance**

Attendance at practices is essential for both player and team improvement. Unexpected absences from practices can cause significant disruptions in practice plans. Many drills and exercises require a certain number of players, or specific players in order to maximize the team's benefit from the drill. The need to constantly change practice plans on the fly because of player's unexpected absences can make practices chaotic and unfocused.

It is each player's responsibility to let their coach know that they will not be at practice as soon as possible. All Ridgecrest Starlings Coaches want to be informed about all absences directly from the players themselves, not their parents.

If you are sick – stay home. If you are too sick to go to school, you are too sick to be at practice.

As with unexpected absences, tardiness is equally disruptive to a team practice. Most practices start with either warm-ups or a team meeting, both of which are too important to miss. It is each individual players' responsibility to arrive on time and ready to practice. If a player has a regular reoccurring reason for being late to a practice, the player must work out an accommodation for this with her coach. If practice starts at 6 PM then players should be suited up, with proper practice clothes, shoes and protective gear and ready to start practicing at 6 PM. If you need special attention (i.e. ankles or wrists taped) from your coach, be there early in order to get this done before practice starts. On travel days, if a player is late to the staging area in the morning, they may be left behind!

**Keep in mind: If your team is constantly forced to practice without you – how much will they need you on the court with them during tournaments?**

It is up to each coach to determine how many absences a player is allowed before their play time on the court will be effected. Each coach will inform their team about their absence and tardy policies and any associated penalties. Players attending all practices may see more playing time than those with excessive excused and/or unexcused absences.

***All playing time, line-ups and rotations are the sole discretion of the coach.***

*Anyone who believes that they can coast through practice and just "turn it on" in the game is going to be playing in a game and discover that they have nothing to "turn on."*

## **Practice Players and Multiple Sport Athletes**

School sports and activities are an integral part of the scholastic experience and we will make every effort to work with players and parents to allow players to participate in other school or club sports and activities.

However, we recommend that if a player and their family are not willing to make it a priority to attend at least 85-90% of Ridgecrest Starlings practices and events then those families should carefully consider participation in a club sports program.

Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club is a team based organization. All players in the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club are expected to be an active, contributing, competitive member of their team and to put the welfare and the success of their team ahead of their own wants, wishes and desires. Within each team we focus on training and developing individual players in order to make them great teammates, better athletes and better volleyball players.

Being an integral part of a team and developing strong team based skills is the very core of your development as a volleyball player. Any player, who is only interested in practice, not competing, is not interested in being a full member of a team. Therefore the Ridgecrest Starlings will not, in ordinary circumstances, accept practice-players. However we recognize that there may be rare instances or extraordinary circumstances where a player may not be in a position to join one of our teams. Any exceptions to our practice-player policy will be determined by the director and then the appropriate coaches on a case by case basis. Any player who is allowed by the director to be a practice-player will only be assigned to a team with the approval of that team's coach.

One of the most common reasons players may only want to be a practice-player is to allow them to compete in another sport during the club volleyball season. The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club supports our athlete's desires to participate in other activities while being a member of a club volleyball team. However the athletes should not expect their volleyball team to always be a secondary priority to their other activities. Volleyball players who want to play multiple sports or participate in other activities will need to learn to balance their efforts, their time and their dedication among all of their activities.

In the past, some players have asked to be practice-players because they are not able to start club volleyball until after the winter high school sports season because the high school coaches of other sports have told their players that they are not allowed to play club volleyball while playing on their high school team. The Ridgecrest Starlings do not agree with this policy and should not be expected to accommodate these other coach's unrealistic, selfish and exclusionary policies. If a high school coach will not allow you to play club volleyball and be on his team at the same time, He is trying to force you to choose to play just their sport. The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club can offer any player in this situation one option (see rule 3 below) that may allow you still participate in both sports at the same time.

If a player desires to be a member of a Ridgecrest Starlings Club Volleyball Team and play another high school or middle school sport at the same time we will support their effort to do so with the following restrictions:

1. The player must sign up to be a member of the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club and be assigned to a team at the beginning of the club volleyball season. You will not be allowed to join a club team if you wait until after the other sport season ends to contact our club.

2. If a player joins the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club with the intent to stop playing club volleyball mid-season in order to play another sport, the player will have to have the director's and club volleyball coach's permission to play on her volleyball team under those conditions. Any players who terminate mid-season without telling their coach and the director at the beginning of the season what their intentions are will not be allowed to join the Ridgecrest Starlings again the following season.
3. If a player wants to be a club volleyball player and play another sport where the coach WILL NOT allow the player to practice or compete with a club volleyball team during their season. You will be allowed to join a club volleyball team under the following conditions:
  - a. The player will need her assigned volleyball coach's permission to be part of her team even though she may not practice or compete for several months.
  - b. During the other sport's season, if she is not allowed (by the other coach) to practice or compete, the player will still be expected to attend all volleyball practices and tournaments that do not have a direct day and time conflict with the other sport. The player is expected to be at practice in order to learn what she can from the sidelines and to bond with her team.
  - c. The player will be expected to attend tournaments even if she cannot compete in order to support and cheer for her team from the sidelines. She can also assist with scorekeeping, stats, etc.
  - d. The player will be expected to attend and participate in all team events that do not directly conflict with the other sport's schedule. (i.e. team dinners, team activities, etc.)
  - e. Once the player's other sport season ends and she starts practicing and competing with her volleyball team full time, she should NOT expect to have significant court time at tournaments until the coach feels she has "caught up" sufficiently to positively contribute to the team on the court. Like her teammates, the player must earn her court time in practice. The player will be expected to travel to the tournaments with her team regardless of her play status.

***If expecting a player to attend practices or tournaments when she is not allowed to practice or play seems unfair? Remember - it is NOT the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club that is stopping the player from playing club volleyball. It is the policies of the other coach of the other sport that is limiting the player's athletic opportunities.***

4. All players will pay the full club fees and are expected to attend all tournaments, practices and events, even if they will not be playing that day. Discounts will not be given for players who cannot attend all practices or tournaments.
5. If the coach of another sport or activity WILL support a player's desire to play for their team and play club volleyball at the same time – we will support our athletes in their endeavor to be a multiple sport athlete with the following rules and concessions.

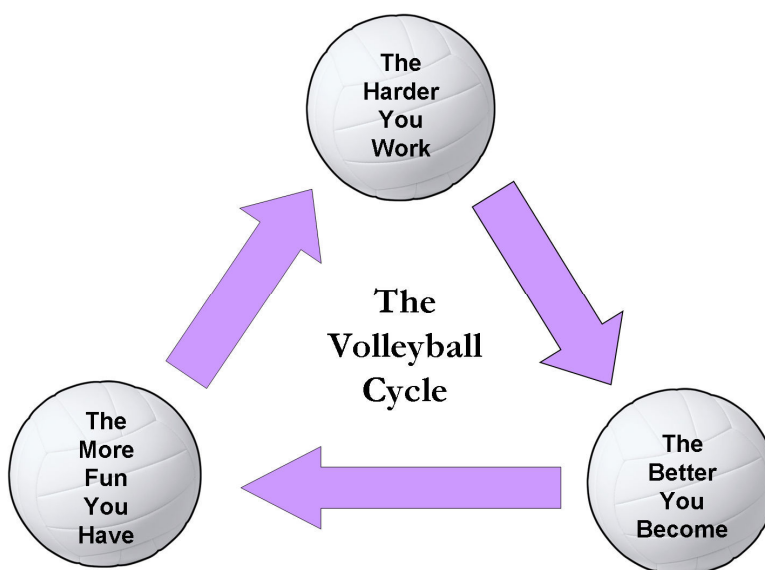
- a. Players will be allowed to miss volleyball practice for the other sport's games. Just as we will expect the player to miss the other sports practices to attend volleyball tournaments.
- b. Game/Tournament conflicts must be dealt with on a case-by-case basis between the player and her coaches from both sports.
- c. Practice conflicts. Players will be allowed to miss occasional volleyball practices in order to participate in practices for the other sport. But we will expect the same consideration from the other sports coach also. (Most middle school basketball coaches have been pretty good about this,)
- d. How much practice, or how many team activities a player is allowed to miss, must be worked out between the player and her coach.

*Players can be either givers or takers. The giving and taking can happen both verbally and non-verbally. A giver understands that she doesn't need to be the kill leader for the team to win a match. Be supportive. No eye rolling. No turning your back after a teammate makes a mistake. When the team comes together after losing a point, give high-fives with meaning; don't just put your butt in the huddle and then turn around and walk out.*

*– Mary Wise, Head Coach – University of Florida*

## **Team Chemistry, Support and Having Fun**

A vital part of a team's success is the chemistry that develops between the players. All players must demonstrate unity, support, friendship, and respect towards each other at all times. All players will be expected to contribute to the team chemistry and to be enthusiastic at both practices and tournaments regardless their play status.



*My vision of a champion is someone who is bent over, drenched in sweat at the point of exhaustion, when no one else is looking. – Anson Dorrance*

## **Academics**

All Club players must maintain a good academic standing throughout the school year. Good grades are an extremely important part of a player's future and the Ridgecrest Starlings feel it is in the club and the player's best interests for all players to maintain the highest grades they can achieve.

## **Rules and Policies for Players**

1. The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club expects each player to treat all coaches, other players and adults (parents, coaches, officials, etc.) with respect and to address them in a proper manner. When at tournaments, directors, referees, other coaches, opponents and their parents are also to be treated with respect. Failure to adhere to this standard by a player or their family members may result in the player's immediate suspension of play or dismissal from the Club.
2. Athletes must report any and all injuries to their coaches. This is imperative to the athlete's safety and proper growth and development. Withholding information about injuries will cost an athlete play time.
3. Athletes must be coachable. Arrive at practice on time and ready to work hard, make technical changes, learn new skills, and display a positive attitude toward practices, teammates and coaches. Do what your coach tells you to do, and do it how and when he tells you to. Volleyball is a growth sport – skills and techniques that served you well last year may need to be changed or improved in order for you grow and improve this year.
4. Part of growing up as an athlete is learning how to talk to and deal with a coach. All of our coaches will happily take the time to explain to any player why they do and say the things they are doing and saying. You may not like your coach's answer, but they will honestly answer your questions. **No player should ever leave a practice confused, angry or unhappy with things her coach has said or the way he is coaching her or her team.**
5. If you have concerns about your position or play time you should schedule an appointment and directly address your concerns with your coach. During practice or on a tournament day is not an appropriate time for this conversation.
6. Athletes must have and wear proper gym apparel to practices and tournaments. Athletes will be responsible for their own kneepads, shoes, and other necessary items.
7. No jewelry of any kind is allowed during practices or tournaments.
8. Players must keep the practice and tournament facilities clean and orderly. The Ridgecrest Starlings are a guest in practice and tournament facilities. All players must assist each other in any necessary clean up.
9. Gym bags and other personal belongings should be neatly placed in the location designated by

the coach at both practices and tournaments.

10. Athletes are responsible for their possessions. The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club is not responsible for lost or stolen items at practices, tournaments, or club events. You will have a gym bag, keep your stuff in it, and keep the bag closed.
11. Coaches may hold team meetings after matches or tournaments. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory. No athlete will leave practice, tournaments or other team events until released by their coach.
12. Pressure and anxiety may be intense at tournaments. Athlete issues (teen drama) will not be tolerated during tournaments. It is an unnecessary distraction. Come to all tournaments focused on volleyball and only on volleyball.
13. Display Team, Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club and Personal PRIDE at all times. Be courteous to officials, opponents, and coaches. Perform with real effort, winning or losing. Actively, assist with non-game assignments, including up/down officiating and scoring. You work hard to be a good volleyball team. Be proud of your team.
14. All Starlings teams are members of Starlings Volleyball, USA, the largest junior's volleyball club in the U.S. Support and cheer for other Starlings teams.

*Your body language is huge! What you do after you make a mistake .... If I could talk to every club kid that is out there right now – I don't mind, I see kids, players, prospects making mistakes on the court all the time and I like that. Because what I want to watch is what are you doing right after you make that mistake. – Greg Whitus – NCAA division I, college recruiter*

## **Practice Rules**

In addition to the Ridgecrest Starlings rules and policies listed in this document each team/coach may have their own additional rules for practices and/or tournaments. These rules will be provided to the players by their coaches.

All your family and friends are welcome to attend any tournament they wish. We prefer to limit attendance and participation in practices.

- Parents are welcome to stay throughout any practices. If they desire to help, talk to the coach – they will help you find a way to be involved.
- Younger siblings may stay at practices as long as they are accompanied by a parent, stay out of the way, off the court and do not become a distraction.
- Small children should be watched closely by their parents as they may be injured if they get in the way of drills and exercises. Please keep them away from the court.
- Boyfriends, by their very nature, are distracting, and therefore are not allowed to attend practices.

*If all I wanted to do was win, I'd find something I can play on my own. The real prize comes from the experience you get, and the time you spend learning to work well together with new friends. That is far more valuable than any gold medal or trophy I have ever seen.*

## **Player Code Of Conduct and “Zero Tolerance” Rules**

Players are reminded that they are representatives of their team and the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club. Everyone should exercise good judgment and be considerate of others at all times during club volleyball activities.

The luggage and personal effects of the athletes may be inspected at anytime during a trip or practice by any member of the Ridgecrest Starlings staff (this includes Chaperones).

For safety purposes, during tournaments, players are expected to travel in pairs when not escorted by a chaperone or coach. On overnight trips, players must always receive permission from Chaperones or parents before leaving their motel rooms for any reason.

Players must wear appropriate attire when traveling with the Ridgecrest Starlings. Mandatory attire for tournaments is your official issued uniform. No modifications to the uniform will be allowed. While traveling before and after tournaments players are encouraged to wear their Ridgecrest Starlings tee shirts and/or sweatshirts and sweatpants.

There is a “Zero Tolerance” policy with respect to the following rules:

- Players must not use or possess unlawful drugs, tobacco or alcohol;
- Players must remain nonpregnant;
- No (non-sibling) boys in players’ rooms and no players in (non-sibling) boys’ rooms;
- Players must not participate in any criminal activity.
- No physical or verbal hostile or aggressive confrontations.

Any player who engages in any such misconduct will be immediately removed from her team and sent home at the expense of her parents.

### **Substance Policy**

Possession and/or use of alcohol, illegal and recreational drugs, and any tobacco products are strictly prohibited.

Alcohol possession and/or consumption by minors (under age 21) is prohibited by law and by our club. Possession and/or use of recreational and/or illegal drugs are also prohibited. If a player uses any of these substances while a member of a junior club team, the team may be declared ineligible for further competition by the SCVA. Therefore, possession or use, at any time, of illegal drugs or alcohol by Ridgecrest Starlings athletes will result in immediate expulsion from the club.

The sale of tobacco products is illegal to persons under 18 years old. Additionally, there is overwhelming evidence that tobacco degrades health and athletic performance. Therefore, possession or use of any tobacco products, at any time, is subject to the same penalties as alcohol and drug use.

## **Suspending or Expelling a Player**

There are reasons why a player may be suspended from playing or be expelled from the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club:

- Demonstrated lack of commitment as evidenced by excessive unexcused absences from practices

and/or tournaments,

- Repeated, poor sportsmanship or a lack of respect for others,
- Repeated, poor attitude, lack of effort, disruptions and/or dishonesty,
- Being uncoachable – not willing to learn, change or grow as a volleyball player,
- Repeated violation of Player Rules or Policies,
- Any violation of Code of Conduct or “Zero Tolerance” Rules (see below),
- Repeated violation of Parent Rules or Policies

No suspension or expulsion of a player will occur without a review with the player, her parents, coach and the club director.

## **Rules and Policies For Parents**

1. Be a good role model for your daughter and her team. The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club can teach athletes many positive traits, such as teamwork, athleticism, a spirit of cooperation, self-discipline, and respect for commitment to excellence. But in order for these positive traits to take hold, the adults around them must also set proper examples.
2. Supportive parents make a stronger team. The Director and all the Coaches want parents, friends, relatives and fans to enjoy all the practices and tournaments. Please be involved and be a cheerleader for the entire team. If you desire to become more involved with the Ridgecrest Starlings talk to the director to see how the club can best use your skills. After your children, supportive parents are any club’s most valuable assets.
3. Cheer for your team and all its players. If they make a great play, it is also OK to cheer or congratulate our opponents. Encourage your daughter to interact in a friendly manner with players, coaches and parents on other teams.
4. Do not yell at or approach the officials, lines persons, or scorekeepers at a tournament. If a problem or a score discrepancy occurs, let the coach deal with the problem. Yelling at a referee will not get them to change their mind about a call and it may prejudice the official against your daughter’s team. Verbally abusing an official, linesman or scorekeeper may result in your official ejection from the tournament site. *Yelling or complaining about the scorekeeping may result in your ejection from the tournament site. In an extreme case may result in your daughter’s team forfeiting their match.*
5. Stay off the court. SCVA rules state that the only individuals allowed to interact with the players on the court are the coach, director, or other official club personnel. “The court” is defined by the actual playing court and the minimum 6’ 6” free zone surrounding the court.
6. Cheer for your daughter and her team. Be supportive of both her and her team. If she is having a bad day, and she needs consoling, do so without judging her, her coach, or her teammates.
7. Parents must never approach a coach with a complaint at any time in front of their team, at a practice and absolutely never, under any circumstances, on a tournament day. Schedule a meeting with your coach to discuss your complaint. If you cannot resist the temptation to complain about, chew them out, or verbally attack your daughter’s coach in front of his team your daughter will be immediately

excused from that day's activities and sent home. Repeat violations of this rule will result in your daughter being dismissed from the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club.

8. Parents shall not be disruptive to the team in any manner while playing, practicing, traveling, or just hanging out together. Parents who are found to be disruptive or creating any problems among the team will have their daughter removed from that activity. Repeat violations of this rule will result in your daughter being dismissed from the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club.
9. Do not publically criticize any (current or former) members, parents or coaches of your daughter's club or team. Criticism is contagious and usually hurtful. The damage you do may be irreversible.
10. If a parent has a concern that he or she would like to discuss, or if a parent is not satisfied with a particular issue, then please follow the grievance resolution procedures in this handbook (Page 16).
11. Learn the rules of the game, and your daughter's coach's personal coaching philosophy. If you haven't been around enough to understand a rule or the coach's philosophy, take the time to learn about them firsthand before complaining about them.
12. Get your child to practice on time and pick her up promptly. Make sure that she arrives properly prepared to practice and compete.
13. Parents are allowed to listen to any conversation a coach is having with his team or your daughter. You may hover around the perimeter of a huddle or sit and listen in at any team meeting. Remember – you are there as a spectator. If you insert yourself physically or verbally into a team meeting or huddle without being invited to speak by the coach – your daughter will be sent home for the day. Repeated violations of this rule will result in your daughter being dismissed from the Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club.
14. You are committing a lot of time, money and energy in order for your daughter to be a member of her team and learn from her coach – so let her coach do his job. If you disagree with his methods, manner, or what he is teaching make an appointment and talk to him about your concerns.
15. Coaching decisions are the SOLE responsibility of the coach. Line-up decisions are the SOLE responsibility of the coach. Playing time decisions are the SOLE responsibility of the coach. Offense and defense decisions are the SOLE responsibility of the coach. Specific decisions about who plays when, who subs in and out, and the length of time any given athlete is on the court is the SOLE discretion of the coach.

**No coach will be required to defend his or her thought processes or decisions, and it is improper and unacceptable for a parent to request a coach, or the club to do so.**

16. Commit all your thoughts, energy and time to helping your daughter, her teammates and their coach make her team the best volleyball team they can become.
17. Be there for the games and practices. Don't be one of those parents who never watch a practice or attend meetings and (therefore never understand a coaches philosophy) but will be the first to question a coaches decisions during a game.

18. No parent is allowed to coach or attempt to coach their athlete from the sidelines during any practice or tournament. Parents should stay off the court and team sidelines unless requested to be there. If you want to coach your daughter – sign up with the director, pass a background check and become IMPACT certified by USA volleyball, spend a season as an assistant coach with the Ridgecrest Starlings proving that you know what you are doing, and then we will let you coach.
19. Respect the rules. This is one of the most important attitudes players need to learn. If you don't agree with officials or your coach, keep it to yourself. Honor the rules of the game and your coach's decisions.
20. Have fun. This should be a positive experience for everyone. Winning is nice, but losing is inevitable. Being the parent of a star player may be important to you, but every player is equally as important to their team. Remember – everything is about the team – not just your daughter.

“Volleyball is the ultimate team sport, you only get one contact before you have to give the ball off to a team mate, It's not about six people and a ball, it's about the team coming together, working together, It's the synergy of the group that eventually wins the match not just the all-stars you have lined up there,”  
Cynthia Barboza – member U.S. Women's National Team

## **Expenses and Fees**

The fee for membership in the 2012 Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club will be seven hundred (\$700) dollars per player.

Most of the costs that the club incurs happen at the beginning of the season. It is very helpful if the entire player's fee can be paid up front. However if paying the whole fee up front is a financial hardship the fees can be paid in two installments due on the following dates:

If paid in one installment of \$700.00 - due on Tuesday November 22, 2011.

If paid in two installments:

- \$350 due on Tuesday November 22, 2011.
- \$350 due on Tuesday January 24, 2012.

All fees must be paid in full by January 24, 2011.

If you are unable to pay the fees in full by January 24<sup>th</sup>, or you need an alternate payment schedule please contact the Director to make other arrangements.

## **Uniforms**

The Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club will provide:

- Team Jerseys – (2 with contrasting colors)

- A set of warm-ups or a hooded sweatshirt
- A personalized gym bag
- A club tee shirt
- Team Socks (2 pr) (optional)
- Team Shorts (optional – may require additional fee)

The jerseys are the property of the club and are loaned to the player for the season. After Starlings Nationals Tournament in June all the jerseys must be turned into your coach before leaving San Diego. Losing or damaging a jersey will require the player to buy a replacement jersey.

We will try and accommodate individual requests for specific numbers on jerseys. But we cannot guarantee that the number a player wants will be available in their size.

All other equipment, except for the jerseys, becomes the personal property of the player.

Players are expected to wear the agreed upon team uniform to all tournaments. No modifications or additions to the team uniform will be allowed.

Players are responsible for their own shorts, shoes, kneepads, ankle braces, etc.

The type and style of shorts that the team can wear will be decided in a team meeting with the players, coaches and their parents.

## **Playing and Court Time**

We guarantee that playing time on any team or at any event **WILL NOT BE EQUAL**. The very nature of the game and the substitution rules make equal play time impossible. Playing time for athletes is determined by a complex combination of attendance, attitude, effort, performance, the athlete's potential, the team's needs at the moment and in the future, the coach's philosophy, the team's competitive level and is left solely to the coach's discretion. This coaching decision is not up for debate or question.

All players are expected to be fully involved, competitive members of their team regardless of the amount of play time they get during the tournaments. As teams mature and grow each player will develop or grow into a role on the team. Remember the single most important position on the team is the one you have been assigned to play for that match. Give it your all, commit to doing everything you can for your team, supporting one another at all times. Do this and your team, your season, and you will be successful.

***You are paying for instruction and practice time - not time on the court at tournaments.***

***All playing time, line-ups and rotations are the sole discretion of the coach.***

All the talent in the world will take you nowhere without your teammates.
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## **Grievance Procedure**

Competitive athletics can give participants a worthwhile and rewarding experience. However, by its very nature competitive athletics will not allow all people involved to be happy at all times. In the case of a grievance please know when and how to approach the situation to reach a speedy resolution.

Never approach a coach during practice or on tournament days to discuss a grievance.

Your concerns and input are important and we certainly welcome the opportunity to discuss them with you. In the event that you or your athlete has a grievance, Please adhere to the following procedures:

### **For Players:**

1. Ask your coach for some time to discuss a problem. Then talk to your coach. Do not ambush your coach with a problem during a practice or on a tournament day. Instead ask for some time before or after a practice or on a non-practice day.

### **For Parents:**

1. Wait 24 hours! If after 24 hours you still feel angry or indignant, then -
2. Talk to your athlete. If your daughter has the same concerns or problems that you are experiencing then she should arrange to talk over the problem with her coach. If this conversation does not solve the problem then -
3. Both the player and parents should meet with the coach. The parent should make an appointment with the coach for a meeting (not on a tournament day) with your athlete present. If this does not solve the conflict then -
4. A meeting with the coach, player, parent and club director will be in order.
5. If a meeting with the director, coach, player and parents does not resolve your grievance you will have only two choices – 1) learn to live with the issue, 2) play volleyball somewhere else.

If you have complaints or problems, please give yourself a 24 cooling off period, then follow the steps above to resolve your problem. Do not let a sense of unhappiness or dissatisfaction fester and grow. Please deal with the problem directly. Constant or repetitive complaining around you athlete and/or the other parents and members of the club will not solve your problems.

Young players are vulnerable and impressionable. Hearing constant complaints about the coach, the coach's style, or club policies, or other players or parents - can have an adverse effect on the athlete as well as the athlete's teammate's performance and/or attitude. If you, as a parent, are unhappy about something, please follow the grievance policy to resolve the matter.

*All performance whether individual or team is based on trust. Athletes have the best chance for performing well when they trust themselves. Teams have the best chance for success when coaches and parents create a climate where athletes feel the adults care for them is not based on performance. The support is unconditional. Athletes have the best chance to learn what trust is all about if they see it modeled by their parents and coaches.*

*– Terry Pettit former head coach University of Nebraska*

## Ten Steps To Help Your Coach Help You (Excerpted)

By Dave Cross National Director of Yes I Can Volleyball

(The entire article is available at: <http://www.ridgecreststarlings.com/articles/10steps.html>)

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“If your coach has fun - you will too!” What can you and your teammates do to ensure your coach is having fun working with your team? Try the following ideas and see if it doesn't bring a smile to your coaches' face, (and a boost to your level of play):

1. Personally set a goal to be the first one in the gym before every practice or game. - Coaches love it when their players get in the gym early, and those who straggle in “just on time” or a few minutes late impress no coach.
2. Always volunteer to help set up the nets. If this task is done, start warming up early. - Your coach has many important jobs to take care of every day for your team. Do not make them waste time doing things you can do for them - they will greatly appreciate it!
3. Always greet your coach with a cheerful smile. - Doesn't it give you a good feeling when you are welcomed pleasantly? Your coach is no different. “Treat others as you want them to treat you.”
4. Always run everywhere in the gym during practice. When the team is called together, set a goal to be the first one over to the coach each time. All coaches love hustle and enthusiasm and hate the opposite.
5. Always look directly at your coach when they are speaking. - This shows respect and an eagerness to listen, learn and cooperate. *(From the director - I would add a corollary to this step - Always look directly at your coach when you are talking to him. Being able to stand up straight, look your coach in the eye and speak your mind is a sure sign of maturity and self confidence - two things your coach is going to love seeing you display.)*
6. Never talk when your coach is speaking. - This is very disrespectful and no one enjoys being “dissed”. Besides, how can you possibly be listening if you're talking yourself?
7. Make every effort to do what the coach is asking for at all times. - That is all any coach expects of their players- to do their best.
8. Never question the correctness of your coach's instructions or strategy in front of others. - This is usually viewed as being disrespectful and puts your coach on the defensive in front of everyone. Nothing good can come of this.
9. If you do have a question, respectfully ask the coach one-on-one during a break or after practice. - You'll get a much better response to your inquiry and your approach to the situation will be appreciated.
10. Learn what your coach likes to talk about besides volleyball and make an effort to chat a little when appropriate. - Everyone likes it when others show an interest in what they enjoy.

*I think about how lucky I am to have such wonderful friends. We laugh, play and work hard together as a team. It is so rewarding to win as a team. It is so disappointing to lose as a team. But, always, we win and lose as a team. The support, friendship and love that we have for each other is an ever-lasting experience. Volleyball is the glue that bonds our friendship. The Starlings program is the reason why we are together. Volleyball is more than a sport or competition. It is girls getting together, bonding and working hard for the one goal of doing our best. No matter what the outcome of the tournament, we always go home winners. We are winners because we are friends.*

*- Lauren Okabayashi (10<sup>th</sup> Grade) Starlings – Dominguez Hills, CA*



Acknowledgement of Receipt & Acceptance of Handbook

Player Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

We acknowledge receipt of the Player/Parent Handbook/Guidelines and have read and will abide by all rules it contains, specifically the Code of Conduct, Player and Parent Guidelines contained therein while members of Ridgecrest Starlings Volleyball Club.

Player Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(This form must be submitted to the club director with the rest of your paperwork, after you have read the handbook.)