



Eastside Twin City Volleyball Club

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State of Eastside Volleyball Club

*By Tim Vande Schraaf, President
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Over 10 years ago the birth of the Eastside Volleyball Club organization was formed when five East Peoria Community members met and adopted a mission with 3 primary principles that are still followed to this day. The founding principles put in place at that time were:

- 1. To provide an affordable program and partner with facilities in and around Central Illinois with our common goals of building the volleyball infrastructure.*
- 2. To never lose sight that God, Family, & School come first and we should never have volleyball supersede those important memories.*
- 3. To bring volleyball to a much higher level and put Central Illinois in direct competition at the State level.*

To this day we continue to hold those founding philosophies as our golden rule. We can be proud that we continue to keep our program as the most affordable program in the area's we are based in. The club has always afforded more bang for the buck. Is it cheap? No, we work very hard to maintain and meet these goals by the endless hours spent by our Board of Directors to provide this program as volunteers. Although sometimes we may not be as available as some of our competitors, we hold in our heart a love and passion that cannot be measured as a business. It has never been about the buck, but instead about the player. Although we continue to strive to partner with facilities, we are quickly becoming a statewide organization and will not simply be based in Central Illinois. We have a large pool of equipment that is currently used by our partners and we may have to move and work with other facilities that work within our plans and area's. Unlike previous years, it is becoming more difficult with use of facilities. In this political environment today we must always look for what is best for the organization, which could result in different competition and practice sites. I continue to work with a plan of facility use for both, and be rest assured I will look out for the betterment of the organization as a whole. Does this mean the Eastside Volleyball Club will cease to exist in some areas? Yes, possibly if it will impact the organization as a whole. Will the Eastside Volleyball Program continue to operate? Yes, of course, but possibly with a new look and in new areas.

To this day we also continue to strive to promote the importance of God, Family, & School to our players and encourage participation in those activities as a core means for growing up. Although we sometimes cross the line of promoting an all or none, we eventually go back to our founding principles. Last year we crossed the line more than we wanted to due to missed practices and competitions by our players, and felt that in order to reach a higher level, we needed to hold our players hostage. This has been a difficult dilemma in the past, but I am pleased to announce we have a plan for this year and future years. We will not ask our players to pick activities, although it should be no secret that those attending volleyball will far exceed their growth to those that do not attend. The new philosophy will make use of a more communal practice system, which will also enhance our facility scheduling. We will implore our athletes to find it within themselves to make allowances and make their schedule's work.

Although our competitions are strong, we need to reach higher than we have in the past for a new level. With that, we will be adding a more Elite track to our existing program that will have a schedule in place that will force our athletes to reach for that higher level. I believe we have the best players in the area, we have just not sustained to reach high enough yet, and in the past, have not had goals and expectations for reaching post season play. Although we will continue to operate our founding principles of getting everyone involved in competitive volleyball to increase the area volleyball infrastructure, we will now offer opportunities for reaching post season play via higher level competitions and the qualifier circuit for our Elite teams. Success is no longer measured by just wins and losses, but by whom you play and how well you play them. In the many years since the program was born, we have seen a trend for most nightly area school competitions. When the program was established I made a statement that all programs must accelerate their programs by getting as many players as possible engaged in club volleyball. Those benefits and accomplishments are now being seen now by the competitive nature each night of Central Illinois teams. Teams are no longer taken for granted. To that end, those teams are much better prepared for their post season play and we will eventually see an area team at the state level.

In closing as we start a new chapter of the Eastside Volleyball Club, we are now known as the Eastside Twin City Volleyball Club as the result of a merger with the Twin City Volleyball Club. All of the ideals, values, philosophies, and goals will be retained, but now we have the same basic principles of the Twin City Volleyball Club meshed nicely with ours. We all look forward to some of the additional values such as better engagement with the players through journalizing, a plan for an Sports Nutritionist's, since there is an epidemic of poor eating habits among our youth, and more importantly some of the mental preparation that is instilled through the Twin City Volleyball methods.

I would personally like to ask you all to come to our upcoming information meetings. This is a new and improved look you should all want to be a part of. I shared with our staff that we have the best players and coaches in the area. This is the year we break out and prove that and I would like you all to be a part of that excitement!