

## **THE CARE AND FEEDING OF A NYC JUNIOR VOLLEYBALL TEAM ON THE ROAD**

**Words of wisdom from parents who have  
“been there, done that” graciously compiled  
by Susan Semmens**

Instructions and tips for chaperoning teams during over-night, multiple day tournaments:

(NOT 1 day GEVA Tournaments when each family is responsible for their daughter’s food, travel and care)

Chaperones bear the primary responsibility for the care and feeding of a volleyball team while it is on the road attending multiple day tournaments. While coaches may involve themselves in the non-volleyball aspects of a road trip, by driving or participating in outings, chaperones must be prepared to be responsible for the team whenever it is not on the court. Often, the team travels to a tournament with the parents providing vehicles for carpooling. Other times, for larger trips that are further away, the team may travel together by van or air.

### **MEALS:**

Although meals are the responsibility of the chaperones, the coaches should be consulted on a daily basis, about when meals are best accommodated in the play schedule. Some coaches also have preferences concerning what kinds of foods they want the team to be eating.

Budget considerations should always be a top priority when planning. Girls are responsible for their food costs and meal bills. Grocery bills are totaled and divided evenly between the girls and collected at the end of the tournament.

### **BREAKFAST:**

Normally there are two shifts or “waves” on a given day of play. At most two and three day tournaments there may be multiple pools in a day. If the team has drawn a morning wave, that means that play will start at 8:00 (they may have to be at the gym even earlier if they play the first match!) This means that, depending on the travel site, they might need to eat breakfast as early as 6:00 am.

Chaperones have 4 options:

- a. Best option if available, is to eat at an “expanded continental breakfast” that is included in the room rate at the hotel. They often include yogurts, fruit, juice, milk, and cereal and sometimes more. It is “free”

and convenient, although chaperones should check to see if the breakfast will be served early enough for the team's schedule.

- b. Hotel Breakfast: This option could be difficult for player's budgets. In addition, some hotels don't serve breakfast early enough or quickly enough for early morning play. If it is chosen, chaperones should arrange for team seating ahead of time and accompany the girls to breakfast.
- c. Locate an inexpensive restaurant nearby (IHop, Denny's, etc.) that serves breakfast at an early hour. Chaperones should locate these restaurants ahead of time and know the address, reserve the table, etc.
- d. Organize breakfast in one of the chaperone's rooms. Other than the free hotel breakfast, this is the cheapest and fastest way to feed a team. It means that the chaperones will have done the shopping the night before and will have a cooler (can be Styrofoam from the supermarket)  
\* Please see recommended Breakfast Grocery List at the end of the document.

If a team has the PM wave in the afternoon or a later bracket, the coach may let them sleep in and eat "brunch" (utilizing one of the options above) in the late morning.

## **LUNCH:**

If the team plays in the morning wave, they will need lunch at the tournament site. (Even if the team is in the PM wave, the team may need to eat something during their pool play, which may last well into the evening) Chaperones must be prepared to bring all the ingredients to the site and provide the team with food. Since many sites restrict the areas in which food may be brought and served, a bit of scouting can save difficulties at mealtime. If the weather is nice, there is often a place outside where lunch can be assembled. Sometimes the restrictions only apply to courtside or inside the actual gym, and the food can be brought out in a hallway or in a seating area. If possible, ask those who have been at the tournaments for tips.

The girls can make their own sandwiches with the ingredients provided.

Nutritious (and popular) snacks are included in the grocery list. Chaperones can check with the coaches to find out pool play schedule and the best times for having food available to the team. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE TEAM MEMBERS CLEAN UP AFTER THEMSELVES!**

At some tournaments the team eats from the "groceries" more than once during the playing day. It depends on the format of the tournament. Groceries can always be replenished as needed. \* Please see the recommended grocery list at the end of the document.

## **DINNER**

At most tournament sites, it is difficult to find a restaurant that will seat the entire team, coaches and chaperones as well as additional parents, unless reservations are made in advance by the chaperones (or other helpful parents) Therefore chaperones should identify a restaurant early in the day (or in advance of the tourney) and make reservations. It is important to recognize that reservations that are usually being made on Friday or Sat. nights in restaurants often overburdened by other teams. While dinner, from arrival to departure, may take 2 hours at 6pm, it can take 3 hours at 7pm (girls are often hungry and tired at the end of a long day of play) Chaperones should also consider that the girls may be on tight budgets, and should try to keep meals in the \$10-\$20 range for dinner. It is usually best to keep the adults' and the girls' check separate for easier division of the bill. (Girls become quite good at handling this themselves) Places where they can have separate checks or can order at a counter and pay individually are great for keeping it simple. Consulting Zagats online for a listing of restaurants sorted by price can sometimes turn up some gems for inexpensive and fun team dinners. Again, chaperones can ask those who have been at the tournament before.

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

The cell phone has become indispensable, particularly when more than one vehicle is in use. Chaperones should have the cell phone numbers of the coaches and emergency numbers for team members' families with them traveling. (Coaches will have these as well)

## **MONEY:**

The girls are advised to bring money for food. They can settle their own bill at restaurants. (Discussed above)The chaperones collect money from each girl to cover the team grocery bill at the end of the tournament. Note that the coaches are welcome to eat from the team groceries, but are not asked to pay a share of the grocery bill.

There is usually a little opportunity for extra spending, except for the possible purchase of a tournament t-shirt, souvenirs or added recreational activity (see below)

## **RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

Most tournament schedules leave little time for extra recreational activities. Time permitting and **after consulting with the coaches and team**, chaperones may wish to organize group activities. Many of the girls have homework to take

care of during the down time over a tournament weekend. If the group splits into two, with one group remaining at the hotel to study, one chaperone should remain at the hotel with the players.

### **HOTEL ROOMS:**

Chaperones should be rooming at the same hotel, with at least one chaperone on the same floor near the team rooms. They should have a rooming list (usually assigned in advance by the coaching staff) and aware of the hotel room assignments. Coaches usually give the girls a "lights out" time as well as a time to be at breakfast. How a chaperone might handle this, and how "hands on" they need to be with getting them going in the morning may vary depending on the age of the girls involved. Girls should be encouraged to get their own wake-up calls and be responsible for being ready to leave with them on time. It is the chaperones' responsibility for making sure the girls are safe and in their rooms at the end of the evening.

- Chaperones pay for their own travel costs, including hotel rooms. The exception has been that the club pays for the chaperone's dorm room for the East Coast Championships at Penn State where they are required to stay in the dorm with the team. Check with club director for any clarifications.
- Team travel arrangements may be made by the club, the coaches, or a team parent or chaperone. Parents usually make their own reservations. Again, check with the Club Director and coach to clarify at the beginning of the season.

### **CLUB VOLLEYBALL GROCERY LIST**

Will probably need to replenish at least some items during tournament (usually bread and sandwich meat, possibly more yogurts if breakfast is served)

Remember that you have limited storage space for perishables. To keep costs down you don't want to over buy. Although there are always some foods that are eaten first, when they are hungry, the girls will eat what remains.

### **BREAKFAST "in the room"**

- Milk (2 half gallons)
- ½ gallon skim
- ½ gallon 2%

- CEREAL – 2 large boxes, low sugar (1 box Cheerios, 1 box Raisin Bran)
- YOGURTS – blended style (Yoplait or similar), low fat raspberry \$ strawberry
- BANANAS – 2 bunches, on the green side to start!
- OJ – 2 ½ gallon cartons
- Small plastic cups
- Paper Bowls
- Plastic spoons and knives
- Napkins
- Peanut Butter \* see lunch groceries
- BREAD \* (also buying for lunch, add one extra loaf to start for breakfast)
- Optional – other fruit

### **ON SITE LUNCH AND SNACKS**

- White Bread 2 large loaves/Wheat Bread 2 large loaves
- FROM THE DELI (note that they often close earlier than store and don't open until 9am) Girls tend to prefer fresh cut deli meats and cheeses
- TURKEY BREAST – 2 lbs. to start, "honey" popular
- HONEY HAM – 1 to 1 ½ lbs. to start
- Sliced Deli Cheese – ½ lb cheddar and ½ lb of provolone or muenster
- PEANUT BUTTER creamy (1 medium/large plastic jar)
- Raspberry or Strawberry Jam (1 squeeze plastic bottle)
- Mayo (squeeze plastic bottle)
- Honey Mustard (squeeze plastic bottle)

### **PRODUCE**

- BANANAS (on the green side. The girls don't seem to eat them if they are too soft!)
- GRAPES (green)
- BABY CARROTS Large bag
- CHERRY OR GRAPE TOMATOES
- ICEBERG LETTUCE – 1 large head
- APPLES (small Gala, Empire, Fuji, or Macs)
- RANCH DIP (low fat is fine)
- CHEESE CUBES
- STRING CHEESE
- HUMMUS
- Low Fat YOGURTS (optional) Blended styles ie- Yoplait or something similar.

- TRISCUITS -1 box
- WHEAT THINS (Bagel Chips are also popular)
- WATERS, enough for 1 for each girl for each day. Sport size to refill.
- Plastic cutlery (spoons and knives)
- Paper plates
- Napkins

**HELPFUL TO HAVE BROUGHT FROM HOME/PREPARED IN ADVANCE**

- Sharpie marker
- Ziploc style ½ gallon bags to store Deli meats, cheese, etc.
- Paper towels
- Disposable plastic tablecloth or an old sheet for spreading out a “picnic”
- Styrofoam cooler or collapsible cooler for transporting when necessary
- Reserve a mini-fridge in hotel room
- Find out ahead of time where nearest grocery store is located