



# **Sand Volleyball League Rulebook and General Information**

## **Purpose and Scope of This Document**

This Rulebook and Registration Information booklet is intended to give all participants a broad overview of how the league operates and explain most rules and procedures that govern the league. This document is not intended to cover every last detail, such as dates and times of Preseason and Postseason parties, schedules for each team, and various other procedural and administrative items. Many additional details for the league will be disseminated via e-mail and on the Club website, so please check both frequently. If you have a SPAM filter on your e-mail, please add [patrick@madisonssc.com](mailto:patrick@madisonssc.com) to your list of safe senders to ensure you receive all e-mails pertaining to the league. This is the only e-mail address from which e-mails regarding the league will come.

## **Code of Conduct**

The Madison Sports and Social Club does not tolerate discrimination, racism, sexual harassment, unwelcome sexual advances, violence, threats, or any other type of behavior that may in any way make any member feel uncomfortable or threaten his or her health and well-being. We expect all members to treat each other with respect and abide by common rules of decency and good sportsmanship.

Team names must not be offensive toward any race, nationality, gender, or any other group of individuals. They must also not contain profanity. Please use tact and common sense when choosing a team name. MSSC reserves the right to reject any team name it finds offensive. You will be asked to supply a new name in the event your team name is deemed inappropriate.

During play, all participants must refrain from taunting, name-calling, put-downs, intimidation, and violence toward teammates and opponents. Everyone makes mistakes, and we will not tolerate criticism or intimidation of any of our members due to differences in skill level or any other factor. Coaching, tips, and helpful hints are welcome, provided they are relayed in a constructive and friendly manner.

All members are encouraged to report offensive behavior to the Club President, Patrick Fosdick, via e-mail at [patrick@madisonssc.com](mailto:patrick@madisonssc.com). All reports will be kept anonymous and taken seriously, and appropriate action will be taken if deemed necessary, including, but not limited to warnings, suspension and removal of the offending individual from the league.

## Registration and General League Information

- Registration is only available on our website (<http://www.madisonssc.com>).
- Teams will be accepted on first paid, first enrolled basis. Teams who submit registrations and payment in good order will be enrolled in the league as their full payment is received. If necessary, a cutoff date for registration will be announced on the Club website and Facebook group.
- The Team Captain has the option to divide up the team fee amongst his or her team members using TeamPayer. This service allows the Captain to assign an amount to each player, who will then receive an e-mail from the captain requesting the amount. Any amounts not paid in full by the second week of the season will be charged to the Captain's credit card.
- We will segment the league into Upper and Lower divisions whenever possible to ensure the best playing experience for everyone. Sometimes we are able to do this for the regular season, and sometimes we just segment playoff brackets based on final regular season standings
- Teams must maintain complete and accurate rosters. All players, including subs, should be listed on a team's roster, and players who play in any number of games must complete the waiver, which is accomplished through accepting a spot on the team from a captain's e-mail invite. Teams in violation of waiver policies will be subject to forfeiting games at MSSC's discretion

## Prizes

Prizes will be awarded for the top teams in the leagues, including Champions t-shirts for the winners, along with cash prizes or gift cards. We segment the league into Upper and Lower divisions whenever possible, and prizes are only awarded to teams in the Upper division.

## Team Shirts

MSSC provides t-shirts for each player on a team's roster. Colors are assigned on a first requested, first awarded basis. You may choose any color other than orange, which is the MSSC staff shirt color.

## Rules and Regulations

### 1. General Rules

- A. All games in the league shall be governed by the rules outlined herein
- B. This is a co-ed recreational league, not the AVP Tour. All players are expected to show good sportsmanship and act appropriately toward team members and opponents at all times
- C. Players must respect the authority of the referees to regulate the game and abide by their decisions. Referees have the authority to eject players from the game for detrimental conduct. All decisions of the referees are final. Any rulings not specifically covered in the rules are up to the discretion of the referee or a representative of MSSC
- D. Rules are subject to change and clarification by MSSC. Any rule changes or clarifications will be communicated to all registered participants via e-mail
- E. Olbrich is a "dry" park – meaning no alcohol is permitted. Dogs are also against city rules

## 2. Team Size and Forfeits

- A. A standard team will consist of six players on the court for each team, at least two of whom must be female. Teams may play with as few as four players provided there are still at least two females on the court. If a team is not able to field four players (including two females), they will forfeit unless the opponent agrees to let them play shorthanded
- B. If a player leaves a match for any reason and no substitute is available, the game may proceed as long as there are still at least four players present (including at least two females)
- C. If a team is not ready to play at the scheduled start time, a forfeit may be declared by the referee. Since the courts are not lighted, we must keep the games on schedule to finish before it gets dark
- D. Teams may recruit subs from other teams during the regular season if they are shorthanded, or use their own subs from outside the league. A team must furnish at least four of its own players to avoid a forfeit. A team's "own player" is defined as anyone not on the roster of another team in the league. Subs from other teams are not allowed in the playoffs.

Starting with the Fall/Winter 2016 season, rosters are going to be more strictly enforced in all MSSC sports due to rampant use of non-roster players and other illegal players in playoff games across leagues in all sports. The following rules are now in force going forward:

- All players (including subs) must "check in" for all regular season games by showing a current picture ID to a referee or representative of MSSC prior to each game. The player must produce the ID on the day of the game – it may not be e-mailed or otherwise submitted at a later date. Driver's licenses or passports are preferred. A picture of a driver's license on a phone is acceptable. If any player is not able to produce an ID, the team has two options:
  1. The player does not participate in the game
  2. The player may participate in the game, but the team permanently forfeits the right to use a non-roster sub in the playoffs
- No player may appear on the roster of more than one team in the league, regardless of division.
- Teams may not use any non-roster sub for more than two games per season. Playoffs are included in the two games
- Any roster player must play in at least 50% of a team's regular season games to be eligible for the playoffs. Exceptions will only be made for injured players who are able to produce a doctor's note stating the length of time before the player may return to participating in sports. The injured player must be on the roster at the beginning of the season
- Subs from other teams are not allowed in the playoffs.
- Teams are allowed one non-roster sub in the playoffs if needed. This sub cannot have already played two games for the team as noted in the third bullet point above, and is subject to the restrictions noted in the first bullet point above
  - A team may use a roster player who did not play in at least three regular season games as their one allowed sub. No other subs are allowed.

All rules listed above may be disregarded if the opponent agrees to let the team play a legal game with players who violate any of the above the rules. Any forfeits must be agreed upon before the start of the game and the scorecard must be signed by both captains acknowledging the forfeit.

### **3. Equipment**

- A. All equipment will be provided by MSSC

### **4. The Court and General Game Play**

- A. The court will consist of one standard sand volleyball court, measuring approximately 60 feet in length by 30 feet in width
- B. Any ball that hits the line is in bounds
- C. All matches will begin with a game of “rock, paper, scissors” between the two captains. The winner may choose to serve or choose the side of the court on which his or her team will begin the game.
- D. After the completion of each individual game, the teams will switch sides
- E. The team that lost the previous game will serve to begin the next game
- F. Players may rotate in wherever they wish, as long as they always rotate in at the same spot. For example, some teams prefer to rotate in at the service position, while some prefer to rotate in at outside hitter opposite the service position. When players rotate in, there still must be at least two females on the court

### **5. Officials**

- A. All games will be officiated by an impartial referee supplied by MSSC. The referee governs all game playing issues and has authority for final rulings

### **6. Serving**

- A. All players must wait for the referee to announce the score before serving. The referee has discretion to award a point to the opponent if a player takes too long to serve
- B. All serves must be made from the sand (not the grass)
- C. Jump serves are not permitted due to the recreational structure of the league. A player may serve overhand or underhand
- C. A serve that hits the net but still goes over is a live ball
- D. Players are allowed to set a serve
- F. Players may not block or otherwise "attack" a serve as it crosses the net or immediately after it crosses the net. Essentially this means that a serve should be either set or bumped, resulting in a dramatic change of trajectory. Not allowed are blocking the ball at or shortly over the net, spiking the ball just after it crosses the net, or pushing the ball back over just after it crosses the net with no other hits by teammates. Refs are allowed to use their discretion for this rule.

## **7. Hitting, volleys, and returning a serve**

- A. There may be no more than three hits per side before the ball must cross back over the net. No player may hit the ball twice in a row (excluding blocks at the net)
- B. There are no gender restrictions on who must hit the ball before it crosses back over the net
- C. Players may not go under the net or hit the net other than by minimal incidental contact. Violation of this rule results in a point for the other team
- D. Players in the back row may not spike or attack. This means they may not jump and hit the ball in a manner that would normally be considered a spike, and they may not move up into the front row to attack. A player's row will be determined based on where he or she was at the serve.
  - If a team only has five players, at least two will be considered to be in the back row at all times. If a team only has four players, at least one will be considered to be in the back row at all times. It is referee discretion as to who is considered in the back row, and refs may determine that there were more players in the back row for shorthanded teams
- E. Lifts and carries are not allowed. The simplest definition of a lift is any hit using two open palms to move the ball upward. A carry occurs when a player palms, holds, or otherwise controls the ball other than by brief contact (for example: palming and throwing a ball rather than bumping or spiking it)
- F. Kicking is permitted
- G. Intentionally heading a ball is not permitted

## **8. Scoring**

- A. Each match will consist of three games, with the winner of two of the three games getting the victory. All three games may be played if time permits. All games will count for tiebreaker purposes in the league standings
- B. The league uses rally scoring - i.e. there are no side outs and a point is scored on every legal serve
- C. Games are played to 21 points and a team must win by two points. There is a cap at 25 points; the first team to 25 wins regardless of the score. Referees have discretion to play games to 15 if daylight becomes a concern

## **Miscellaneous Administrative Rules and Notes**

- MSSC encourages Free Agents (or players without a team) to register. The league has a maximum capacity of 12 teams, so full teams will be placed first, followed by Free Agents in the order they registered
- Free Agents are welcome to form teams on their own or request to play with friends, otherwise they will be assigned to a team by MSSC
- Spectators are welcome and encouraged at the games
- Club management reserves the right to alter the set up of the league at any time before or during the season

## End of the Game

At the completion of the game, the score card will be submitted to MSSC as proof of the game's final score. All players are expected to shake hands and otherwise show good sportsmanship, regardless of the final score or any disagreements or situations that may have arisen during the game.

## Results and Standings

Results and standings will be posted on the Volleyball page of the MSSC website (<http://www.madisonssc.com>) following receipt of the official scores from each game.

## Cancellation/Rainout Policy

Games may be postponed or canceled due to dangerous weather, extremely poor court conditions, or a number of other factors. Rescheduled games are not required to be played at any specific location, but the location must be agreed upon by both teams. In general, canceled games are added to the end of the regular season schedule. **All cancellations will be e-mailed to all registered players and posted on the MSSC website. Do not contact us via e-mail or phone to inquire about rainouts, as those messages will not receive a response.**

## Good Sportsmanship

The final section of the rules and regulations of the league will reiterate what was stated at the beginning of this document: The purpose of our volleyball league is first and foremost to have fun. Winning should always come second. All participants must realize that not all players will be on the same skill level, and that there may be vast differences in skill level between members of the same team or between two teams in the league. Boasting, bragging, taunting, verbally abusing, or otherwise putting down other players will not be tolerated. The referees and/or a representative of MSSC reserve the right to issue warnings, penalties, and ejections if any of the above-mentioned behavior becomes too severe. Winning may be important to you, but good sportsmanship must take priority over wins and losses.