

July 2019

Dear Players and Parents,

I am excited (and SUPER nervous if I'm being honest) to take the lead this year with our Lady Mustangs. This will be my 7<sup>th</sup> year as part of the coaching team at GFA, but the first year as head coach. I will tell you that I absolutely do not feel qualified to coach, but I can, through God's strength, lead them with integrity and encouragement. I will pray for them daily; I will pray for their spiritual, emotional and athletic growth. I ask you to do the same for me; pray that I will listen to and follow the Holy Spirit's leading in all situations, on and off the court.

To start, I want to say playing volleyball is more than just learning a game; it is a time for the girls to learn to deal with life and people in the real world. In life we win, we lose, we get frustrated with ourselves and the people around us; we get sad and outright mad; we have heartbreak of all kinds and joy beyond compare. This is what our season will look like...real life. We may get sad because we don't get the position or playing time we think we should instead of being happy for the person who does. We will get mad that we didn't get the point or there was a bad call by a referee. We will jump up and cheer when a girl who has struggled to get the ball over the net on their serve FINALLY makes it and we don't even care if we lost the point, we're just glad she did it! We will be heartbroken when we lose in the third set by just a few points to a team we've been determined to beat all season (or many seasons for that matter!). We will get discouraged because we keep making the same mistakes over and over; we'll get frustrated with our teammates for making the same mistakes over and over. This is life...this is volleyball.

Through it all, during this volleyball season and our lives in general, we have our Lord and Savior who works ALL things together for the good of those who love Him. Please remember that whatever comes our way, the only one who can defeat us is ourselves. If we are on the Lord's side, then who can stand against us...ONLY US. As humans we often defeat ourselves before we've even given ourselves the chance to try. This year I want our girls to be relentless in trying and never, ever give up! As a team (and there is no "I" in team) we will finish the race as the Apostle Paul would say. We may not win every game but we will not be defeated. We will finish each game with pride because we were brave enough to get on the court, tried our best, didn't quit trying and brought honor to God by our actions and attitudes on and off the court.

Whew...that was a lot! BUT... I hope I clearly conveyed that my heart is for these girls and I pray my actions will always reflect that.

Attached you will find details about the season (things you'll need and what to expect), practice and games schedule, as well as a list of ways you can serve the team (and earn service hours while you're at it!). Please, we need your help! This is an "all hands on deck" team and there is something on the list of service opportunities that fits everyone's spiritual gifting.

I am looking forward to a great season with you and your girls. Please never be afraid to come to me in humility and a spirit of encouragement to show me an area where I have an opportunity to grow. Please call, text, email or catch me after practice if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

In His Service,

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## What to Expect from GFA Volleyball

### **League Play:**

We compete in the White Tanks Athletic League. Games are played against smaller schools around the area (Arlington, Palo Verde, Surprise, Wickenburg, etc.). We usually have two games a week once the season begins. We will have a Varsity or "A" Team - which is what the other schools call their more experienced players (usually 8<sup>th</sup> graders). If we have enough players, we can also have a Junior Varsity or "B" Team (for other schools these are usually all 7<sup>th</sup> graders). Most schools we play don't have 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> graders, so they may have a size advantage on us but they won't have a heart advantage on us! ☺

### **Practice:**

We will practice Monday-Thursday from 3:45 – 5 p.m. The 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade girls will be dismissed from their classrooms to the gym; 5<sup>th</sup> grade needs to be picked up from their class and escorted over. Practice is mandatory. We will be going over numerous skills the first two weeks of practice and then polishing those skills as the season progresses. Please avoid scheduling (if at all possible) appointments or other events during this time; remember, the more practice your child gets the better equipped she'll be for games. Please let me know in advance if your child is unavailable for practice.

### **Games:**

As a parent of two former Lady Mustangs, I totally get wanting to watch your girls play, but depending on the size of our team, playing time may be limited. However, I will do my best to give every girl the amount of playing time that allows her to use her skills to best benefit our team. If there is ever a concern about the amount of playing time a girl gets, please come talk to me privately.

### **Transportation:**

Parents are responsible for getting their girls to/from away games. I can carry six girls in my van and am more than happy to assist as needed. Please let me know in advance so we have enough seatbelts for everyone. You may also make arrangements with other parents for transportation, just be sure to keep me in the loop so no one gets left behind.

### **Practice & Game Gear:**

- Sneakers that will keep you comfortable, supported and safe on the court.
- Comfortable, black shorts that are easy to move around in for game days. Cotton, nylon or spandex exercise shorts are best. Please make sure they are an appropriate length. Color for practice shorts doesn't matter, just keep them an appropriate length.
- Knee pads for games and practice.
- Reusable water bottle with your name on it for games and practices.
- Our Uniform Manager (*parent volunteer needed*) will be distributing uniforms during practice. Please wash them in cold water and air dry...NO DRYER PLEASE...THEY MELT!
- Our T-Shirt Coordinator (*parent volunteer needed*) will organize the purchase and distribution of our team shirts that can be used for one game during the week if so desired.

### **Goals:**

Our number one goal will always be to reflect Christ in our actions and attitudes. Our second is to be brave enough to try our best. Our third goal will be to do better tomorrow than we did today.