2026 BISON



VOLLEYBALL

Coaching Staff

Head Coach: Nicole Kilian
Varsity Assistant: Randy Bostic
Junior Varsity Coach: Measha Lindstrand
Sophomore Coach: Sarah Thomson
Freshman Coach: Katie Skasick
Freshman Coach: Melissa Roullier
Program Assistant: Katherine Sunwall

Program Mission:

- Our mission is to foster a culture of unwavering integrity and a relentless learning spirit, empowering student-athletes to compete with confidence and character. We are dedicated to developing champions on the volleyball court and leaders in life through discipline, respect, and a commitment to excellence.
    - Integrity: Acting honorably, adhering to rules, and holding ourselves accountable.
    - Learning Spirit: A growth mindset, focusing on skill development, and embracing feedback.
    - Confidence: Mental toughness, resilience, and belief in oneself through preparation

Program Vision:

- To cultivate a championship culture that prioritizes academic excellence, selfless teamwork, and unwavering integrity, empowering student-athletes to excel in the classroom, on the court, and in life.
    - Academic Excellence: Highlights performance in the classroom.
    - Team Before Me: Emphasizes selflessness, team over self, and collaboration.
    - Champions for Athletics: Focuses on winning, high performance, and championship culture.

Team Decisions and Playing Time

Tryout Process

Tryouts will occur over 2 days this year; August 14th and 15th. The program consists of 5 teams - Varsity, Junior Varsity, Sophomore, Freshman Blue and Freshman White; 50 athletes total in the program. Not all athletes that try out will make a team which means that cuts do occur. If you desire to make Varsity or JV, you must attend all tryout times.

Coaches will be looking for these skills and characteristics in athletes:

- Passing skills - serve receive and defensive passing
- Setting skills - hands, release, placement, and consistency
- Attacking - approach, armswing, contact, power, and placement
- Serving - overhand serve, strength, and placement
- Attendance and timeliness
- Attitude, effort, work ethic
- Leadership skills, communication skills, team chemistry
- Overall skill level and performance

Position Break-Down and Roles

- ☐ ***Outside Hitter:*** must be an individual who can play in the front row and back row; they must have excellent passing, serve receive, defense, attacking, and blocking. The individual is versatile, adaptable, agile, and is a strong communicator with the team.
  - ☐ Key Responsibilities:
    - ☐ Attacking: OH is the main source of points and performs most of the attacking from the front row and often the back row.
    - ☐ Passing: This individual must have strong passing technique and consistent serve receive because this person will be 1 of the three serve receivers.
    - ☐ Blocking: This individual is responsible for defending the opponents OPP/setter by setting the block at the pin allowing the MB to seal and complete the block. The OH is also responsible for transitioning to block the opponent's middle attacker to seal the block with the MB.
- ☐ ***Middle Blocker:*** This individual is a front row player that specializes in blocking and quick attacks. The MB's primary role is blocking the opponents middle attacker, OH, and OPP, as well as back row attackers. This individual must be athletic, agile, a strong communicator, and height often is vital to this position.
  - ☐ Key Responsibilities:
    - ☐ Defense: Blocking and reading their opponents and quickly moving laterally to either the OH or OPP to seal the block. This individual must watch the opponent's setter to determine the location of the set and find the hitter to block.
    - ☐ Offense: Attack the ball quickly and act as a decoy.
- ☐ ***Opposite Hitter:*** This individual is considered a secondary attacker and is positioned opposite of the setter, and may often take the second ball if the setter takes the first. They are vital in blocking the opponent's strongest attacker, OH. This individual must be athletic, agile, adaptable, and versatile.
  - ☐ Key Responsibilities:

- ☐ Attacking: Though, this position may not be set as frequently as OH and middle attacker, this individual must be ready for any set they receive and attack the ball with power and precision.
- ☐ Blocking: This individual is responsible for blocking the strongest attacker on the opponent's team. They need to read and adjust to the set and hitter to set a pin block that allows the MB to seal the block and basically create a "wall".
- ☐ Defense: This individual may or may not play back row, it depends on what setting scheme is being utilized. However, this individual needs to defensively read the opponent's attackers and place themselves in a proper defensive position to dig. This person will need to be ready to play defense at any time, during any rotation.

☐ ***Setter:*** This individual runs the offense by receiving the second touch in an overhand position creating opportunities for attackers to hit the ball over the net. This individual needs to make quick decisions during play, direct the offense, and communicate with teammates. This individual must have excellent leadership and communication skills, hand-eye coordination, agile, anticipation, ability to think quickly under pressure, excellent ball control and footwork, variability in types of sets.

- ☐ Key Responsibilities:
  - ☐ Run the offense and make decision about which hitter to set
  - ☐ Communicate with teammates to execute plays
  - ☐ Place the ball where the attacker can effectively hit the ball
  - ☐ Identify opponent's weaknesses and exploit them

☐ ***Libero:*** Is a specialized defensive player, who wears a different colored jersey, can only play backrow, and is an expert in passing, digging, and serve receive. This individual needs to have an excellent strategic awareness as they will be leading the defensive aspect of the game.

- ☐ Key Responsibilities:
  - ☐ Specialize defense: First line of defense, focusing on keeping hard-driven attacks in play and passing the ball to the setter.
  - ☐ Passing and serve receive: Typically one of the best passers on the team, responsible for receiving serves to initiate the offense. Serve receive rating > 2.2.
  - ☐ Defensive communicator: Considered the defensive coordinator, this individual should communicate with teammates in the front and back row based on the opponents servers and attackers. This individual is also responsible for communicating defensive changes quickly prior to the serve being in play and based on the opponents offense.
  - ☐ Agility, speed, interpreting/reading the opponents serve and offense.

☐ ***Defensive Specialist:*** A back-row player who excels in digging, passing, and serve receive to strengthen the team. Typically this individual will substitute for an individual who is weaker defensively with the goal to keep rallies alive and create scoring opportunities. This position is specialized and requires excellent ball control, agility, and is considered a supportive role to the team.

- ☐ Key Responsibilities:
  - ☐ Defense: Primary role is to be a strong back-row defending, with excellent digging and passing skills
  - ☐ Skilled serve receiver with a serve receive rating > 1.9
  - ☐ Reliable and skilled passer both forearm and overhead. Be able to come off the bench at a moments notice and protect the back court
  - ☐ Agility, speed, court awareness and strategic awareness

- Compliments the libero through strategy and teamwork

- ***Captain:*** A team leader who acts as a liaison between the players and the coaches, and is the only person who may speak with referees in regards to rules and/or calls during competition. This person is responsible for leadership, setting a positive example, ensuring the team stays motivated, and maintaining good sportsmanship. The role is chosen based on leadership, communication skills, and not necessarily based on skill.
  - Key Responsibilities:
    - Liaison: The captain serves as the go-between for the coach and the rest of the team, relaying information, and feedback from both sides.
    - Referee communication: Is the only player permitted to speak with referees about rules and/or calls, making it crucial to be level-headed and assertive.
    - Team morale: Maintains a positive energy, motivates teammates during tough times, and builds a stronger team dynamic by setting a positive example and ensuring everyone feels included.
    - Accountability: This person is responsible for the team's behavior and must be accountable for poor performance and practices.
    - Leadership: This person is expected to lead by example through their attitude and actions, both on and off the court, and to inspire teammates to trust the coaches and process at practice and during competition.
- ***Leader:*** Leadership is the process of influencing others to achieve a common goal, often involving the ability to provide a clear vision, inspire and motivate teammates, and guide them through change and challenges. It can be defined as a combination of behaviors, skills, and attitudes that enable a person to bring out the best in others on the team and within the volleyball program. Leadership is about setting a vision and inspiring the team to execute it with enthusiasm.
  - Key Responsibilities:
    - Influence and inspire others' actions, behaviors, and opinions, often through inspiration and creating emotional bonds with teammates.
    - Leaders establish a clear, future-oriented vision and communicate it to their teammates, providing a sense of purpose within the team.
    - Adaptability and change are vital characteristics of a leader as each practice and game athletes are faced with adversity and challenges that require an attitude of acceptance and perseverance.
    - Empowerment through leadership creates a power balance that encourages participation and collaboration among team members.
    - Commitment to teammates and all athletes in the program, coaches, and self.
    - Support and compassion and placing the needs of others above their own.
    - Leaders will step up during a crisis and act creatively to solve difficult situations.

Playing Time

Each coach is responsible to determine starting line-ups and substitutions; these decisions will be made based on the following - attendance at practices, skill level, attitude and work ethic, leadership skills, team chemistry, performance at practice and during games, and the needs of the team. All players will have equal opportunities to train during practice. Playing time is earned and is not a privilege; coaches will make play time decisions based on what they believe will bring success to the

team. ***At NO time will the individual needs of a player be placed above what is ultimately best for the team***. Players are expected to EARN a starting position and/or playing time EVERY DAY in practice. Players on the sideline must encourage and show their support for the players on the court; bad attitudes or sulking WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!

Team Playing Time Breakdown

- **Varsity (10-12)** - play time will be determined by the rotations that will make the team competitive, not based on seniority
    - Varsity Lettering Requirements
        - **Grades** - a student will not receive a varsity letter if they receive a final quarter grade of an F, in any class, for the sports primary season quarter; this means quarter 1 or 2 of the 2026 school year.
        - **Classroom Attendance** - a student will not receive a varsity letter if they have missed 6 or more unexcused absences during the sports primary quarter; this means quarters 1 and 2 of the 2024-2025 school year.
        - **Behavior** - a student will not receive a varsity letter if they have had 1 major behavior incident or 2 or more minor behavior incidents during the sports primary season quarter; this means quarters 1 and 2 of the 2024-2025 school year.
        - Play in 20 varsity sets during the conference season, does not include pre-season or non-conference sets/matches.
        - Any senior on the varsity team, no matter play time.
        - Varsity team manager(s).
- **Junior Varsity (8-10)** - everyone will play, but game playing time will be variable and not guaranteed and is pending coach's discretion during practice and game situations.
- **Sophomore Team (10)** - everyone will play but equal playing time is not guaranteed.
- **Freshman Team (10-15)** - everyone will play but equal playing time is not guaranteed. Some girls will get to travel, but not the whole team due bus seating limitations. All girls will get to play at home competitions.

24 hour waiting period

If a player or parent has concerns there is specific protocol that MUST be followed. Questions and conversations regarding playing time will NEVER take place directly before, during, or after matches.

1. Chain of Command:
    a. Athlete to Athlete -If there is interpersonal conflict, a conversation may be had with the coach, but the individual needs to address the concern with their teammate. If the issue is not resolved then the athlete may go to the next level athlete to coach.
    b. Athlete to Coach - It is imperative to develop communication between athletes and their coaches. If an athlete has questions or concerns that they want to discuss with the coach they must schedule a time to have this discussion. If the issue is not resolved then the athlete may go to the next level athlete, parent, and coach.
    c. Athlete, Parent, and Coach - if the issue is not resolved, a meeting before or after practice may be set up between the athlete, parent, team coach, and head coach.
    d. Athlete, Parent, Coach, and Administration.

******Parents it is unacceptable to approach or initiate a conversation about your daughter if she has not first made an attempt to discuss concerns with her primary coach******

Student-Athlete Code of Conduct and Expectations

1. Coach is boss
2. Win with humility
3. Lose with dignity
4. Deal with anger and frustration is a socially acceptable manner
5. Have fun

★ **Represent yourself and GFHS Volleyball**

★ **Be on time** - Practice starts at designated time. All athletes are expected to be dressed and ready 15 minutes prior to scheduled practice time, game day arrival, bus departure, etc. This means the nets are set up, you are dressed and ready to jump the line right at the start of practice

★ **Respect the equipment** - ALL players will put up and take down equipment. Facilities and equipment should be handled with care and respect.

★ **Create a Positive Community** - through attendance, hard work, positive attitude, and encouragement. At no time should there be bullying, harassing, or negative talk.

★ **Student-Athletes** - coaches will complete weekly grade checks. If a student athlete has a D or F in any class they will be expected to complete assignments/exams during practice and potentially miss out on competition.

★ **Cell Phone Policy** - cell phones will be collected at all home games and travel games. Being a part of this volleyball program is a privilege and also hard work. When the program is competing it will be treated as a business trip and an opportunity for all athletes to create friendships and community.

★ **ABSOLUTELY NO use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, vaping, or drugs.** Violations of these rules will result in serious consequences. You should remove yourself from situations where these influences are present.

Parent Expectations

★ **Basic Rule: if you have nothing positive to say, say nothing at all**
- Reminder: parents are never to discuss playing time or any concerns regarding strategic decisions with coaches at games, tournaments, or practice.

★ Be your daughter's biggest cheerleader and support the Bison Volleyball Program!

★ Be an example of good sportsmanship by refraining from arguing with officials, acting aggressive or hostile towards other parents, spectators, coaches, players, and officials.

★ Volunteer your time to help make this program run successfully

★ Cell Phone Policy - it is expected that parents honor and respect the cell phone policy. And remember this is not punitive but creating opportunities for creating friendships and community. If you need to get a hold of your daughter you can contact a coach through Parent Square.