

Why I Don't Pay for Club Volleyball

During a recent dinner one of my friends asked, "Why do you pay so much for club volleyball? Below is a summary of my answer, I wanted you to know what I really "pay" for and what I hope you gain from these experiences. The truth is I never intended to pay for club volleyball.

I pay to assure that you are pushed beyond your perceived limits. I pay professional coaches to challenge you at every practice and match. I pay them to challenge you to the point where you might want to quit because it is so tough. I pay them to coach you in volleyball because I understand that your self-assurance on the court transcends to your everyday life. I pay for you to learn how to set goals and chase down dreams. I pay your coaches to help install a high level of self-confidence that you can and will accomplish the goals you set for yourself. I pay so you have more caring and responsible adults involved in your life. I pay for the days when you arrive at home exhausted from school and you don't really want to go to training/weights/plyometrics, but you do it anyway. I pay for the life lessons that losses, frustrations, and disappointment from competition can provide. I pay for personal and team accomplishments that competition can provide. I pay for these opportunities because I do not have to push or force you to play volleyball, rather your desire to play is unequivocally intrinsic.

I pay for you to have opportunities to take pride in your actions on and off the court. I pay for you to be accountable to others (coaches, teammates, club directors) and to help you understand that you are not the center of the universe. I pay for the opportunity for you to honor your teammates and coaches by always giving your best effort on and off the court. I pay for you to have the leadership opportunities volleyball offers. I pay to provide opportunities for you to help everyone around you improve as a person and teammate. I pay for you to understand that you will forever be surrounded by more talented people and less talented people, and that a true leader has the humility and patience to work with both. I pay for you, my daughter, to learn that it is the accumulation of hours upon hours of practice combined with numerous personal sacrifices to be an overnight success.

No, it is not club volleyball that I am paying for. I am paying for the time and conversation with a teenage girl on the way to and from practice. I pay for the smiles and sense of purpose that playing club volleyball provides you. I pay to provide lifelong memories from traveling and going to new places with me. I pay for you to experience new cultures, foods, and cities that we experience by traveling to tournaments. I pay because it's clear that volleyball sparks your life, passion, and sense of pride. I pay for help in guiding you down the right path. I pay because club volleyball reinforces the life lessons about hope, compassion, hard work, and commitment to yourself and others.

Most importantly I pay for the bridge of understanding that volleyball provides a father and daughter.

Love always,

Dad

Jeffrey Kerns, Ed.D.