

# **GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES**

Knowing when to communicate and how to communicate with your athlete's coach is a concern for almost every parent at some time during the season. Most often, the concern is how to inquire about issues surrounding playing time. Palm Beach Juniors has always tried to encourage the athlete to talk to the coach when she has a problem with her playing time. If the athlete is unsure or unclear about what the coach expects from her, either in practice or in competition, the appropriate action is for the athlete to communicate with the coach as to what she needs to do to get more opportunities to play in matches or at another position. When parents have a problem that is specific to their own athlete, we also encourage them to speak first to the coach. Coaches WILL NOT discuss "coaching decisions." Coaching decisions include, among other things, specific match decisions (who played when, who was subbed in/out and when, etc.). Playtime is a very complex determination. It includes the coach's opinion, the athlete's ability, the athlete's potential, the team's needs at the moment, the momentum of the game, and the team's needs for the future and the club's philosophy. The coach will not be required to defend his/her thought process or conclusions in these determinations, and it is improper for a parent to make such a request.

In addition, Palm Beach Juniors instructs coaches not to discuss any athletes' situations on other teams. If you, as a parent, have legitimate concerns about a coach other than your athlete's coach, or with an athlete other than your own, you must address the directors.

## **POLICY ORDER:**

**1.** The athlete should first speak to the coach about the matter. If the matter remains unresolved, or the athlete has a reasonable concern that speaking to the coach will not resolve the matter, then move on to step 2.

**2.** The parents should speak or meet with the coach. Parents and/or athlete should contact the coach via the telephone to set up a meeting time (not during a tournament). A parent should never approach a coach at a tournament. We have instructed the coaches to follow the "24 hour rule", to refuse to discuss any controversial matter, and to refer the parent to the Directors. The coach will then walk away.

The recommended time for a parent to schedule a meeting is usually before (if time permits) or immediately following a scheduled practice. If the matter remains unresolved or if the parent has a reasonable concern that speaking with the coach will not resolve the matter, then go to step 3.

**3.** The parent may speak to the Director(s) and request a meeting with the coach and Director(s) together.

In certain situations, Palm Beach Juniors may request the athlete to also attend. Meetings should be previously arranged. This will not take place at a tournament site.

**4.** If the parent or athlete is not satisfied by the action of the Directors, they may request, in writing, that the Board of Directors review the matter.

**5. Refunds and Deposits:** Upon making any Palm Beach Juniors team, at a regular or supplemental tryout, there is a **non-refundable \$475 tournament fee** as well as a **\$600 non-refundable uniform fee** to secure the spot. Subsequent refund of any club dues is based on the number of players per team **and given for medical reasons ONLY**. Should the player be injured at any point during the season, Palm Beach Juniors will credit your refund to the next months club fees. All refunds are reviewed on a case by case basis. All final decisions are determined by the Finance Committee.

**6.** Any dispute with the club must be submitted to the BOD in writing, including the date of incident or injury, Dr. notes including type and length of disability, and the duration of club participation. All disputes which include complete documentation as previously stated will be considered.

**7.** All issues or disputes, regardless of the nature or source, must follow the previously detailed club "Policy Order" as stated in numerals 1-4 above.

### **OTHER POLICIES REGARDING GRIEVANCES WITH PALM BEACH JUNIORS CLUB:**

**1.** Palm Beach Juniors will not tolerate hostile, aggressive confrontations between a parent and any official, coach, athlete, or another parent, whether the confrontation is within the club or not. Violation of this policy may result in the athlete(s) being dismissed from Palm Beach Juniors.

**2.** It is inappropriate for an athlete or parent to approach other PALM BEACH JUNIORS members about a problem the athlete or parent is having with a Palm Beach Juniors coach.

Asking uninvolved persons to take sides in an issue is unfair to the third party and to the club. For the psychological health of the teams and the club as a whole, grievances need to be handled between the parties involved and the decision makers in the situation.

Remember...Competitive team athletics, by nature alone, create situations where everyone may not be happy all of the time.

**3.** Any member who is approached and asked to listen to or to express an opinion about matters between two other parties in the club is **strongly** encouraged to refer the complaining party to take the matter up with either the coach or the directors.

**4.** Any member who, as a third party, hears remarks or stories about Palm Beach Juniors, its' employees or its' policies, that cause the member to be concerned, is encouraged to call the Director(s) immediately to determine the facts, or to alert the club administration to a situation of which it may be unaware.

By the time the story gets to a third or fourth party, it frequently bears little resemblance to the truth or to the facts of the situation.

It is also detrimental to the athlete and disruptive to the team to complain to the athlete about the coach, the coach's style, or the PALM BEACH JUNIORS policies.

If you, as a parent, are unhappy or concerned about any matter, address the party in control. If the athlete is unhappy, she needs to address the appropriate party.