

Summer Volleyball League Starts Third Season, Enables Players to Keep Playing During Off-Season

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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ALTON – St. Mary's Catholic Church in Alton has launched the third season of its Summer Volleyball League, which is designed to keep volleyball players active and playing during the off-season.

The league recently reached its goal of registering 100 players for the 2019 season, and is open to players in the fourth through ninth grades.

“The gist of the league is that it’s a recreational league,” said director Phil Hamilton. “It’s designed to keep volleyball players playing during the off-season.”

Local schools that have players involved in the camp includes St. Mary’s, St. Ambrose, Alton Middle School, Sts. Peter and Paul, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Alton Evangelical and Jersey Middle. The goals of the league are very simple and low-key.

“The goals would be to keep players playing,” Hamilton said, “get players from all the different schools to meet each other, because they might play with each other someday, form friendships and have kids from different grade levels working with each other.”

In addition, players from the boys and girls’ teams at Alton High and Marquette Catholic will assist everyone as much as possible. In the case of Marquette players, they’ll also earn credit towards their community service requirement at the school.

The league has a very flexible format, and also includes clinic sessions designed to help beginners with the fundamentals, including serving, hitting and basic drills. The players have been divided up into various teams for scrimmages, games and tournaments. Older players will also help with coaching younger players, and younger players themselves will serve as linesmen and also keep score. Play has recently begun, with matches scheduled for every Tuesday, with a tournament to be played in July.

The motto of the league is “Keep Swingin’!” and it’s also ran by the St. Mary’s coaches, along with other local coaches and parents who wish to assist. And Hamilton knows that the league will serve a very beneficial purpose to the players.

“This will be a very worthwhile project for the kids,” Hamilton said.