



WHEN TO CALL A 'SNOW DAY'

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Just like when a school district chooses to call a “snow day” — or not declare a “snow day” — there are a lot of criteria that clubs and club directors must weigh when canceling practices. And, since we live in Wisconsin, snow happens. And that means clubs are always on the lookout for their athletes, coaches and families who must travel. Here are some thoughts from club directors and what they consider when calling a “snow day.”

THE SAFETY FACTOR

Safety is a priority for every club, coach and director in the Badger Region. While clubs don't have control over the weather or what happens on the roads, the safety of their members and their families is part of the conversation when considering a “snow day.” One club we talked to said, “You'd rather be safe than sorry. Being safe today means we get to play tomorrow.” For example: On days when there will be snow or freezing rain, a club might say to it's families, “Communicate with your coach if you feel that it is not safe to travel and thus cannot make practice tonight.” That gives families the option without feeling like they MUST travel in what they think are questionable conditions.

THE WEATHER & ROADS

Some clubs we talked to monitor the following as it pertains to calling a “snow day.”

- * When will the weather episode start?
- * When will it end?
- * What are the temperatures surrounding the weather episode? Are temperatures teetering on 32 degrees? Are windchills expected to be below zero?
- * What do the roads look like currently? And are plows keeping up?
- * What do traffic cameras look like — especially if clubs have athletes that travel highways to get their practice facilities.



THE SCHEDULE

Clubs do have to look at their calendar when weighing the chance to cancel a practice. If a team has big tournament on the weekend coming up, that might be part of the decision to not cancel a practice, but instead make it optional.

If a club is just coming off a busy weekend, they might be more likely to cancel a practice.



Club volleyball is a lot different than high school or middle school volleyball, where athletes get five to six days of week of practice or competition.

THE DRIVER

If a club has coaches that are local and don't have to travel far to the practice facility, that might change their decision to cancel a practice. Having local coaches allows some clubs to say, “We are having practice, come if you can. We will have staff on site.”

Another factor clubs consider is who is driving. If the athlete is 15-and-younger, they are most likely carpooling or being driven by their parent or another experienced driver. But a club that has a 16s team will have a lot of new drivers that are not accustomed to driving in snow at probably late at night.

And even if a 17 or 18-year-old is used to driving in the snow, he or she might have to drive home late at night in these conditions, and nobody wants that.

Share your ideas for directors: brian@badgervolleyball.org