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Xceleration Volleyball Club

John B. David, Editor

Opportunities Knock: Xceleration at the Inaugural JVA West Coast Cup and Bay View Classic

Long Beach Convention Center, The Foundry, and San Mateo Event Center Host Tournaments to End Season

The proverb “when one door closes, another one opens” says that even though you have lost an opportunity to do one thing, an opportunity to do something else has appeared. This quote is about missed opportunities. Many people do not like and, therefore, resist change. Not all change is bad, but sometimes the ambiguity of the change makes it difficult to see beyond. A closed door to some may mean loss or failure rather than an opportunity for development and growth. For years and years, the club has taken the safe route to end the club season at the Bay View Classic. The door was not necessarily closed, but an opportunity presented itself when faced with the option of traveling south to put a foot in the door at the inaugural JVA West Coast Cup – it was a no brainer!

Take for example the 18Blue in the Open Division. Where else would you have the chance to face six of the Top 10 teams from Prepvolleyball’s National Rankings, and seven of the Top 15. The 18 Open field includes



the Triple Crown Sports NIT and Bluegrass champions, plus the USAV GJNC 18 Open runner up. In the end, 18Blue squared off against the nation’s top teams, including No. 8 TStreet, No. 11 Coast, and No. 22 Laguna Beach. In these matches, 18Blue faced all D1 commits from each team. Against Coast, it stood toe-to-toe against the Gatorade National Player of the Year. It matched up against a team with an uncommitted 6’5” OH (a sophomore) that drew attention of college coaches from the top programs in the country.

(Continued on page 3)

J-Ross Speaks...

Dear Xceleration families,

I had the good fortune to attend the inaugural JVA West Coast Cup tournament with some of our teams over the Memorial Day weekend and I wanted to give you some feedback on this new event.

Our club looked into this tournament as an option last September when we first heard of it being put together. The concept seemed good to us and seemed to be a match for our club philosophy of searching out tournaments that will put our teams in a position to be challenged. In talking to the organizers of the event we knew that they would be bringing in some excellent clubs from across the nation, so we committed to it early and hoped that they could pull off what they had told us they were putting together.

Having now been at the tournament I can report to you that it turned out even better than they had hoped. Not only did the better clubs from Southern California buy into the event, good clubs nationwide did in fact attend. With that kind of competition, of course, the colleges were very well represented with over 125 college coaches in attendance. The competition was very good across the board and overall I thought that our teams represented themselves well and played hard. That was what we had asked of them and they definitely came through.

The tournament was very well run, the location was great, and the city is a fun one to visit.

I was able to speak a few times with the organizers of the tournament and we all agree that this tournament will now "blow up" as they say. We fully expect many more clubs in this area and across the country to try and gain admittance to the event. The tournament is locked into the Long Beach Convention Center for the next two years, so expanding the number of teams at the event will be tricky, but plans are already underway for expansion to a larger Southern California venue in Year 4 of the event. The organizers also expressed their appreciation for our early support of the event and told us that they planned to be loyal to clubs who committed to them this year. With that in mind, we will definitely be returning to this tournament next season and hopefully for years to come. Our plan for next season would be to take our White teams to this tournament as well and that is something we will be looking into soon.

Thanks to all of you who supported us in this new tournament. We greatly appreciate your trust in us. We are currently looking at other new events for the 2017 – 2018 season as well.

Go Xcel!

Jim



The Parent Survey provides an important opportunity for you to confidentially share your views about what's working well and where we need to improve so that we can continue to make improvements at Xceleration. Please take the time to provide your feedback by clicking the box below to begin the survey.

**PARENT
SURVEY**
CLICK HERE



Top: Jim and daughters **Kelsey Ross** and **Shannon Kussman** share a tender moment at the Long Beach Convention Center.



JVA West Coast and Bayview Classic (continued)

In the 17 Open for the 17Blue, there are 24 teams in the field and 13 are nationally-ranked.

Moving down, 16 Open is power-packed, containing four of the Top 5 teams in the country! The division also features five teams from the Top 10 and eight from the Top 25.

Not to be outdone by any of them, 15 Open is also loaded.

For our teams that stayed locally at the Bay View Classic, it was an opportunity to cap the season on a high note. Their participation at JVA West Coast Cup will be something that the club will look into as tickets will be much harder to secure in the future.

Bay View Classic

The 13Blue, 14White, 15White and 16White ended their 2017 seasons at the Bay View Classic and it was pure joy and excitement to watch our teams finish the season in grand fashion.

The 13Blue and 14White were transformed from the time they first stepped onto the court in November and has shown great improvement.

The 15White finished as the 3B Champions by starting with five straight wins to open the tournament and finishing at 7-1, with the single loss to Empire Mizuno 15-1.

The 16White tied for 5th and its highest placing in any tournament with a 6-1 record in Division 1.



Taylor and I could not be more proud of our girls. You worked so hard and improved so much this season! The growth of your love for volleyball and for each other was awesome to see. We can't wait to see where you guys go in life! Keep doing great things!

COACH JADE

What a ride 14W! I'm so proud of how much progress each and every one of you made over the course of the season both on the court as athletes and teammates and off the court as friends. It was so fun to see you develop your skills and watch your passion for the game grow. Keep working hard and continue to hold yourselves to that highest standard so you all can continue to have those thrilling moments (remember game 3 of regionals vs FPVC where we were down 6-4 and came back to win 15-7?!?! How awesome was that?). I look forward to following your volleyball careers! Also huge thanks to all the parents. Your support was amazing for the players as well as us coaches :) thanks for your time and dedication! .

COACH NATASHA



15 White: 2017 Bay View Classic 3B Champions



Another club season in the books and I couldn't be more proud of these girls. This team has exceeded expectations all season long, cracking the medals division as a 2's team and undersized. All season long Collin and I have been pushing this team to play with heart and the will to win, our last tournament was a prime example of it, with only 8 players in rotation they played with heart, grit, and the sure will to just win. I can not be more proud of this team and how far they have come. If you have seen the movie *The Benchwarmers* or *The Replacements*, that's us, a random cast of characters with athletic ability and skill with an understanding of how hard they had to work every time they stepped on that court, but they also knew how to have a ton of fun while doing it. It wasn't easy because it never is, but I wouldn't have it any other way. I am grateful to have had these 12 girls as my players. I wish all of you nothing but success in your volleyball careers and continue to be a student of the game and grow as individuals. Great job Xcel 15 White. I will miss all of you.

COACH DAVE



14Blue: 2017 JVA West Coast Cup - Club Division Bronze Medalists



If there was a time for the 14Blue to string together great performances against high-level competition, this was it. Facing four Southern California teams on Day 1, 14Blue went 3-1.

It maintained the momentum on Day 2, including a match in which it was down for most of the game but then recovered to take the win.

In the “one and done” day of the tournament, it was redemption for the 14Blue. Commerce Crush handed the team its first loss of the weekend and was coming into the Gold bracket with a perfect record. The coaches devised a perfect game plan. The players trusted it and followed through to move on. The Wave eliminated the 14Blue with a 15-12 thriller to end the 2017 season with shiny hardware and a 6-3 clip at JVA.

The team that stepped on the court at Cal Kickoff was not the same team that stepped off it in Long Beach. They have grown as individual volleyball players, but more importantly they grew immensely as a team. We were often not the tallest or strongest team on the court, but we competed with every team we played - and often beat those bigger and stronger teams across the net. That should be a testament to the will and drive these 12 girls have. Proud does not begin to describe how we as coaches feel about this team, and we would like to thank them for competing this season. Go Xcel!

COACH KELSEY

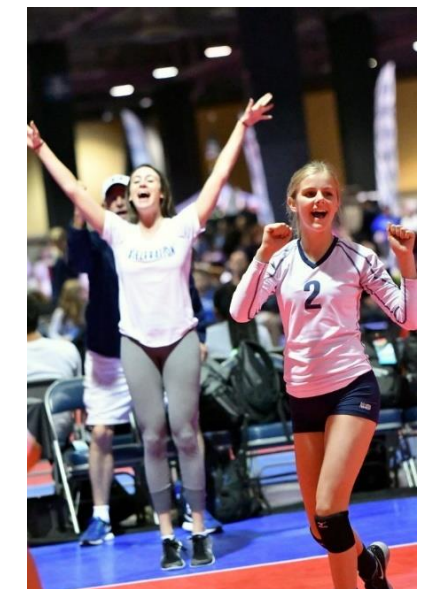


Top: The 14Blue and their families celebrate their top finish, winning Bronze in the Club Division of the 2017 JVA West Coast Cup.

Bottom: Nicole Johnson wasn't quite ready to end the season and let go!

All photos courtesy of **Tomas Pineda**, unless noted otherwise.

14 Blue in Action



THANK YOU to **Tomas Pineda** for all the pictures of our athletes throughout the season. We will always treasure these great moments that will last lifetime.

15Blue: Tune-Up for JGNC-Bound Team



The 15Blue finished 14th in the final standings of the 22-team Open Division pool with a 5-3 record, although six other teams finishing ahead of them posted fewer wins than the 15Blue.

All the teams that the 15Blue faced were from the SCVA. After a two-game slide to open the JVA, the 15Blue notched five consecutive victories, including two that went to three sets.

In the Bronze pool, the 15Blue outlasted FORZA 32-30 in the first set of a thrilling white-knuckle match. After surrendering the second set, the 15Blue pulled away 15-10 to gain a spot in the Bronze final against the Vegas Aces. Lady luck ran out, as the Aces toppled the 15Blue out of the competition.

The 15Blue will use this as another learning opportunity to gain more experience before facing top notch competition in the upcoming Junior Nationals in Minneapolis.

Prepvolleyball's preview of the 15 National Division at JNs identified the 15Blue as The Dark Horse in the tournament. It said, "Xceleration has two terrific tiny setters in **Ruby Santos** and **Chloe Ortega** and two capable, terminating outsides, 6-1 **Madi Risch** and 5-11 **Caroline Gallagher**. The NorCal team believes a Top 10 finish is possible."



16Blue: Big Hearts Overcome Thin Roster



Despite being shorthanded, the 16Blue played with grit and tenacity as if they were backed into a corner. The JVA tournament served as a preview of the tough teams they will likely face in Orlando at AAU, but the team will be battle tested. The team knows that it can do better and will have the AAU to prove that the JVA is an afterthought and it's time to move on.

Hang in and continue to play hard and all will work out.

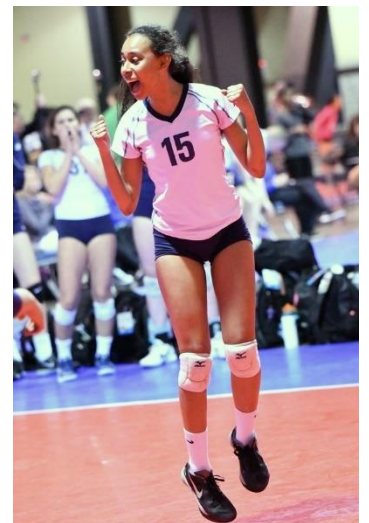


17Blue: Sustained Effort Goes a Long Way



The 17Blue's performance was up and down during the entire weekend and just needed a little bit more consistency. As the tournament progressed, the team played harder and harder, pushing three of the last five games into three-set affairs.

The 17Blue will have a chance for redemption at the AAU Nationals in Orlando where it will likely meet these teams again.



18Blue: Ah, the Wonderful Memories

The 18Blue faced two teams from Southern California and one from Arizona on the first day of competition, winning two from the CA teams.

The second day of competition brought much tougher opponents that included a Laguna Beach team with a sophomore sensation that generated a lot of buzz on the convention floor from big-time college coaches.

It didn't get any easier for the 18Blue when it challenged Coast and the National Player of the Year, Lexi Sun. The second day was in the books with tough competition.

To end their season and club careers, the 18Blue repeated the victory in a rematch against SVVC Rich before being ousted by TStreet in three sets in the Bronze bracket of the Open Division. It was another journey for the memories.



The true gift was the honor – IT WAS – to coach this team. It was on display all season. It was the gift that continued to give all the way through yesterday [at the JVA West Coast Cup in Long Beach] when the final ball dropped.

We believe this team conducted themselves with the ultimate class, and competed as hard for points as any team we ever coached. They understood the process and enjoyed the journey. They embraced accountability and the ups and down. In short, they OVERCAME many obstacles to rise to the top.

There were lots of firsts this year:

- I have NEVER missed a single practice, let alone a game or a match – got sick in Colorado, a first!
- Never have dealt with so many injuries, and concussions
- Never have we had so many different lineups and players playing different positions
- Have never shed tears before in saying goodbye to a team – big tears were shed yesterday
- Never have I loved a team like this team
- The first team we have ever coached that medaled at the Junior Nationals – a few points shy of the Gold!
- Never had more supportive parents

The level of volleyball the girls played this year was the highest level we have ever seen – almost beat T-Street in three yesterday – just take a look at their commits! Some of the best volleyball I have ever seen yesterday.



Photos courtesy of Suzy McKee and Semisi Naqase.



18Blue: Saying So Long for Now



Team dinner Sunday was the best ever – was so proud of how the girls came out and took care of business on Monday.

We get so much more than we give... Thanks again to all of you for a season that was groundbreaking by all accounts. Lastly, should your daughters need a reference for a job, promotion, etc., please have them call me. It's the very least I could do for them. I will miss all of you greatly.

Much love,
Andy Schroeder & Jeremy Swann

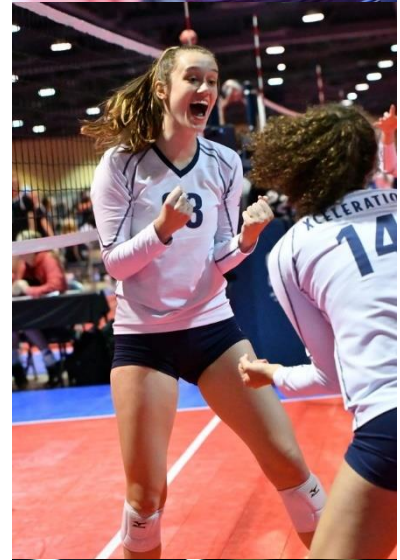
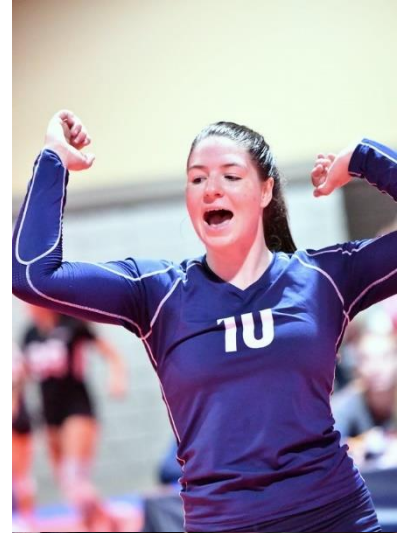


THANK YOU, ladies, for choosing to play for Xceleration.

Left to right: Delaney McKee, Parker Jones, Jaime Brown, Jackie Kupeli, Ashby Russell, Coach Jeremy Swann, Mere Naqase, Janelle Gong, Kelsey Budde, Nikki Jense, and Coach Andy Schroeder.

Not pictured: Michelle Anderson, Alex Nickerson, and Brianna Ranney.

18Blue: Enjoying the Moment



18White: A Message from Coach Cindy Scolavino

What an amazing year! Coach James and I enjoyed every minute we were working with the girls. The energy and drive of this group are outstanding! You could see the love of the game in every moment they were on the court. From our first outing at Cal Kickoff through the final match at Regionals, these ladies continued to improve and challenge their opponents, moving up at every league and finishing in Gold. Who does that? Xcel 18White, that's who! It took all of these talented players to do this and Coach James and I could not be prouder.



Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.

Ali Collins worked as an outside and all-around player. She demonstrated outstanding control of the game and was a leader on and off the court. Ali's powerful attack and solid passing helped lead this team through the season. Ali was also one of our top servers, with a controlled jump float and keen accuracy. She flustered passers time after time. I expect Ali to rock the courts next year as a Senior!



Michaela Charrette, one of the team captains showed not only control as a passer but her attack as our outside was part of the working machine on the court. Her level head helped keep the team focused no matter what the score. I have no doubt Michaela will grow even stronger in her college career in the years to come.



Hannah Pilgrim was one of our quiet players until you put her on the court and then her actions spoke louder than words. Hannah grew so much this season as a hitter and a blocker. She played both Opp and Middle for us and was a pleasure to watch in action. Hannah worked hard on her serve this year and advanced her game to the next level. It was a pleasure to watch her grow on the court.



18 White: A Message from Coach Cindy

Abby Youngblood, another of the team captains, showed such drive as our libero along with her court IQ; she was such a pleasure to watch when she played. She led with a loud positive voice and controlled the back row play. A true leader on and off the court. Abby led the team in serving with excellent control and power, she worked our opponents every time she came up. Many times during the year her serves made the difference in our advancing in the seeding.

Rebecca Jones worked very hard this season and did a solid job as one of our setters. Rebecca was always the first to volunteer to play a new position whenever we needed it and hit the court with all she could at every opportunity. Rebecca is a player to watch for next season in her Senior year.

Maeliza Limasing assisted in our back row defense and always worked to improve her game and assist her teammates on setting up the play for an attack. Mae never failed to be a big part of the supportive voice for the team. Mae is such a hard worker there is no doubt in my mind she will become an even more talented player her Senior year. Mae's serving assisted the team in many a pivotal match this season. I see great things in her future with her excellent work ethic.

Nuru Boone with her quick attack and unbeatable blocking put many teams back on their heels. Nuru has an outstanding vertical and could outreach our opponents at nearly every turn. We also had the pleasure of hearing another one of her many talents in Denver when she took over the hotel lobby piano and added her beautiful voice to it, stopping everyone in the lobby so they could listen to the enchanting sound.

Kaitlyn Peterson started the year out as one of the two liberos, but her quick movements and soft hands turned her into one of our setters. Not only could she assist our hitters with wonderful sets, she also had the court IQ of a Libero and was outstanding on defense as well. Kaitlyn will no doubt excel in her college volleyball career! Another one of our quiet leaders



18 White: A Message from Coach Cindy



Adrianna Vinogradov was such a pleasure to work with. Adri grew so much this season. Not only were her attacks hard hitting, but she could attack at any of the front row positions with success. Her hard work ethic and desire to learn new skills put her as our most improved player this season. We watched Adri master the jump float serve as well as very effective blocking. Adri has a quick read on hitters which made her hard to beat as a blocker. Adri is a driven player but showed such dedication to her teammates with her ready smile and words of encouragement. I look forward to watching Adri in her Senior year and expect great things to come!



Jaz Cruz did it all! As a captain she shared her desire to play hard all time. As a player she could do it all, set, pass, block and attack. You can see the pure enjoyment she gets as she plays her game. It was an awesome sight to watch Jaz attack at the setting position and catching our opponents off guard by powering over an attack instead of a set. It was a beautiful thing to watch! I hope to see Jaz set her Senior year as her best ever! This lady has so much to give on the court, I can't wait to see her in action next season!



Amanda Ward is a ball of fire packed into a 5'8" frame. Amanda is a fierce competitor and very focused at playing as hard as she can... always. Amanda developed a devastating float serve that set many a team scrambling. She served not only tough but almost never missed a serve leading us to many a victory during the year. She is another one of our Juniors that will shine next season. I can't wait to see what she does!



Jerri Bonnel was outstanding as our middle this season. Jerri loves to hit and our opponents hated seeing her do it. Jerri is not only a quick attacker but has an arm like a sledge hammer! Few teams were able to stop Jerri when she got going and more over trying to put an attack by her was nearly impossible. If the ball came to her she either put it to the floor with heat or stopped it from crossing the net. Jerri was also one of our go to servers. Her serve, at times seemed more of an attack with the power she put on the ball and you could count on Jerri to play defense, she didn't hesitate to lay out for any ball coming her way.

I can't express just how proud Coach James and I are of these ladies. They made this season one to be remembered. It was a pleasure to be allowed to be a part of their year and we wish you the very best on and off the court! Thank you for allowing us to be a part of this outstanding season!



SHINING STARS

The following is a reprint from PrepVolleyball.com's report on May 28, 2017 at the JVA West Coast Cup.

It's time for the Star Search from Day 1 in Long Beach.

Here are the players that we saw who stood out the most. We start with the best of the best called Supernovas and continue with Others Who Shined.

Xceleration Who Shined

Parker Jones – 18Blue

Ruby Joy Santos – 15Blue

Ali Silva – 16Blue



Left to right: Parker Jones, Ruby Joy Santos, and Ali Silva.

Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.



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/ Star Search: JVA West Coast Cup Day 1 Studs

Star Search: JVA West Coast Cup Day 1 Studs

Written by: Chris Tobolski in Club Features
May 28, 2017 0



Wave 17s' Julia Kallen (7) goes up against the block of Idaho Crush.

It's time for the Star Search from Day 1 of the JVA West Coast Cup in Long Beach.



Passing Clinics with Andy

PASSING CLINICS THROUGH JULY 29... SIGN UP TODAY!

Dates

- June 10, 17 and 24
- July 8, 15, 22, and 29 (NO CLINIC 7/1)

Times

- INCOMING 15s: 8:00 - 9:00 am
- INCOMING 16s/17s: 9:00 -10:00 am
- INCOMING 18s/College: 10:00 -11:00 am

Location

- Xceleration's Concord Facility - 3911 Laura Alice Way, Concord 94520

Cost

- \$25 per player, per clinic (paid directly to Andy on the day of clinic).

Other Important Information

- INCOMING refers to the age you will play in the 2017/18 indoor club volleyball season.
- Space is limited to 12 players per clinic time.
- All times are subject to change. Players may be re-assigned to a different session based on group size or other factors. Andy will be in touch should anything change.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before session's designated start time.
- Contact Andy directly to reserve a spot: andy@heathco.com
 - On the subject line of your email, please indicate accordingly: PLAYER LAST NAME, First name; PARENT LAST NAME, Parent first name: Passing
For example: DOE, Jane; SMITH, Joan: Passing
 - In the email message, indicate age group and session dates attending



This page and next: **16Blue and 14Blue** at the JVA West Coast Cup in Long Beach over the Memorial Day Weekend.

Photos courtesy of **Tomas Pineda**.

Summer Clinics

SUMMER CLINICS BEGIN JULY 9 THROUGH AUGUST 13... SIGN UP TODAY!

Sign up for Xceleration's 2017 Summer Clinics that will be available to all who are interested in continuing to work, improve, or fine-tune their games during the off-season.

- Summer Clinics will be held at Xceleration's Concord Facility - 3911 Laura Alice Way, Concord 94520.
- Costs to attend will be \$25 per session. Fees are payable directly to the coach at the start of each session. You will not be billed by the club. Cash is strongly preferred; credit cards not accepted and there will be no online payment options available.
- Reservations that are cancelled less than 48 hours prior to the session time and date will incur a \$25 charge.
- Pre-registration is required, as spots are reserved on a first-come first-serve basis. Sign-ups are now being taken through Xceleration's [2017 Summer Clinics Registration](#) page to indicate the sessions that you would like to attend. If sessions are full, you will be placed on a waitlist.
- YOU MUST GO TO YOUR AGE GROUP ONLY (i.e., age division you will be playing in the upcoming 2017/2018 season).

CLINIC SCHEDULE

Age groups and times for sessions beginning **July 9 through August 13** are listed below:

Wednesdays

15s - 6:30 - 8:00 pm
16s - 8:00 - 9:30 pm

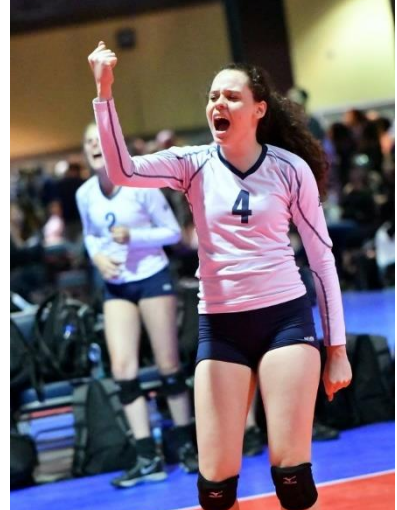
Thursdays

18s - 6:30 - 8:00 pm
17s - 8:00 - 9:30 pm

Sundays

15s - 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
16s - 12:30 - 2:00 pm
17s - 2:00 - 3:30 pm
18s - 3:30 - 5:00 pm

Please send [Shannon](#) an email with any questions.



Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.



Helpful Tips

Exercise Harder on the Beach

By Jen Murphy, Reprinted from the Wall Street Journal, Health & Wellness, May 17, 2016.

Relocating your workout to the sand can improve strength, balance and endurance. “Sand makes the action of running a lot more difficult,” says Even North, director and head coach of Revolution Running, a multi-sport training club in Louisville, CO. “When your feet sink into the sand, it requires more effort to push off and keep your momentum going.”

Mr. North says sand stimulates muscles on the insides and outside of the ankles and calves and helps develop improved proprioception, which is the ability to sense the orientation of the body in our environment. Small muscles and tendons in the feet are working, which helps improve overall stability and foot strength.

Most people who exercise at the beach do so with bare feet. As with new activity, it’s important to start slowly to adapt, says Chris Vlaun, co-founder of Miami-based V-Art of Wellness, which specializes in beach workouts. “No matter how fit you are.”

Mr. Vlaun has clients do warm-up exercises. “jumping jacks get the feet flexing, and a simple reverse lunge works



on balance and ankle stability,” he says. “Twisting pogo hops, where you tuck your knees to your chest as you jump and twist your torso to one side will get your calves and feet screaming, as will high knee lifts.”

He says these exercises alone might be enough to tire out your feet before you even start to run or sprint.



Top: Xcel Class of 2013 and 2017 AVCA All-American **Rachel Nieto** at Long Beach State.

Left, top to bottom: Teammates from Xcel’s Class of 2015 **Dora Beilin** at Cal Poly SLO and **Hailey Lindberg** at Santa Clara.

Class of 2016 teammates **Kaitlyn Zdroik** and **Emma Doud** at San Jose State and Loyola Marymount, respectively.

Photos courtesy of **Paul Harrison**.

ALUMNINEWS

Beach Talk with an All-American

Paul Harrison, Xceleration's Co-College Development Coordinator, continues to mentor our alumni as they progress through their collegiate careers. Here, he sits down with Xceleration Class of 2013's Rachel Nieto, who transitioned from indoor volleyball to sand mid-way through her college eligibility. As a recent graduate who had experience in both indoor and sand, here's what she had to say to our young athletes.

Tell us how the games differ – indoor and beach.

The beach game is so much different than the indoor game. I had to learn new strategies within the game that I had never had to do with indoor. I had to learn to adjust to having one other teammate and what we had to do to be successful. I went from being a Libero to being a setter, blocker, and a hitter. I had to adjust to being outside on the sand, along with the wind and sun factor. Beach is so much more intimate and complex. There are strategies within strategies and you become an extremely smarter player.

How can our players improve their game, beach or otherwise?

Even if you are not a beach player, I STRONGLY recommend playing in the Xcel beach clinics or just with friends. I would have loved to do that before leaving for school. You are able to touch every single ball along with getting in shape. My beach game made me a great indoor player and I really wish I had that earlier because my indoor game would be better than it is now.

What advice would you give our players who are thinking about playing beach sometime down the road.

My advice would be to PLAY as much as possible. Prepare for a whirlwind of change and embrace all the love and support



you can get whether it's from family or teammates or coaches. It's an absolutely amazing experience and appreciate all that you can because in the end it's worth every second. You go from being a top dog in club or high school to being a small fish in a large pond. That is A LOT to take in so don't be afraid to reach out if you need help! Just remember why you play this sport in the first place! Just that alone makes college volleyball worth it.

Left, top to bottom: Rachel Nieto representing Long Beach State at the NCAA Beach Volleyball Championships in Gulf Shores, AL.

Rachel poses with **Paul Harrison** and **Emma Doud** in the head-to-head matchup between Long Beach and Loyola Marymount.

Photos courtesy of **Paul Harrison**.



ALUMNINEWS

A Whole New Ballgame!

Paul Harrison also discussed how our alums have made adjustments in their game. In this two-part series, Class of 2016 teammates Emma Doud at Loyola Marymount University and Kaitlyn Zdroik at San Jose State University (beach and indoor) share their experiences. In a future issue of Xcel News, Class of 2014 teammates Dora Beilin and Hailey Lindberg will get their turn. Dora is at Cal Poly SLO and Hailey is playing both beach and indoor at Santa Clara.

How easy or hard was it to transition from indoor to sand?

EMMA: For me it was a significant change because I had to learn to pass differently and communicate differently.

KAITLYN: I had such wonderful teammates the helped make the transition much easier. They are like family.

Is there a skill you need to improve to be successful in sand? What areas of the game did you feel that you needed to strengthen?

EMMA: It's definitely communication. You must be able to trust your partner.

KAITLYN: Communication. Since there is only one other player besides yourself you have to be loud and direct.

With only 2 players on sand, conditioning is very important, what did you do to get prepared for sand?

EMMA: Conditioning is paramount. You have much more ground to cover with only one partner. We would spend significant time jumping uphill in sand dunes, as well as doing sprints in the sand.

KAITLYN: Cardio endurance. Training to push your limits to make an effort on every ball. Also training yourself mentally to be in every play.



What do you like most about playing sand? What were the factors that made you decide to switch to sand, or play both sand and indoor?

EMMA: I love the community that beach volleyball provides. It is a great atmosphere and, as it is gaining more popularity, it is providing more opportunities to future players.

KAITLYN: Playing sand gives me opportunities to dig, hit, block and set. I LOVE the fact that I can attack a ball.

Playing volleyball and hitting the books can be a challenge; how do you continue to be successful, especially those who are playing both indoor and sand?

EMMA: Coming in as a freshman and being a beach player only gave me a bit more time to get acclimated to the college life. You have to be great at time management to get all of



Photos courtesy of Paul Harrison.

Emma and Kaitlyn (continued)



your class requirements done while working around training and practice.

KAITLYN: Time Management ! College volleyball has forced me to be organized. I can't believe I even got a day planner. I want to be more efficient with my time and be more competitive in the classroom too.

How are strategies the same or different? Do you prepare the same way as you would in sand vs. indoor? Do the elements factor in game strategy?

EMMA: Knowing more of the court and court awareness affects your strategy. You are playing at a faster pace and have to make quick split-second decisions.

KAITLYN: I have played in rain and even hail. There are different strategies for example if it is raining; one may use a free ball as a sky ball, meaning the opponent has to look into the rain to track the ball. You have to be more focused and try not to make it a distraction.



Photos courtesy of Paul Harrison.

Emma and Kaitlyn (continued)



What words of advice would you give to aspiring sand players wanting to switch from indoor to sand (or would like to play both)? What would they need to do to get themselves ready?

EMMA: Be patient with the process. Play the game more and expose yourself

to more opportunities. Find good coaches who know who you are or potentially could be.

KAITLYN: Embrace the hard. Love the challenge and be OK with the uncomfortable.

What has been the best thing about sand volleyball that you have experienced?

EMMA: The coaches and the connections I have made. All my coaches from Xceleration and Sand Legs have made a big difference.

KAITLYN: The team aspect. Even though you are only two on the court it is special to have your teammates cheering you on.

Where do you see yourself (or what do you think you will be doing) 5-10 years from now?

EMMA: I would love to give the AVP a shot. No matter what, volleyball will always be a part of my life.

KAITLYN: Play volleyball at some level. I want to be established in my career in advertising and management.



Left, top to bottom: Xcel Class of 2016 **Emma Johnson** (indoor and sand at Loyola Marymount) takes a moment for a photo with Paul and Emma Doud.

Kaitlyn and Paul meet up with Xcel Class of 2015's **Dora Beilin** at Cal Poly SLO. Dora will give us her views of sand volleyball in the next issue of Xcel News.

Photos courtesy of **Paul Harrison**.



Stephanie and Rob Doud are the proud parents of Maddie and Emma, who were part of the Xceleration program from the Class of 2014 and Class of 2016, respectively. Here they share their thoughts about their experience with Xceleration and poignant message to players and parents coming through the program.



A Letter from Stephanie & Rob Doud

June 5, 2017

To Current and Future Families of the Xceleration Volleyball Club:

It is with great pleasure that we write this letter of endorsement for Xceleration Volleyball Club. It is addressed to any female volleyball athlete looking to strengthen her skills and hoping to make the right connections to advance herself in the sport. It is also for parents looking for testimonies and reasons to commitment to one club over another.

We had the privilege of seeing both our daughters develop their volleyball skills through three different clubs, each contributing growth, skill and experience along the way. However, both daughters finished their club volleyball experience with Xceleration -- **Maddie** (18's, 2014) and **Emma** (18's, 2016) -- and ultimately committed to universities through Xceleration's exceptional knowledge of college recruitment and placement.

Every club was a different experience, all with high's and low's, but it was Xceleration that consistently brought the total package together -- coaching, college recruitment, and yes, spectator enjoyment that made it the best fit for our daughters and family. Coaches **Andy Schroeder** and **Jeremy Swann** showed complete dedication to the advancement of our daughters' volleyball skills as well as a commitment to their growth as young, decision-making adults. As spectators, we witnessed the coaches' perseverance in "getting it right" and not giving up until it was a habit -- often skills that have served them well both on and off the court. Too many of today's athletes are one-goal oriented and could use a little help with off-the-court skills. We believe Andy and Jeremy's efforts demonstrated to our daughters what success looks like and more importantly, what concepts you need to understand and act upon while traveling that road to success.

When it comes to college recruitment, it's hard to find a club with more commitment to the process and more in-depth knowledge and experience with college programs around the country. **Jim Ross** and **Paul Harrison** worked endless hours at tournaments bringing the right coaches to the court for scouting opportunities. They know the skills of their players, the college team's needs and made thoughtful, personal connections that proved to be excellent options for consideration. This Fall, Maddie will begin her 4th indoor volleyball season at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and Emma will start her second season on the Loyola Marymount Beach team.

Club volleyball is a commitment, and not just for the student athlete, but for the entire family. And because both the player and her family will spend an amazing number of hours with an extended volleyball family, it's important to find leaders in that family who help to advance your child's athletic goals as well as your entire family's values. We have fond memories of working with the Xceleration Team, and we hope you have the same opportunity to experience this exceptional club.

-- **Robert and Stephanie Doud**