



CELlent NEWS

APRIL 2018

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**Xceleration
Volleyball Club**

John B. David, Editor

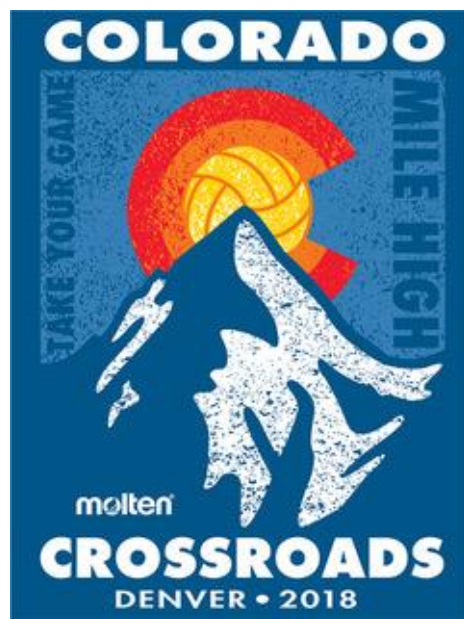
In Search of the Golden Tickets

Xceleration heads to warm and sunny Denver for Colorado Crossroads

On two separate weekends in March, nearly 500 college coaches, 1,500 teams, and 57,000 attendees descended upon 200 courts in the Colorado Convention Center to assess recruits, watch great action, and compete for a handful of Junior Nationals (JN) bids available at the Colorado Crossroads JN Qualifiers.

Xceleration sent nine of its teams in the 14 to 18 age groups to the annual qualifier for a chance to secure one of the elusive JN bids. Much like the search for the “Golden Tickets” in the Roald Dahl children’s classic, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, the bids would grant the “deserving” holders passage to the ultimate volleyball factory in all the land – the Junior Nationals – which will be held at Detroit’s COBO Center later this summer.

Xceleration teams played hard and gave it their all during the competition against many of the top teams in the country but were unable to snag a JN



bid at the Crossroads. Nonetheless, the venue and the surrounding areas, which basked in the sunny and warm temperatures of the Mile High City, were a feast for the senses. The Crossroads produced awe-inspiring action from Xcel and their opponents. Instead of facing self-centered, bratty children who felt a sense of entitlement or the lovable green-haired Oompa Loompas that Charlie met in Willy Wonka’s chocolate factory, Xcel faced the giants of the volleyball world, whose primary goal was to fight furiously for the Golden Tickets. And it’s no wonder that the Convention Center’s iconic and beloved Giant Blue Bear is pushing its nose and paws against the glass façade to get a glimpse of the volleyball action inside the Convention Center.

(Continued on page 4)

J-Ross Speaks

XCELLent NEWS will include messages on behalf of the ownership group in this regular feature of **J-Ross Speaks!**

Hi Xceleration families,

We are past the halfway point of the season but there is still a lot of volleyball remaining on the schedule. That means continued opportunities for our players to work on their games and improve their skills. Don't let down on this. Continue to get to practice and work. If you feel you need extra work on your games take advantage of the Saturday lessons that are offered. They fill up quickly so book them soon.



Congratulations and Thank You, 12Blue

One Xceleration team is complete for the season and that is the 12Blue team. I wanted to congratulate all the players along with Coach Gayle and Coach Jeremy on a job well done! You all grew a lot this season and I know that your volleyball skills improved. Thank you for practicing and playing so hard and for doing it all with huge smiles on your faces. Trust me, that inspires all of us and we look forward to seeing you back in the gym very soon!

Colorado Crossroads

The Colorado Crossroads tournament was a great one again and I was impressed with the level of play that I saw in our players. This tournament continues to draw top level teams and we very much enjoy watching our teams compete at this level. We place you in tournaments and divisions like this to challenge you and when you step up and play, the growth is there. What I can tell you is that we do not usually struggle physically at these types of tournaments. Where we do stumble at times is mentally. It is tough to stay mentally engaged in a tough 3-day tournament and we will work just as hard as we can to give you the tools to do this. Getting the proper rest, blocking out distractions and preparing to play on a daily basis are skills that need to be worked on and practiced daily. All in all, a good showing by our teams and I was proud of that.

Gauging Our Progress

One of the ways I can gauge our progress is by talking to the college coaches which I do on a regular basis as co-director of the clubs College Recruiting program. More and more I am hearing from college coaches how impressed they are with the progression of the club and of our players. They are very impressed with the number of recruitable players in the club and the skill level of our players. Nice to hear and motivating for our coaches and players.



Photo Galleries

You can find more photos in the [Galleries](#) page of our website. If you would like to share your pictures during the season, please post them on our Facebook group page, and they may work their way into future issues XCELLent News.

Instagram

Xceleration has an Instagram presence where you can view our posts throughout the season:

XCELERATIONVBC



Instagram

Facebook Group Page

Xceleration has a group page! Join our [Facebook](#) fan page and participate in the discussion forum where you'll hear about our athletes and various ongoing events. Search for "Xceleration Volleyball Club" and ask to join. Or scan the QR code with your mobile device.



Find us on:
facebook®



J-Ross Speaks (continued)

College Recruiting

Speaking of college recruiting, I have to tell all of you again how important it is to contact your colleges of interest and get a dialogue going with them. The college coaches are getting more inquiries about their programs than ever before which means they get to tournaments with list of kids in hand that they need to see play. Paul and I do our best to drag them over to watch our Xceleration players, but the bottom line is that they are extremely busy at these tournaments and their priority is to the players that have been contacting them. Stay on this!!

Summer Camps / Beach / Fall Ball

I urge all of you to take a look at our website or the back pages of this newsletter as our Summer Camps, Beach program and Fall Ball programs have all been announced. These are all excellent opportunities to improve your games with excellent coaches and low player to camper ratios! In our summer camps we have all 3 courts available to us and this will assure that courts will not be over crowded with campers and that all players will get a LOT of volleyball repetitions. Trust me. This is not true at a lot of camps. Take advantage of this!!

What's Ahead

Ahead are the Far Western JNQ, Power and Premier League Regionals, JVA West Coast Cup and Bayview Classic. Keep working hard! Stay up on your conditioning. Don't miss practices.

Go Xcel!!

Jim

COMING UP!

Travel: Players and parents are responsible for getting themselves to Reno the day prior to this tournament. Coaches will establish a check-in time for players to arrive.

Accommodations: The club has secured enough rooms for all players to stay with parents. Details have been provided to families, including room instructions and options.

Week 1 and Week 2 Hotel:

Silver Legacy Resort & Casino, 407 N Virginia St., Reno, NV 89501

Week 1 Check-in: April 20 for 3 nights

Week 2 Check-in: April 26 for 3 nights



THE STORY OF THE BLUE BEAR

"I See What You Mean," also known as the giant blue bear peeking into the Colorado Convention Center's lobby, is the 40-foot high sculpture which injects a welcome sense of fun and playfulness into the convention center experience. The creation of local artist Lawrence Argent, this public art was installed in 2005 and has quickly become a bona fide Mile High icon – and a can't-miss photo op for thousands of volleyball visitors in town for the Colorado Crossroads.

The Blue Bear has not only become one of the iconic symbols of the Colorado Convention Center, but also an iconic symbol of the city itself.

(Continued on the next page)



Colorado Crossroads (continued)

One by one, they trickled into the departing lobby of the Oakland Airport, and there to welcome and greet players and their families before checking in their luggage and head to the security gate is none other than Xceleration's travel coordinator **Normie Pineda**, with everyone's boarding ticket on hand.

The journey east to the Colorado Rockies began with high hopes and giddy excitement. Upon arriving at Denver International Airport, the teams were again treated to a smooth ride to the Hyatt Regency in downtown Denver via luxury coaches. No more spending hours getting rental cars and driving oftentimes through the thick snow in Denver.

Though the Golden Tickets were not in the offering this time around, Xceleration's teams gained many things from this event: increased camaraderie, cohesiveness, and chemistry by being together with their teammates. This time together further developed or sealed life-long friendships.

The Crossroads and Xceleration also offered athletes very unique and important learning opportunities. To name just a few, Xceleration athletes had the chance to practice personal responsibility while traveling, not only to themselves but towards their teammates; they learned to take care of each other and develop a sense of sisterhood; and they experienced competition like no other against teams from other regions of the country. For our families that attended, they built and enhanced relationships with other Xceleration families, creating a lifetime of memories. Along with these new life experiences, the teams also had fun and embraced the moment.

Immediately after checking-in to get settled at the Hyatt, the teams headed across the street (how convenient is that?!) for a final practice run at the Convention Center before the competition begins. To get acclimated with the Denver altitude and thin air, coaches ran their teams through light workouts to familiarize the player with the new environment and the big stage. Greeted by the Giant Blue Bear and rows and rows of volleyball souvenirs for sale, Xceleration took to one of the 200 courts on site to get butterflies out of the way. The highlights from the two-week period follows.



THE STORY OF THE BLUE BEAR

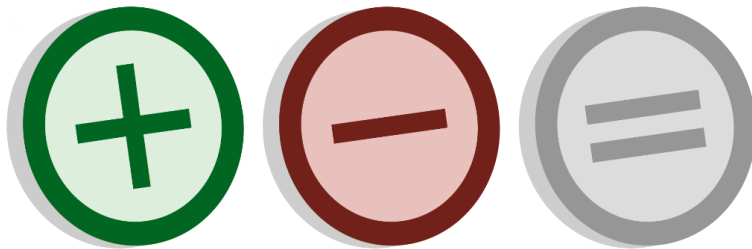
Argent was asked, why a bear? why a giant, curious blue bear, specifically? Here's what he said.

Lawrence Argent: There's iconic Colorado imagery – the Rockies, the Flatirons and all that – that I think is a little bit overused, a little passé. So I thought about what it is like to be a resident here and the journey one takes down either corridor (14th St. and Speer Blvd.) when one notices there is a convention occurring. I'm always interested in what might be going on in there, the exchange of information, ideas and ideologies. But there's never really any indication from the outside what's going on inside. I had recently seen a photo in the newspaper of a black bear looking into someone's window and that resonated with me. As for the blue color, that was actually an accident – originally the bear was going to reflect the colors of Colorado, with sandstone colors and things like that. But a printout of the design came back blue by mistake, and I thought that was much more exciting. And it was serendipitous, because [I learned later] that the black bear was very important to the Native American Ute tribes that lived in Colorado – and also that one level of spiritual enlightenment for the Utes was the "blue" level.

Source: www.denver.org



PULSE SURVEY



The Colorado Crossroads marks the half-way point of the season and we'd like to hear from you about your Xceleration experience to date. Please take a few minutes to complete our mini-pulse survey to gauge whether or not we're meeting expectations. We value your input to help us grow the club. Thank you in advance for your time. Click on the image above to begin the short survey.

Testimonials

Jim, Normie, & Tomas & Xceleration VBC,

I just wanted to take a moment to THANK YOU for all the time, effort and hard work you put into pulling together the Colorado Crossroads for our team. What an incredible job! I sensed from the parent meeting in the fall that the decision to move away from the team chaperone model was a big one and the additional cost being passed to the families weighed heavily on your hearts. But as a parent, I must tell you, this experience has been a fabulous one and well worth the extra expense. Being downtown and in walking distance to the Convention Center has been an absolute gift of ease, convenience, and lots of fun. Truly!!!

Xcel is such a phenomenal club and it really starts with the hardworking, dedicated and passionate leadership that each of you embody. Our family is so grateful to be a part of the 15W team and this amazing club. And Tomas please keep those photos coming! You have such a wonderful talent for capturing the spirit and joy of this game through our girls. Thank you all so much!

With gratitude,
Courtney & Olivia Anderson (15White)



Xceleration wishes all of you a very Happy Birthday! May life lead you to great happiness, success, and hope that all your wishes come true!

MARCH CELEBRANTS

Gracie Armato
Kynidy Ferguson
Catherine Helgeson
Rosa Jones
Ingrid Lam
Katie Malan
Shruti Mangipudi
Aliya Quadjovie
Isabella Vance
Kylie Wood

APRIL CELEBRANTS

Olivia Anderson
Claire Conners
Natalie Does
Katie Edwards
Armani Houston
Claudia Lindgren
Tati Leuvano
Miranda Marshall
Karli McHugh
Alaysia Mitchell
Leila Sardinha
Amira Vontoure
Maya Walker

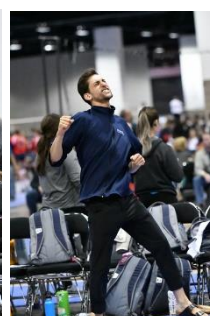
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**Find Your Life Purpose... Seek
What Sets Your Soul on FIRE!**



**“TO SUCCEED,
YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE
IN SOMETHING WITH
SUCH A PASSION THAT
IT BECOMES A REALITY.”**

Anita Roddick



do it
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**Follow Your Passion
and Success Will Follow!**



"As long
as you've
got passion,
faith and are
willing to work
hard, you can do
anything you
want in this life."



Ascending through Premier & Power Leagues



Premier League

- 12Blue concluded its season in PL#2 in the Bronze bracket of the Eagle Division
- 13White will begin as the 9th seed and the top of the pool in the Silver Bracket of the Eagle Division in PL#4 after running its Premier League record to 7-9

Power League

- 13Blue: Currently at 5-7 and in the Bronze Division (#32) after PL#2.

14Blue Moves Up to Silver Division in Power League!

Kayla and I are very proud of how well our girls have improved and competed in Colorado & in our first 2 Power Leagues. It was so encouraging to see our team's hard work pay off in PL2 when we moved up to the Silver Division. Kayla and I look forward to seeing even more growth as the competition gets tougher. Way to go 14-Blue!

Coach Mariah

Photos courtesy of Ashley Worsham & Tomas Pineda.

[Click here to see more.](#)



14Blue / 14White



14 BLUE

- Finished 41st of 129 in the American Division
- Opened with three consecutive victories and ended the tournament at 5-4, including a 1-1 record in play-in matches
- Book-ended the tournament with two three-set matches, winning 15-10 versus Victory Volleyball in the opening game, but falling in 16-18 squeaker in the last game on get-away day.

14 WHITE

- Finished 89th of 129 in American Division
- Was dealt two opening day defeats before bouncing back with three straight wins against teams from the host state of Colorado – Littleton, 303 Volleyball, and Ballistic
- Went home with a 3-4 record in the first Colorado Crossroads experience for most of the team

Photos courtesy of Susan Lem & Tomas Pineda.

[Click here to see more.](#)



15Blue / 15White



15 BLUE

- Top 10 finish in 9th of 93 teams in the USA Division
- Opened strongly with a five-game win streak before dropping 2 of the last 3 games
- Impressive 6-2 record, defeating teams from Missouri, Texas, Colorado, and Washington

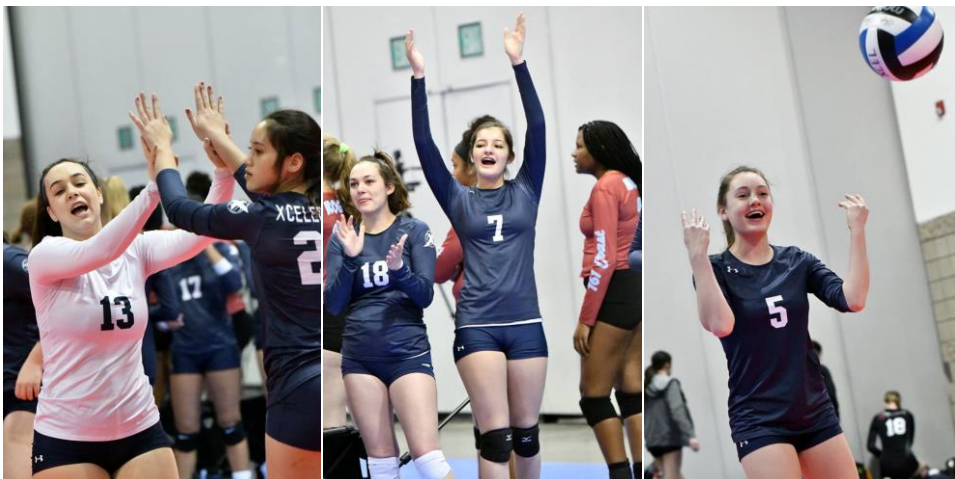
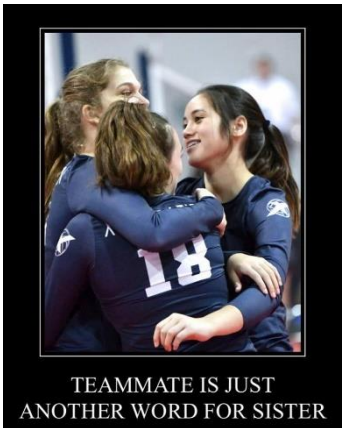
15 WHITE

- Finished 57th of 121 in the American Division
- After two victories on Opening Day, 15White skidded but stayed competitive against many tough teams in the tournament
- Undeterred, the team celebrated and bonded over the first weekend of the tourney



Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.
[Click here to see more.](#)

16Blue / 16White



16 BLUE

- Ended in 33rd of 47 in the Open Division
- Pitted against perennial contenders in the country – Northern Lights, Front Range and VCNebraska from volleyball country – the Blue started slowly in the first four games
- Re-ignited their play with strong bounce-back wins in 2 of last 3 matches to finish with a 3-4 record

16 WHITE

- Placed in 21st of 121 in the American Division
- After an opening match setback, rolled to four consecutive victories over teams from Colorado, Florida, Texas and California
- 5-4 record garnered a spot in the finals of the Silver C Bracket
- Two of four losses came in three sets

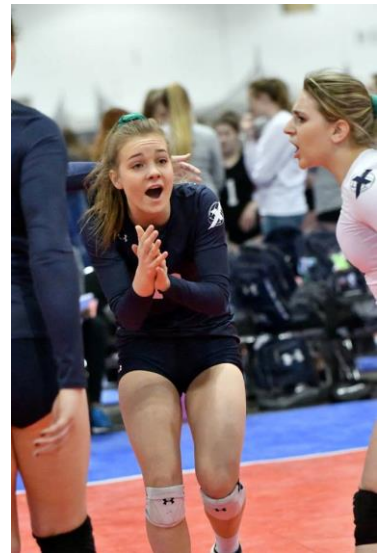
*Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.
[Click here to see more.](#)*

17Blue



17 BLUE

- Placed 41st of 47 in the Open Division
- Posted 3-4 record at Crossroads, including 3-game win streak



Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.
[Click here to see more.](#)

At the Golden State Qualifier and Colorado Crossroads: A Message from Coach Andy



In Reno, for the Golden State Qualifier... Like Salt Lake City, we incurred snow and had to get everyone there early.

The Team hadn't been at full strength all year and the same held true in Reno. The Girls battled very hard on Friday to make it to the upper half of the draw and remain in Bid contention. Great performances were turned in by all players. Cameron wasn't able to go; we would later find out she had been/was battling pneumonia.

Saturday/Sunday. We had a tough pool and couldn't string together a consistent performance. We end up with 3 of our loses to 1-2-3 in the tournament. Very good teams. We ended up in 7th place.

Denver, Colorado... We battled hard on Friday and won 2 of the 3 matches – and get to the upper half of the draw. First time we have ever had a team get to the upper half of draw in the three open tournaments we played in.

Saturday. We were able to pull off 1 win against a team from Carolina. Ultimately, we moved out of contention for a bid and into the Silver Division. We beat a very good Spiral team from SoCal Sunday morning. Then, we were in total control against Oregon Juniors to get to the Silver Final but couldn't hold on. We ended up in 15th place.

Each player on this team is so special and so important.



18 BLUE

- Placed 15th of 39 in the Open Division
- Punctuated the first two victories with comebacks in the third sets of each match
- Held a 4-4 record at Crossroads
- Placed 7th of 15 in the Open Division of Golden State Qualifier
- Losses against Top 3 finishers in the tournament and JN bid winners



Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.
[Click here to see more.](#)

BREY – has carried a huge load for us all year long. Great player, teammate and leader. Poised and working hard to have a great career at SMC (St. Mary's College).

CIERRA – huge pickup for this team. Can do it all and has done it all. Great teammate and tireless worker.

EMILY – another great pickup for this team. Really athletic and very teachable. Great teammate. Relentless work ethic.

MIRANDA – continues to lead by example. Unbelievable work ethic and attention to detail. Very much improved since the start of the year. Dixie State get ready!

JENNA – has moved back to her natural position – the middle – and is playing great. Her energy during matches is off the charts!

CAM – had pneumonia for part of Reno and part of Denver. When on the court she has helped in a big way. Big time competitor. Can do it all on the volleyball court.

TATI – been great for us all year. Very strong hands and competes like no other. Big reason we're going to Anaheim.

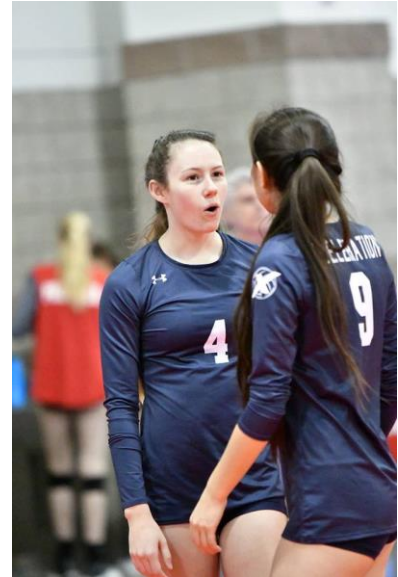
MAFA – has overcome a sprained ankle sustained early in the season. Initially was in the middle and has now moved to the left side. Had a big time tournament in Denver. Has very high volleyball IQ. Mafa is only a junior!

SHRUTI – has also been great for us in the setting position. Has a super soft touch on the ball, has played some great defense too. Shruti is a very coachable player.

CHIARA – tremendous talent at the Libero position. Has passed and defended at a high level. She is also one of the best Teammates we have ever coached.

INGRID – another player that can do it all. Passes the ball very well and has no fear of any swing. Will pursue all loose balls at a college level. A tremendous teammate and is very coachable.

GRETTA – another unbelievable teammate. Has great motor and is tireless in her efforts to improve daily. Can play both pins and is a very skilled back row player.





USA Volleyball.

18Blue Earns American Bid to Junior Nationals!

After outstanding performances at PLQs and PL#1, we wish to congratulate the 18Blue on earning and accepting an American bid for the 18's Junior National Championships that will be held from April 27-29 in Anaheim, CA.

In case anyone is wondering how a JN bid in league is already secured, the 18's schedule for USAV is different than other ages because JN's for them are in April. For everyone else, JN bids in league are given after power league regionals in May and JN's are late June.

CLASS of 2018

COMING UP... Don't fall asleep and remember that The Class of 2018 Graduates Issue is now being prepared. Please submit your special messages and photos by May 5 to be included in this special issue.



Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.
[Click here to see more.](#)

18White



18 WHITE

- Finished 63rd of 93 in the American Division
- Slow start after dropping 4 of first six games in the tournament.
- Strung together four straight victories in the latter rounds to finish at 6-5 in the Crossroads.
- Finished 19th of 27 overall at the Golden State Qualifiers with a 4-3 record, posting 3 solid wins in the last four matches

*Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.
[Click here to see more.](#)*



SOPH 79

The 2017 Soph 79: Special Mention and Honorable Mention Honorees

Prepvolleyball recognized 83 sophomores as Special Mention in its Soph 79 for 2017. This list identifies players who excelled at the high school varsity level in their sophomore seasons last fall. Two members of the 16Blue represented Xceleration – Congratulations to Ruby Santos and Madi Risch.



Ruby Santos, 5-2 S, James Logan (Union City, California) – The Colts were 40-5 in 2017 and reached the California Division I state championship match for the first time in school history. Fast setter Santos, a two-year starter, was a huge reason for that success. Over 119 sets, Santos delivered 1200 assists and added 232 digs, 57 kills and 37 aces. “She is the reason our team is able to run a fast-paced offense,” noted coach Matthew Guzman. “She is smart, makes good decisions and has the ability to put the ball wherever our hitters need it.” Santos was a Second Team All-League pick.



Madi Risch, 5-10 OH, Acalanes (Lafayette, California) – A tireless worker, Risch averaged 6.1 kills per game, 2.1 aces per match and 1.2 blocks per match for the Dons in 2017. The First Team All-League pick also passed 1.98 for the season.





SHINING STARS

Here are TWO Xcel players who stood out to Prepvolleyball on Day 1 of the Colorado Crossroads when they were making their rounds... Congrats to Breyan Ashley (18Blue) and Nadia Pace (17Blue)!



Top: 18Blue's **Breyan Ashley** is a senior at Dublin High School and will stay a Gael next season to play for St. Mary's College in Moraga.

Bottom: 17Blue's **Nadia Pace** is a junior at Oakland's Bishop O'Dowd High School.



ON THE ROAD

Stop kicking my seat, Tomas...



Thank you to all our roving paparazzi for capturing memories that will last a lifetime! Our trip to Denver to play against the highest levels of competition was phenomenal, but spending time with new-found friends is priceless.



Photos courtesy of Trenelle Holt & Kathleen Gillis Henry.

with 14White

with 17Blue

ON THE ROAD with 14Blue



**MOVIE
NIGHT**



XCELERATION

Tom's
URBAN



Photos courtesy of Susan Lem.

ON THE ROAD with 15White & 15Blue



blue AGAVE
GRILL



Photos courtesy of Natasha Gayle, Angie Flores McCalmon & Josette Sayama.

ON THE ROAD

with 16Blue



MAGGIANO'S
" LITTLE ITALY "

Welcomes
Xceleration VB 16 Blue
March 16, 2018



MAGGIANO'S
" LITTLE ITALY "



Photos courtesy of Dee Ortega.

ON THE ROAD with 16White



*Photos courtesy of
Karen Conley Elliott and
Tony Wong.*

**ON
THE
ROAD**

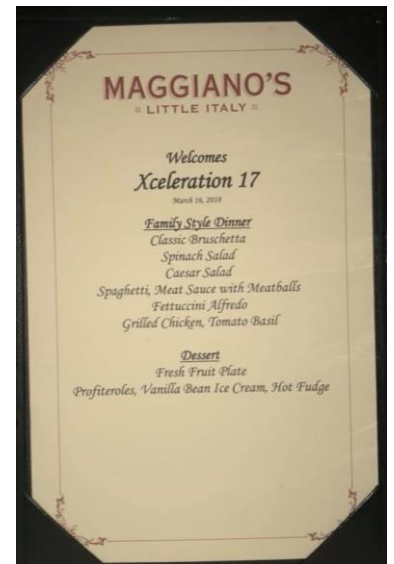
with 17Blue



XCELERATION



MAGGIANO'S
LITTLE ITALY®



Photos courtesy of Leslie Ray & Kathleen Gillis Henry.

ON THE ROAD with 18White (and Staff)



C'mon ladies, dance with me! Ready, 5 – 6 – 7 – 8... step, kick, step, kick, step!



Vesta





To learn something more about our Xceleration athletes, in this and in future editions of XCELLent News we feature our players with a common bond, those you would call “different flowers from the same garden.” They are someone who is more than just family, they are forever friends – they are **SISTERS!** Here we meet 13Blue’s Olivia and 18White’s Dalilah Wiseman.

Two Wisemans Hope to Bring in the Gold

Xceleration is pleased to welcome and introduce the Wiseman sisters – **Olivia** plays as a defensive stopper for the 13Blue and **Dalilah** tees it up for the 18White. Both are newcomers to the club and were attracted to join Xceleration because they had heard that “the coaching is unbelievably good.” ☺

With Xceleration, Olivia is certainly becoming a better player in the back row and Dalilah is getting more and more opportunities and learning new techniques at her position. As travel tournaments are not on the schedule for the 13s, Olivia is anxious to get to do that next year. Dalilah is equally very excited to participate in faraway tournaments where the 18White already had the opportunity to visit Las Vegas and Denver to date, and later to Long Beach for the JVA West Coast Cup. Anaheim and Orlando may even be in the lineup if the schedules work out.

While the travel tournaments lie ahead, we step back in time to find out how the pair got introduced to the game. Dalilah started playing volleyball for the Lafayette Moraga Youth Association’s (LMYA) 5th grade team because all her friends played it and it seemed like a fun sport. She was hooked ever since. “It’s a team sport where the whole team gets to bond,” Dalilah said.

When she was “younger,” Olivia played soccer, softball, and tennis and swam but gravitated towards volleyball. “Dalilah and I would go in our backyard and she would hit down balls at me, and I just grew from there,” Olivia said. “She is a great volleyball coach (with coaches John and Dave from last year, too) because she taught me everything I know about volleyball.” This year with coaches **Jade Sanford** and **Maddie Borch**, Olivia is eager to learn rotations and new things about the sport. According



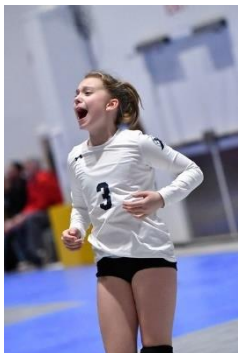
Hello
my name is



HELLO
my name is



Top: **Olivia** would like to introduce herself to Xceleration. And, Hello There, **Dalilah!**



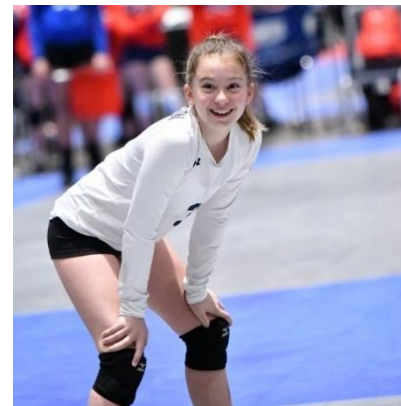
	Olivia	Dalilah
Favorite Food		
Favorite book(s)		
If you can only bring 3 things on a deserted island (or when going on vacation), what would they be?		
Favorite or most faraway place you have visited		
Favorite TV Show		
Favorite Musical Artist		

to Dalilah, her sister is the type of person who is willing to put in the work to learn new things. "I would always tell her to never give up and always have confidence." To which Olivia, who is wise beyond her years and being the consummate learner, would say that "losing is OK because it helps you learn."

Outside of the sport, both girls excel in school. Dalilah's favorite subjects at Campolindo High School are Math and Sports Medicine, while Olivia loves to write (and PE) at Stanley Middle School. When

Xceleration asked the duo to look into their crystal [volley]balls and tell us what's in store for them down the road, Dalilah sees herself being a hair and makeup artist. Olivia will still be "playing volleyball hopefully at a good college."

Following in their mother Caroline's footsteps as a hair dresser, it's not surprising that both sisters have keen interests in hair and makeup. Dalilah said, "I would love to do hair like my Mom when I'm older." She plans to also have a professional career as a successful hair and makeup stylist.



Alright Mr. Pineda,
I'm Ready for My
Close-Up...



Olivia followed, "I'm really good at makeup and hair, too. I can braid hair in any way – French, Dutch, Fishtail, Waterfall... you name it!"

So now we know a little bit about each of the Wisemans... how they got started in volleyball, why they joined Xceleration, their favorite



food, books, or musical artists, where they intend to land in their careers, what they thrive in, what they like... but what we probably don't know are the things that they don't like – their biggest pet peeves! Your **mission** Xcel, should you decide to accept it, is to find out what they are by introducing yourselves and asking Olivia and Dalilah. As always, should you or any of your Force be caught, the Secretary will disavow any knowledge of your actions. Whoops, that's another story! Anyway, say "HELLO!"



Photos courtesy of Tomas Pineda.
[Click here to see more.](#)

In the NEWS

Krey Elementary School students to enter Wonder League Robotics Competition Invitational Round

By Staff Writer Aly Brown,
Reprinted from March 22, 2018,
The Press

Krey Elementary School's Coding Coyotes, seen here with their lead teacher Sarah Jenkins, recently landed a coveted spot in the Wonder League Robotics Competition Invitational Round, a world-wide competition. Photo by Aly Brown



Congratulations to Gracie Armato, pictured third from the left, of Xceleration's 12Blue for gracing the news with your accomplishment as a STEM leader. Good luck to the Coding Coyotes and Gracie at the Wonder League Robotics Competition (WLRC).



A Krey Elementary School team recently landed a spot in a world-wide competition with the chance to earn a generous STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) grant.

Calling themselves the Coding Coyotes, students Aidan Duttera, Ariana Le, **Gracie Armato**, Garrett Anderson and Samuel Penrod – led by fifth-grade teacher Sarah Jenkins – have dedicated after-school hours to completing robotics missions assigned by Wonder Workshop Inc. for its Wonder League Robotics Competition (WLRC). The organization was founded by Vikas Gupta to inspire kids to code for success in the 21st century.

“We had to take a robot named Dash and complete different courses, and if we completed all of the required courses and had enough points, we could get into final round – the hardest round – which we did,” said Garrett. “We’re going to have to run a lot of trial and error (for the final round).”

Since October, the students have used their coding and computational-thinking skills to tackle missions that

involved getting Dash to perform specific tasks. They had to videotape the robot’s movements and submit all missions by Feb. 16 in competition with teams from around the world. On Feb. 26, the Coding Coyotes received an exciting email, welcoming the group to the final Wonder League Robotics Competition (WLRC) Invitational Round. They were among 7,500 competitors from 63 countries and were placed 10th from the top of a list of 130 qualifiers.

“There were hard things we had to complete,” said Aidan. “One mission, we had to get Dash up the ramp, and he kept falling.”

Jenkins said the robot used to enter the competitions was purchased with funds garnered from a Donor’s Choose project. The students then created and edited their own entry video, which helped snag them a spot in the invitational round, but they were also encouraged to write stories for extra credit. The five students drafted a witty comic book and built characters from cups and crafting materials to help demonstrate the use of robotics in various capacities.

“We’re really good coders, but it was more than we’d ever done before,” said **Gracie**. “One really difficult challenge involved moving paper clips, and Dash kept getting them stuck under his wheels.”

Samuel explained that they crafted a sort of plow to attach to the front of the robot, which enabled it to move the clips without getting stuck. And it’s that creative thinking that landed them a spot in the invitational round.

The invitational round will commence on March 5 with teams competing for the coveted grand prize of a \$5,000 STEAM grant, a Dash robot for each team member and national recognition and certificates. Prizes and recognitions will also be awarded to some of the top finalists.

“It was really fun to do this stuff together,” said Arianna.

alumni news



Left photo: University of San Diego (USD) Club Volleyball wins the Western Region Challenge Tournament! Great job, **Jordan Minney** (Xcel Class of 2015), right side in the back row flashing the #1 sign! Jordan also is the President of the USD club volleyball program!

Right photo: In the same tournament, **Jerri Bonnel** (Xcel Class of 2017), second from the left in the back row, and her Chico State club volleyball team placed 1st in the Silver Division... congratulations, Jerri!



The Ivy League released its list of student-athletes selected for 2017-18 Academic All-Ivy honors in its fall sports, and Xceleration is proud to announce that alum **Kelley Wirth** (Class of 2015) is on the prestigious list. The 80 men and women were starters or key reserves on an officially recognized varsity team with 3.0 or better cumulative grade point averages. Each institution nominated five men and five women from its eligible student-athletes.

Kelley Wirth, Jr., Women's Volleyball, Economics (Moraga, CA)

2017: Honorable Mention All-Ivy selection... Has earned All-Ivy recognition in each of her three years... Ranked second on team in blocks... Named to Fall Academic All-Ivy Team... Named Yale Invitational MVP and named to All-Tournament Team... Selected Ivy League Player of the Week on Sept. 4... Named to UC Santa Barbara Thunderdome All-Tournament Team on Sept. 10... Named to Penn State Classic All-Tournament Team on Sept. 16... Led the Bulldogs in kills per set (2.94)... Produced season-high 17 kills in five-set loss to Harvard on Nov. 3... Had 10 or more kills 13 times.



Photos courtesy of Paul Minney, Jerri Bonnel and Yale Athletics.

First In – Last Out

Club Partner and Co-College Development Directors Jim Ross and Paul Harrison will normally put in 12-hour days (or more) at travel tournaments and showcases like the Colorado Crossroads, to get college coaches from around the nation to watch and get in touch with our players.

Perspective from a follower... “I remember when I was one of those parents who had dreams of watching her kid play college sports, running, basketball. Then reality set in....and what I am most grateful for now, is that all the while I had these dreams, we made the kid work his tail off in school, academics have always come first in our household, and even though the kid will not get a sports scholarship of any kind, he is having a blast playing high school sports, and his grades are going to get him academic money... which in the long run is far more important.

I would tell any of you whose kids are in 5th-8th grade...what they are now athletically may not be the ticket later....make them make school their #1 priority and don't live your dreams via your kid. So many things change.... trust me.”

(The picture below was sent by a trusted college coach - We can't verify the exact statistics but the point is - the better student you are, the more options you are going to have.)

← Making The Grade

Percentages of Schools that can recruit you depending on your GPA:

GPA	4.0	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.0
%	94%	72%	51%	21%	8%



When Your Kid Loses

Posted March 17, 2017. Reprinted from the Facebook page of U.S. Senator Ben Sasse from Nebraska.

I've been chewing on this photo for days – it's amazing.** Check it out.

Like the old lead-in voice to ABC sports broadcasts, it captures both “the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.” There is so much joy in that center-court dog-pile – the last-second shot that propelled Ponca High to overtime victory in the district championship and thus a life-changing trip to the state tournament. Wow.

But the image I can't get out of my mind is the kid trying to pull her jersey over her face. That's the leading scorer from Oakland-Craig High School – her season now over.

Part of why I can't look away from her tears is because I know the family – and they're incredible. I haven't spoken to the parents since they lost, but I am certain of two things: 1) This game surely still hurts; and 2) Merritt and Dannika (the dad and mom) will know how to use this moment to help their daughter grow.

As the son of a Nebraska football and wrestling coach, my heart still pounds every Thursday and Friday morning in February and March as new championship weekends kick off. I love the drama. Our championships in swimming and diving, wrestling, and girls' basketball have just wrapped up. Boys' hoops tips off today. It's a special weekend--teams across our state, from big schools in Omaha and from schools with tiny home



gyms straight out of the movie *Hoosiers*, have all earned the right to come play dramatic games in Lincoln. It all comes down to this. One and done. Win or go home.

By late Saturday night, all but of a few of those teams will have lost, and a whole lot of kids will head home with their dreams dashed. It hurts. There will be a bunch of heartbreaking photos of kids who left it all out there. This is the tough side of sports.

...But what a huge opportunity you have, moms and dads, with your little “losers.” Don't miss it this weekend.

Melissa (my wife) and I have been talking about this photo -- and how probably the most important thing we ever learned from sports was the gift of losing, horrible though it felt. We often -- and rightly! -- spend a ton of time pursuing victory and celebrating winners. But Melissa and I have been comparing notes on the opportunities on the other side of the coin, when our kids experience the heartbreak.

As parents, what we say to our kids in those moments will have far greater impact than anything they would have learned from a dog-pile at center court. There's more character-building opportunity in the scar tissue of the loss than there ever will be in the jubilation of the win.



When Your Kid Loses

So to the moms and dads driving to Lincoln this morning, here are four quick thoughts on the parenting challenge that awaits if your kid loses tonight or tomorrow or Saturday.

1. Don't deflect the blame.

So often, the sweaty uniform hasn't hit the laundry basket yet, and we're scrambling to ease the pain of defeat by letting them blame other factors—"my teammate missed a free throw, coach called the wrong play, the third leg of the relay fell behind, the other guys played dirty, the ref blew a key call."

Instead, encourage your kid to show gratitude to the coaches for a great season (and even thank those pesky folks in the black and white stripes). Extend a hand to a teammate who also feels crushed, pull him up off the floor or mat, pull her out of the pool. This is how we teach our kids to care for the hearts of others, even when their own hearts are breaking. This may be the first time in life that your child has ever been required to do this -- but sadly, in this vale of tears, we parents know it won't be the last.

2. Help your kid admit that, for today, the other player was better.

My dad was my wrestling coach, and I was fortunate to win a whole lot more than I lost. But today, those losses seem so much, much more important. My dad's words still ring in my ears thirty years later that one of the things that makes this sport unique is there is absolutely nowhere to hide. The ball can't bounce the wrong way; no one else can take the shot; there aren't many gray-area judgment calls like interior line holding in football. You battle one-on-one, and when it's over, you

shake your opponent's hand. You stand next to him as the referee raises his arm high in victory -- over your head, in front of the whole gym. You gotta look him in the eye, and give him his due. For the 90% of you who won't have a kid cutting down nets or raising up hardware Saturday, your gift to him is to encourage him to hold his head up and offer the other guys a "good game" with the sincerity of a man, not the begrudging of a boy.

3. Give them a minute to lick their own wounds; don't immediately try to make them feel better about tomorrow.

I spoke with a mom from Blair last weekend who asked me to share words of comfort with her son. He'd just lost his shot at state with an unexpected disqualification on the final day. She wanted me to let him know that it's not always going to hurt this much, and I did. She was surely right -- it won't hurt like this forever, and our kids need to know that.

But thinking about it later, maybe this never-before-known ache in his gut shouldn't be too quickly mended. She said it was the worst thing they'd ever experienced.

There's opportunity in that. Perhaps when we let our kids experience this pain, that's when change happens. This is where the learning occurs, when character development becomes more important than winning or losing.

If this seems heartless, think of it this way: While it tears you up to watch your child reach for a dream and fall short, know that soon, scar tissue will begin to cover these fresh wounds.

This is GOOD scar tissue. The growth happening underneath these scars is precious, and will serve your son or daughter well. From this experience, your child will be able to acknowledge



the success of others, even at personal cost. Your child will know what it means to work on a team to the benefit of others before self, what it means to take direction, to accept responsibilities, and to put forth their very best, leaving it all on the field/court/mat.

And your kids will know how to respond when even their best isn't enough. All this happens to our kids so the next day, they pick up the ball, and head back to the gym. Working hard, getting better with that dream still alive.

Kids who can get knocked down like that and get back up are ready for all that life will throw at them. And isn't that really the point of all this? To get our kids ready for real adversity?

4. Oh, and hug them like crazy.

Know that none of what you say to your child in those first moments matters as much as what you do. In those very first moments, when the agony of defeat is washing all over them, just grab your kids and hold on tight. Tell them you love them. Tell them the love is unconditional. Tell 'em you're proud.

This is your job. And you'll never have a more important calling.

Enjoy the games everyone.

***Congrats to photographer Curt Hine (of the Oakland Independent) on this epic shot.*



Assist From Sloane: Team v. Being Seen

By Sloane Green, posted February 8, 2018. Reprinted with permission from Prepvolleyball.com

A couple of weekends ago, I was at a qualifying tournament and I saw something I have never seen before. I was watching an 18's team. This team did not have a libero, but instead rotated each of its three outside hitters to play that position. I thought, "These outsides-turned-liberos were all still playing and working on their ball control... no harm done."

A father of a player on this team threatened to remove his outside daughter if she was in the libero jersey. Then, just before a match was to begin, I watched the father march onto the court and follow through with his threat. He took his daughter home in the middle of the tournament, moments before the match's first whistle blew.

I was blown away. Maybe she hadn't committed to a university. Maybe the pressure of *not* playing or *not* being seen as an outside hitter was the worst thing at that time. It had me thinking about what it's like to be on a team and working for the goals of qualifying and winning, as well as being recruited and preparing for the next level. What is it like to be selfish in the pursuit of *your* next level, while also playing for the needs of the team?

I played before the era of highlight reels on YouTube, and before college coaches were able to look me up in a hand-held database. I remember my sister sending VHS skill tapes to universities. (Do players know what VHS is?).

College coaches looked up court assignments and match times on paper tacked to a bulletin board in the middle of a convention center. At tournaments, it's almost absurd to remember that recruiters walked around and just noticed talent wherever and whenever they saw it.

It was rare that athletes committed to universities before their junior year, so my parents never felt pressure that I wouldn't find my place at the next level.

I felt that the better I did personally, the better my team would do; thus, I would be noticed. College coaches gravitated to the winning courts – and they still do! That's where the "good kids" played. I never had the conflicting battle of, "I need to be seen *more than* I want my team to succeed," because they were one and the same. I've talked to many club coaches recently that have a goal of finding a place for all of their players who want to play collegiate volleyball. This means they're talking to college coaches at tournaments, responding to their interest e-mails, helping players make skill videos, and preparing their players in practice and individual lessons. At the same time, coaches are gunning for championships, qualifying wins, and higher rankings. They're competitors, too. Because of this, you can't rely solely on your coach to get you recruited.

So, as a player, how do you do both: win for your team, and be seen by collegiate scouts?





Assist From Sloane: Team v. Being Seen

We can talk all day about “we over me,” working hard in practice, and being a selfless player... that’s an important conversation. It’s all good until tournament time rolls around and a couple of players don’t play.

Instead of truly caring about playing time or qualifying for nationals, what I hear is the frantic race to commit. I hear parents comparing their daughter to others her age: where she’s going, who she’s being recruited by, and why haven’t we heard anything?

First of all, comparing anything is unhealthy. Secondly, this hysterical, nervous stress makes you act selfishly. Your kids hear it, and then they begin to feel it, too.

There becomes a divide in the team between those who are committed, and those who are uncommitted. I’m not sure I need to say it, but this doesn’t lead to too much team success! Who wants to play with and for teammates you feel are “too good” for you?

I did it. It happens before you know what’s going on. As a 5-8 setter, I got some looks, but girls in my club I felt I was better than, but happened to be 6-0, got to go to big-time schools. By my 17s year, we stopped talking about our dreams, because I felt that my dreams weren’t as valuable as my teammates going to Minnesota and Stanford. I ended up waiting and waiting to find something higher-tier, and then just choosing a school. I transferred later to a better-suited option.

My point is that if you want to play volleyball in college, I think there’s room for that to happen.

Focusing on the team goals is what will prepare you for college.

Investing in your club program does not mean you’re not thinking about yourself, too. Competing will never make you a worse volleyball player. Being recruited is an individual thing that happens in pursuit of team goals.

Whether you play or not, and because sending video is queen nowadays, college recruiters will see you. Whenever you step onto the court, whether you play the whole time, or not at all, make sure you add value.

That means, if you’re a serving sub, then set out to string points together for your team. If you’re used as a blocking sub, put pressure on your opponents. If you’re a setter in a 6-2, make it so your team is more “in rhythm” with you than without you. If you’re a libero, or trying to get recruited as one, but you’re playing DS, make it impossible for your coach to *not* play you. If you don’t play, help your teammates by helping them find ways to score. If the only time you play is in warm-ups, then taken them seriously.

The beauty of sending video and contacting colleges you’re interested in is that, if you are on a coach’s radar, you will be seen. The coach watches you on the bench, and how you either sulk or cheer for your teammates. The coach wants to see you do athletic things on the court, but she also wants to see how you react and respond when you make a mistake. Coaches watch how you prepare, and how you talk to your club coach, parents, and teammates.



As a coach, watching that father grab his kid from the situation is a red flag. It tells me that the dad likes to make the rules, and that his daughter is used to someone else doing the hard things for her. That worries me.

Coaches build their programs based on the people – not just players – they have, and they are careful about balancing their personnel: not too many direct, “I’ll tell you what I think” kids, and not too many nice, “I’m staying away from confrontation” kids.

How you act *all the time*, and not just when you’re winning or playing six rotations, tells the coach more about your character than you think.

Striving to be the best individual helps your team succeed, just like competing for team success motivates each player to improve. Cheer for your teammates’ success; that means it’s your success, too. Push your teammates in practice; not only will they get better, but so will you. It’s amazing how that works.

Helpful Tips

Parents & Athletes: 6 Ways to Relieve Stress of Being a Sports Parent

By Janis Meredith, reprinted from *The Art of Coaching Volleyball*

Watching your child play sports is fun; facing the stress of the financial, emotional, and physical demands is not. What is it about your child's sport that stresses you? Do you worry she will not play well? Are you pulled in too many directions trying to keep up with the demands? Can you stand another game listening to overprotective and whining parents? Do you breathe a sigh of relief after each game that your child did not get hurt?

After being a sports mom for 21 years, I've felt all of those stresses. You will face them too, and here's how to handle the stress.

Find a safe place to vent.

Choose one person—husband, friend, sister, parent—who can sympathetically listen without feeding your frustration. That one person should not be your child.

Face your fears.

Ask yourself: what am I really afraid of and what is the worst that could happen? For instance, if you worry about your child being injured in a volleyball game, what's the worst that could happen? Maybe she would miss a few games? Or her season would end? Or she'd have to get surgery? If that happens,

the world will not end. If she loves the sport, she will be back stronger than ever.

Sometimes, looking ahead to the worst and thinking about how we would deal with it, helps us face today with more confidence and less worry.

Give your kid credit.

I'm pretty sure that parents worry more about their kids' frustrations than kids do. In some ways, kids are tougher than we think. Give them a little credit. Maybe they can fight the battle without you wielding the sword for them.

There have been many times when I itched to step in and take care of my child's problem, but held back. And boy, am I glad I did! Not only would I have made an idiot of myself, I would have missed seeing my child resolve the issue in his own way and robbed him of some character growth in the process.

Learn to say N.O. every time you say Y.E.S.

Is your life busy now? If so, how can you possibly take on more without adding stress? You can maintain some sanity by exchanging every yes for a no. For every new task or responsibility you take on, let one go.

(Continued on the next page)



The club season is into full swing and you are feeling a lot of stress – driving your daughter to practices and tournaments, signing her up for private lessons, making sure she's eating healthy and nutritious food, just to name a few that factor into compounding the pressures of being a sports parent.

In this article from Janis Meredith, she provides a few tips on handling and alleviating the stress that are unfortunately part of sports.



6 Ways to Relieve Stress of Being a Sports Parent

Your child doesn't have to be in three sports at once. It's okay if you aren't the team mom this year. And honestly, your house does not have to be spotless during a busy sports season. Don't worry about what others think; it's okay to be picky about your time.

Avoid the craziness.

If it's over-the-top parents that add stress to your life. Avoid them. If it's obnoxious spectators that make your blood boil, move your seat. If you can't stand the coach, practice detached cordiality (you don't have to be his best friend, but you don't have to be an enemy either).

Sometimes it's just better to step back from the fray and let the chaos continue without you. Others may perceive you as reserved or even snobby; but you know you are merely staying sane.

Get a life!

I have wanted to say that to many parents who are so wrapped up in their child's sport that they lose

sight of what is really important. Their fanatical behavior screams "I have no life other than my child's sports!" Can you imagine the stress in that household!

I love the way my kids maintained a life outside of sports—hanging with friends, going to youth group, even going on trips. Having a life outside of sports gave them balance and re-invigorated them to get back at the game.

As you and your child-athlete walk away from youth sports, you will know that if you learned to cope with stress within the snapshot of sports, you can learn to handle it in the bigger picture of life.

Janis B. Meredith, sports mom and coach's wife, writes a sports parenting blog called JBM Thinks. She authored the Sports Parenting Survival Guide Series and has recently launched a podcasting series for sports parents. You can also find her on Facebook and Twitter.



Helpful Tips

Communication with the Coach: 6 Ways to Approach Your Coach

Teaching advocacy is an important part of helping them succeed in sports

By Priscilla Tillman, reprinted from *The Art of Coaching Volleyball*

If your child has played youth sports for any number of years, you know there comes a time when coaches need to find various consequences (usually unfavorable) to correct poor performance, attitude or other things that need to be addressed. It's the name of the game. And the name is usually synonymous with burpees, push-ups, suicides, gassers, shuttle runs, one-on-one, ball-on-one – we all know the drill

But what happens when we think a coach has gone too far? As parents, we're usually trying to strike a balance between looking after our young athletes and teaching them how to advocate for themselves. There's a fine line between questioning a coach's technique and questioning a coach's character.

For athletes 12 and under, it's best to advocate one-on-one with the coach away from the child. But for athletes over the age of 12, teaching them the valuable skill of advocacy is our best bet as a parent.

"Sports don't create character, they reveal it," says Joe Jardine, a licensed marriage and family therapist in California. "Parents, parenting, home life – that is where character is created."

Jardine, who has a master's in clinical psychology from Vanguard University, offers 6 guidelines here on effective ways young athletes can communicate with their coach:

Invite yourself into the conversation – "Hey, Coach, is there a time we can meet and talk about my performance and the punishments/consequences
(Continued on the next page)



One of the best life skills we can teach our children is how to stand up for themselves - how to respectfully interact with an authority figure. As soon as they are old enough (every kid is different), our job is to rehearse with them so they can be clear, concise and confident. Even if it doesn't bring the results you are looking for, it will provide them a path to follow for the rest of their life.



Communicating with the Coach (continued)

given at practice?” The right time to have a conversation with a coach is when you invite yourself into it. Having the coach name the time respects his role in life and on the team.

Use “I” statements – “You” statements put the other person on the defensive. Teaching children to advocate is also teaching them how to own their experience. A coach is much more apt to listen when a child says something like this: “I feel crushed when we have to do 100 burpees after we make a mistake in practice.” As a parent, we can also use “I” statements at home with our children to model this practice.

Ask questions – Asking questions instead of blaming the coach will also ease tension. “That was a lot of burpees. Can you tell me how you arrived at that number? Will this make me a better passer, hitter, competitor?” Asking a question instead of blaming educates your player.

Don’t criticize the coach – Criticizing comes off as a power move. If the coach wants to know what you think he’s doing wrong, he will ask you.

No profanity – It’s disrespectful and causes anger and frustration in the other person. When there’s anger and frustration, communication and resolution are hard to accomplish.

Be thankful – Beginning the conversation with a statement of gratitude for what the coach is providing to the team (i.e. his time, expertise) and then addressing the issue can put the conversation at ease from the start. Also, finish the conversation by thanking them for their time and for the opportunity to discuss the matter.

When we begin a team sport, parents and players alike need to understand that the coach is still the leader of the team. However, if a consequence seems extreme to you or your athlete, the guidelines above are a great place to start to open the conversation.

Be thankful – Beginning the conversation with a statement of gratitude for what the coach is providing to the team (i.e. his time, expertise) and then addressing the issue can put the conversation at ease from the start. Also, finish the conversation by thanking them for their time and for the opportunity to discuss the matter.



When we begin a team sport, parents and players alike need to understand that the coach is still the leader of the team. However, if a consequence seems extreme to you or your athlete, the guidelines above are a great place to start to open the conversation.



I really don't have time for this, Christian... the girls and I need to have a chat about game strategy!

Keep in mind, the most important place we can teach a young athlete how to advocate with character is at home. The way we handle things like conflict and adversity in our home is the biggest contributing factor to how they will deal with it outside the home.

After 21 years of being a sports mom, I know that I became a better parent. No matter if your child plays 2 or 10 years, your willingness to learn and grow with them through the experience will make you a better mom or dad.



EXCELLENCE DEFINED: Seeking excellence is not the same as seeking perfection, but rather a perfect effort

By Erika Carlson, reprinted from SportStars Magazine

The term “excellence” is thrown around a lot in the world of competitive sports. I’m a fan of this word, so much that I included it in the name of my business, Excellence in Sports Performance. But like so many terms in the sports world, (i.e. “mental toughness,” “talent”) what does “excellence” really mean in the sport context?

Let’s first talk about what it’s not. Excellence is not being perfect. In fact, it’s the solution to trying to be perfect. The perfectionist believes anything less than perfect is failure. While the intention is to push yourself to perform your best, the reality is you often feel a sense of failure, because consistent perfection is unattainable. What is excellence? It’s your personal best in a given session. It’s being clear on what you can accomplish and control. Excellence is a result of how you train on the field and in the gym. It’s also how you choose to respond to failure. It’s a process. It’s a core value of an athlete. It’s something you strive to accomplish every day. It’s not something that just shows up randomly in the heat of the moment. It’s truly “opportunity meets preparation.”

My favorite example of excellence in motion is U.S. women’s soccer player Carli Lloyd. She is truly a product of hard work and learned mental toughness. Carli is known for delivering in big games. I had the pleasure of watching her score the game-winner at Wembley Stadium in the 2012 Olympics. We saw her score a hat trick in the World Cup final. Her

former coach Tony DiCicco says, “The bigger the game, the more she wants to perform.”

Former teammate and national team teammate Brianna Scurry says, “She’s as big a big-game player as I’ve seen. A lot of great players wither on the vine, become wallflowers, when the pressure is the biggest.”

What is the secret to Carli’s experience in big games?

Physical Excellence – Always finding ways to improve herself, Carli has often sought out extra training that helps her perform at the top end of her ability. Physical strength and conditioning gives her the confidence to “just play” without the worry of running out of gas. She is always a work in progress.

Mental Excellence – Her mental game has developed most over her 10-year stint with the senior national team. Carli stated in a recent article, “Over the years and definitely over the last four years, I’ve taken visualization to another level... I’ve basically visualized so many different things on the field, making these big plays, scoring goals.” This is a key strategy to maintaining her technical skills as well. Excellent visualization is not just situational, it’s very technically detailed.

Are you striving for perfection or excellence? Knowing the difference and training accordingly will set you on a path of accomplishment and, more importantly, enjoyment and fulfillment from your sport experience.



Excellence is a result of how you train on the field and in the gym. It’s also how you choose to respond to failure. It’s a process. It’s a core value of an athlete. It’s something you strive to accomplish every day.



Excellence is your personal best in a given session. It’s being clear on what you can accomplish and control.

WHAT I DIDN'T SEE MADE ME PROUD

By Jeffrey Kerns, Ed.D., reprinted from Linked In

As a father I am bursting with pride tonight after my daughter's volleyball tournament. The girls fought hard and gave their best. However, on this day the other team earned the hard fought victory.

I was/am bursting with pride even though I observed her getting benched for two rotations for not playing to her fullest potential. It was this benching that allowed her to demonstrate her true character, leadership, and commitment to the team.

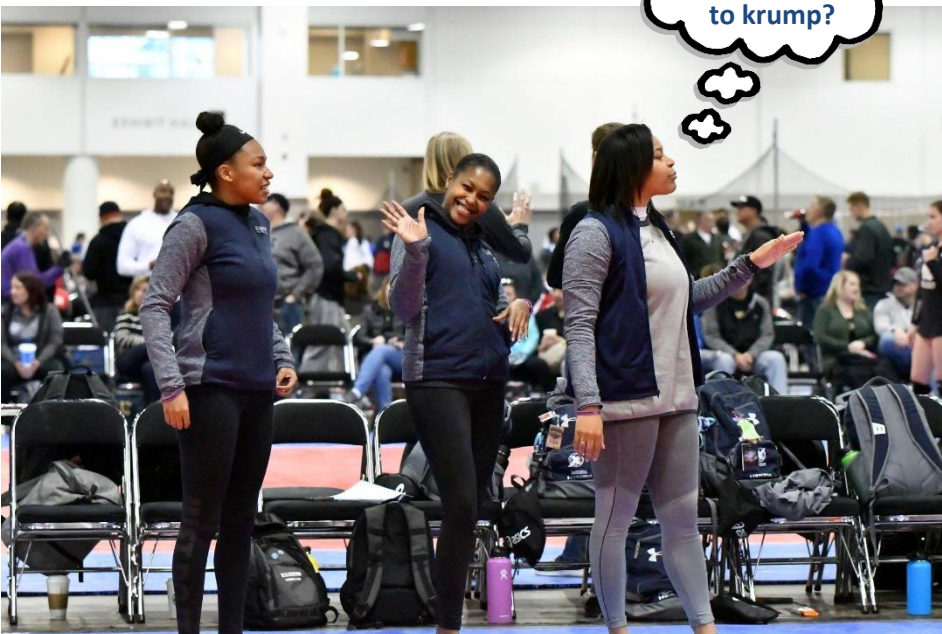
She cheered for her teammates as enthusiastically on the sideline as she does on the court. She put the team goal of winning in front of her personal accomplishments. She demonstrated that what a leader contributes on the court is just as important as the emotional contribution from the sideline.

I know she wanted to be out there to prove she could do it, she wanted to earn the right to be on the court contributing to the team. Her competitive drive and intestinal

fortitude was burning in her eyes as she waited for that opportunity to "prove it." As I watched her cheer, encourage, and remain fully engaged on the sidelines she proved by her actions that she is willing to fulfill any role that is beneficial for the team. But then again, I expect to see those things from her.

However it was what I didn't see that made me extremely proud of her last night. I didn't see her pouting or secretly hoping her teammate would fail. I didn't observe her once question the coaches' decision or claim it wasn't fair. I didn't see her mope between sets/games or hang her head in defeat. When she came back in I didn't see doubt, fear, or worry in her eyes. I didn't see her back down from her national champion competitors. I didn't see any hint of a behavior that would hurt the culture of the team.

Sometimes what a man doesn't see makes him prouder than what he does.



She cheered for her teammates as enthusiastically on the sideline as she does on the court. She put the team goal of winning in front of her personal accomplishments.



WHY I DON'T PAY FOR CLUB VOLLEYBALL

By Jeffrey Kerns, Ed.D., Millard Public Schools,
reprinted from Linked In and inspired by posting from Shad Martin

To My Daughter Allie,

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 intend 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 push and challenge you to the point where you might want to quit because it is so tough. I pay them to build up your confidence at the same time so you don't. 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 position 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 life lessons, victories, and personal/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, that your mom and I have taught you, and continue to model for you.

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

*Love always,
Dad*



Dear Xceleration Families,

I ran across a letter in a volleyball publication that was written by a father to his daughter and I wanted to share it with all of you.

The letter has been forwarded to all our coaches to remind them of the responsibility they have and that you have entrusted them with for your daughters. It is a responsibility that, as a club, we take very seriously and strive constantly to uphold. We will continue to work as a group to give your daughters a complete experience in club volleyball and all the good that can come from it.

Hope you enjoy the read. See you on the courts and GO XCEL!

Jim Ross

Where's my
Boba?



Photo courtesy of Dee Ortega.



2018 CAMPS & CLINICS

Take Your Game to the Next Level!

ABOUT US

Xceleration VBC was established in 2005 with the goal of providing training to serious minded volleyball players. We believe in providing the very best training available with our qualified coaches. We provide a well-rounded program that teaches skills, sportsmanship, leadership and a strong work ethic. We set a high standard for our administration, coaching staff, and players. Our programs are designed to develop the ultimate volleyball potential in your child. Whether you are new to volleyball or have years of experience, we are all ready to take you to the next level!

At Xceleration we field teams for girls ages 12-18. Our programs focus on teaching proper fundamentals and running drills that transfer into game-like situations. Our coaches will work hard with ALL athletes to improve their volleyball skills.

This year was a very successful season at Xceleration VBC. Once again, 8 of our 11 teams finished in the Gold, Silver, or Bronze Divisions of the NCVA Power League in their age groups. Our 18 Blue, 17 Blue, and 15 Blue teams earned bids through the NCVA Power League to the 2017 USAV Junior Nationals in Dallas and Minneapolis, and our 16Blue team competed well at the AAU National Championships in Orlando.

Our older players are highly recruited due in part due to our college development program that continues to flourish and has received rave reviews from college coaches across the nation. We have a database of over 400 coaches across the country that we have made direct contact with at tournaments, and with whom we remain in contact with and keep updated on the progress of Xceleration's athletes. We deal directly with these coaches on a constant basis to assist our players during the recruiting process. ***Since our inception, we have sent more than 100 of our players on to play in college in every division from D1 to NAIA, and more than three dozen are currently on college rosters.***

Whether you are serious about your volleyball training or are just trying out the sport to see if you enjoy it, then Xceleration has the programs for you!

All Camps and Clinics will be held at our training facility:

Xceleration Sports Facility
360 Ferry Street
Martinez, CA 94553

Practices for the Beach Program will be held at:

Moraga Commons Park
1425 St. Mary's Road
Moraga, CA 94556

Read more about Xceleration Volleyball Club at www.xcelerationvbc.com. You may also visit our Facebook group page for much more information and to stay current with Xceleration VBC news!

[Contact Us](#) via e-mail if you have any questions.

SUMMER CAMPS

July 6 – August 16

Chase away the summer blues... Get active and join us at one of our camps to elevate your game during the off-season. Each session will have three courts, with players divided to accommodate varying skill levels – Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced!

Mondays / Wednesdays / Saturdays (5th-8th Graders)

Mon/Wed	6:15 pm – 7:45 pm	(All Skills Camp)
Sat	12:00 pm – 1:45 pm	(All Skills Camp)

Mondays / Wednesdays / Saturdays (15s-18s)

Mon/Wed	7:45 pm – 9:15 pm	(Setters / DS)
Sat	2:00 pm – 3:45 pm	(All Skills Camp)

Tuesdays / Thursdays / Saturdays (15s-18s)

Tue/Thu (I)	6:15 pm – 7:45 pm	(All Skills Camp)
Sat	4:00 pm – 5:45 pm	(All Skills Camp)

Tue/Thu (II)	7:45 pm – 9:15 pm	(All Hitters)
Sat	2:00 pm – 3:45 pm	(All Skills Camp)

Summer Schedule

Week 1: July 9 - July 14th
Week 2: July 16 - July 21
Week 3: July 23 - July 28
Week 4: July 30 - August 4
Week 5: August 6 - August 11
Week 6: August 13 - August 16

Camp Staff: Lucas Abbott, Ruth Lawanson, Leslie Ray, Jade Santos, Andy Schroeder, Jeremy Swann and additional Xceleration coaching staff. Click [here](#) for bios.

Cost: \$175 for 3 sessions / per week

Online payments only. Click [Online Store](#) to make payment and obtain a Paypal transaction number required for registration.

Registration: Online registration only and registration is not confirmed until payment is completed. Must obtain a Paypal transaction number to complete player registration. Click www.xcelerationvbc.com/2018-summer-camps-registration.html to register.



2018 CAMPS & CLINICS

Take Your Game to the Next Level!

BEACH

June 18 – August 1

Xceleration welcomes you to our 2018 Beach Volleyball Program. We hope that you can join us this year for an exciting way to spend your summer on the beach, as well as continue your off-season volleyball conditioning in a fun way.

For our beach volleyball season, no tryouts are required! Practices will begin on Monday, June 18, and runs for approximately two months and will include two tournaments, usually in Santa Cruz.

This program will focus on fundamental training and concentrate on individual skills. We will teach each and every athlete the fundamentals of passing, serving (overhand and introduce jump serving), and hitting.

Dates

June 18 – August 1: Mondays/Wednesdays

(Tentative and subject to change). No practice on July 4.

Practices

Ages 13-14 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Ages 15-18 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Please contact Leslie Ray @ lesrayxcelybc@yahoo.com if anyone under the age of 13 is interested in playing beach.

All participants will be required to be a member of the California Beach Volleyball Association (CBVA) and the Northern California Volleyball Association (NCVA). Please visit www.cbva.com and www.ncva.com to purchase the respective memberships. (Note: If you are currently playing indoor volleyball this season and already an NCVA member, no additional NCVA membership is required; you will just need to purchase a CBVA membership.)

Beach Staff: Michelle Boydston and Melinda Lau – Click [here](#) for bios.

Cost: \$675 per player

Online payments only. Click [Online Store](#) to make payment and obtain a Paypal transaction number required for registration.

Registration: Online registration only and registration is not confirmed until payment is completed. Must obtain a Paypal transaction number to complete player registration. Click www.xcelerationvbc.com/2018-beach-registration.html to register.

FALL BALL

August 27 – October 18

Xceleration's Fall Ball Program will offer one-on-one instruction, as well as game-type situation training with our passionate and dedicated coaches.

The Fall Ball Program will be fun, informative, and excellent training for anyone wanting to learn or become more proficient at the sport. If you are a girl that loves volleyball and wants to have a great time getting better at it, then this is the place for you!

Dates

August 27 – October 18: Tuesdays/Thursdays

Sessions

4th-6th Graders 6:15 pm – 7:15 pm

7th-8th Graders (I) 6:15 pm – 7:45 pm

7th-8th Graders (II) 7:45 pm – 9:15 pm

Fall Ball Staff

Leslie Ray and additional Xceleration coaching staff. Click [here](#) for bios.

Cost:

- \$525 per player
- \$275 for 1 day per week for 4-6 graders ONLY; MUST be 2 days per week for 7/8 graders

Online payments only. Click [Online Store](#) to make payment and obtain a Paypal transaction number required for registration.

Registration: Online registration only and registration is not confirmed until payment is completed. Must obtain a Paypal transaction number to complete player registration. Click www.xcelerationvbc.com/2018-fall-ball-registration.html to register.

