



Xcelent NEWS

JANUARY 2021

VOL. 9 ISSUE #2

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- Jan 22-23: All Teams WCVBA League 1/2 (Roseville)
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- Feb 19-21: 15B, 16s-18s Las Vegas Classic
- Mar 4-6: 18B/18W NCVA 18s Sierra National Qualifier (Reno)
- Mar 5-6: 12s-17s WCVBA League 3/4 (Roseville)
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Xceleration
Volleyball Club

John B. David, Editor

The Firsts...

Season Openers at NorCal Winter Classic and Music City Championship

Setting foot on volleyball tournament floors in Roseville at the JVA NorCal Winter Classic or in Nashville at the Music City National Championship may be old hat for many Xcel members, but there are also several players and families who are experiencing their first taste of competitive volleyball in 2022. We may all remember that first whistle, the first serve, the first kill, the first dig, the first win – all a thing of beauty – or even the first loss but, nonetheless, season openers always hold something special in our hearts and psyche.

Opening games may set the tone for the tournament, or even the season. But it does not define who we are and what our season will become. The season is just getting off the ground and we have months to go to work on our game, to get better, and to learn with our teammates.



We will continually adjust to improve, and so will other teams. We will be on winning and losing end of the games. There will be performances we can get excited about and those where we will fall short of expectations. It happens to every team. And it is always how we respond after each of these that will test our character. In the end though, only one thing really matters – ***DID YOU HAVE FUN?***





Important: Please Read the Xceleration VBC Handbook

We've neglected to mention that an important reading material for all players, coaches, and parents is our handbook to guide all of us throughout the season. Please click [XCELERATION VOLLEYBALL CLUB HANDBOOK](#) to read about each of the topics shown below.

- Club Mission Statement
- How do we support and achieve our mission?
- Why play junior volleyball?
- Xceleration Volleyball Club training program
- What can you expect from playing at Xceleration Volleyball Club ?
 - Quality instruction
 - "Transfer" and "Competition"
 - Extended training schedule
 - Increased discipline
 - Education
 - College development
 - Weekend lessons
 - Fun
- Our expectations for Xceleration players
 - Commitment
 - Regular attendance
 - Respect for the rules of the club
 - Cooperation
 - Image presentation
 - Maintaining good grades
- Xceleration volleyball club code of conduct
 - Substance policy
 - Conduct during competition
 - Social media policy
 - Rules and regulations
- Club injury policy
- Grievance procedures
- Multi-sport athletes
- Playing time
- Practice attendance
- What we expect from parents
- Team parent liaisons and responsibilities
- Team travel
- Chaperones (if needed) and responsibilities



[2022 Season](#)

[Photo Galleries](#)

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 of XCELLent News.



Instagram

Instagram: XcelerationVBC

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



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.



BLUE



12



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BLUE



13



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BLUE



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WHITE



14



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13BLUE & 14WHITE COACHES

GREG GINSBURG – HEAD COACH 13BLUE

Greg returns to Xceleration for another stint of coaching with the club. The Reno native has lived in the Bay Area for a long time and confesses that he has coached “since dinosaurs roamed the earth” or since he was just out of college... oh so 35+ years ago. In addition to coaching club volleyball at Elite (LA) and Xceleration, Greg also has club and high school basketball and volleyball coaching experience at Salesian College Preparatory in Richmond, CA and St Mary's College High School in Albany, CA. Greg played a bit of both volleyball and basketball in college; generally enjoying his time on the bench (!). He earned a BS in Ecological Science (i.e., Biology/Environmental Biology) as a Cal undergraduate and an MBA in Marketing at Cal State University East Bay. Greg has also completed executive programs at Stanford for supply chain strategy and at Wharton for negotiation strategy. He currently leads the supply chain function at Smart Sweets, a nutritional snack food company.

Coach Greg said this about coaching volleyball, “I love it when we learn something together and then execute it on the court.”



13BLUE & 14WHITE COACHES

MICHAELA AHLENSLAGER – ASSOCIATE COACH 13BLUE

Michaela is an Xceleration alumnus and joins the coaching staff this year for the 13Blue. The Hercules, CA resident will be in her fourth year of coaching after two seasons at the club level for Plumas Volleyball Club U12 and River Cities Thunder 15-1s, and a season at the high school varsity level for her alma mater Salesian College Preparatory in Richmond, CA. After playing for Xceleration and prior to coaching, Michaela played MB/OH for Feather River College in Plumas County, CA and then at Marshall University in West Virginia where she earned a double major – Bachelor of Science degrees in Health Sciences and History.

On reasons Michaela enjoys being on the Xceleration staff, she said, “Coaching is teaching, and I love helping players learn the game, whether it’s serving overhand for the first time... or swinging line versus angle.” She followed, “The sense of accomplishment they feel and the confidence it brings them makes all the hard work worth it. I love what playing a sport can do for kids as far as confidence, sense of self, and leadership skills, and I support the process and love being a part of it.



Courtesy of Tomas Pineda,
Michaela Ahlenslager, and
Marshall University
Athletics

13BLUE & 14WHITE COACHES

Here are more members of the Xceleration Coaching Staff that follow the last issue of the newsletter. Welcome to Xceleration!

ROCHELLE ALONSABE – ASSOCIATE COACH 14WHITE

Rochelle joins the staff in her first year with Xceleration. The Vallejo, CA resident has been involved playing and coaching volleyball for nearly 20 years, starting at Jesse M. Bethel HS as middle front and all-around in the back row for the Jaguars, where she received Rookie of the Year honors in her sophomore year on the Varsity team. In club volleyball, Rochelle played left side and right side as a second setter and dominant left hitter. After high school, Rochelle attended Laney College in Oakland, CA and continued her path playing volleyball. After graduating from Laney, Rochelle's volleyball coaching career started at Club Solano and Rodriguez HS in Fairfield, CA for the freshman team. Recently getting back into the game, Rochelle is coaching the freshman team at Will C. Wood in Vacaville, CA and now begins her journey with Xceleration.

Rochelle said, "The most motivating thing about coaching is the lives and mindset impacted that you have changed as a coach – being able to influence young minds to being great, successful, diligent, and assertive, allowing them to show their leadership skills and building and trusting relationships with my parents and players, so that they feel safe and also challenged to become better."



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BLUE



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WHITE



15



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Top photos courtesy of
Melaine Irene

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BLUE



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Warm Up and Maturity Are Keys for Evaluating a Player's Potential

A coach can tell a lot about a player just in the five-minute warm up at a tournament. What coaches are looking for is the player who prepares mentally and physically to win the set. Oftentimes the team does a few common things to warm up. They start with passing and progress into setting and eventually a full pepper with some type of variation or progression. After a couple of minutes, team captains are asked by the referee to join them in preparation for the match. During this time college coaches will stand courtside or one court over to see what a player is doing in the warm up. Is he/she casually warming up or taking the warm up seriously to prepare to compete? What coaches need on every team is the player that competes to win and uses every opportunity to prepare for a win.

I'll give you a true example. Nine months ago a player came to me about the recruiting process. After evaluating her, I immediately called a long-time friend and NCAA Division I coach that I knew was in need of a middle blocker for the 2010 season. Over the phone we

discussed the player and the coach made arrangements to fly to Texas to watch this senior play in a home game during the high school season. Within 5-6 minutes of warm up the coach leaned to me and said this trip was worth it, and we are going to make an offer. The coach had not even seen the middle play and only had time to watch the player warm up and go through six or seven swings at the net. She could see the work ethic and potential in the warm up and that scholarship offer was accepted after an official visit was made by the player.

Coaches are looking for the players who communicate and drive to make those around her better. We all know the importance of leadership and the ability to communicate on the court in relationship to winning. Communication is key even in warm up. Coaches are also looking for ball control, mechanics, and movement. When it comes to ball control, are they passing with intention or going through the motions? Is the player balanced when they set and are they quick to move to the ball? Do they hustle after the ball that is set five

Continued on the next page





feet further, or do they just let it drop and pick back up again? In hitting lines, is the player quick to swing and taking the ball at a high point and hitting angles? Is the setter quick to think about the next play and having a consistent location on the ball? Is the libero hustling after the ball with intention to play the ball? Work ethic and potential can all be seen in a warm up. There are several times that college coaches might be going to a specific court to watch a player but see something that really catches their eye in a warm up and they will literally stop and see what a player has to offer. Coaches are always on the lookout for that player that is the difference maker, leader, and one who desires to win.

Usually after a warm up, a team gathers on its side to listen to the lineup and what the coaches have to offer in terms of strategy. This is the time college coaches are looking to see if a player is engaged with the team and looking in the eyes of the coach while he or she is communicating. Being engaged is extremely important for the success of the team, and it also shows the maturity level of a player who has intent of winning. During a set, there are oftentimes a player who is in the recruiting process will have to sit out for several points or even an entire set. This doesn't mean that the college coach is no longer going to be recruiting that player. Parents oftentimes panic if things aren't perfect or playing time is altered in some form or fashion. This is a natural reaction for most players and parents. The absolute worst thing a parent or player can do is start worrying

during a set about the recruiting side of the game. All things turn out usually for the best in most cases and just because a player sits out doesn't mean they lost their chance or a coach won't evaluate the player. The coaches will also see how a player reacts to situations, such as sitting the bench or a change in pattern. Is the player on the sideline talking and engaged with the team or arms folded and not vocal? Does the player hustle in at a timeout and engage with the coach or does he/she walk slowly to the huddle to hear what the coach says. Is the player engaging with team members and telling them what shots are open, or has the change in play time gotten the player down? This is a crucial side to teamwork that often fails when players think their value to the team no longer exist. It really is never the case until a player allows the playtime to become personal and negative. As a coach, I have never looked down the bench of players and put someone back in the game who is not engaged for the success of the team. If I have a player that I pull for some reason and they are at the bench with their hands on their knees encouraging the team and communicating during and between plays, then my confidence in that player stays extremely high and the chance of the player returning to the game stays high. If the player becomes selfish and takes it personal and is quiet, there is absolutely zero chance he/she will see the floor the rest of the day.

Coaches can see so much in a player during warm up and intense play situations. They want the player who

drives to compete, prepares mentally and physically with one thing in mind, and that is to win. Anyone can pass a ball, set a ball, or attack the ball. Coaches are looking for the maturity level and the drive to win on every touch of the ball. It can all be seen in the small things, so warm up with intention and always take the high road when faced with a challenge. It can make a difference in the recruiting process.

~ Jenny Krueger, Austin Performance.



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Courtesy of Tomas Pineda



Keys to Volleyball Greatness

With help from some of the sharpest minds in the game, VolleyballUSA has assembled a collection of wise words to guide you through the club season. XCELlent News will share them with you in future issues.



“The most important contact in the game is the one you are making or about to make. Once you make it, it immediately becomes the least important, and all your attention needs to be directed at your next contact.”

– **Doug Beal, coach of 1984 men’s Olympic gold-medal team**

“Erase the last play from your mind, whether it was good or bad. It does you no good to dwell on a mistake or continue relishing a great kill or block you just made. Reset your focus and look ahead to the next play.”

– **Volleyball USA staff**

“Learn to read the game: By watching not just the ball but the people acting on it as well, the game will become easier and you will improve more quickly.”

– **Hugh McCutcheon, University of Minnesota women’s coach, former coach of U.S. Men’s and Women’s National Teams**

“Be a competitor. Do everything you can physically, mentally, and emotionally to beat your opponent on the next play as often as you possibly can.”

– **John Dunning, former women’s coach at Stanford**

“Tackle the stuff you’re not so good at. There’s nothing wrong with practicing a skill you do well, but don’t shy away from putting in extra time on something that you struggle with. Initially, it’s an uncomfortable feeling because you’re working on something that doesn’t come naturally to you, but in the long run it will boost your confidence to conquer the tough stuff – and it will make you a better volleyball player.”

– **Volleyball USA staff**



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 Courtesy of Tomas Pineda

What Really Matters...

Tim O'Connell is a high school and club coach in Louisville, a former volleyball dad himself and has written a few articles for PrepVolleyball.com.

This weekend, before my 16s played, I stood on the sidelines with our [younger] team at KIVA. And in that moment I remembered a few things.

What it's really all about.

Sometimes, it's not about 10-foot touches; it's about who can run under the net without touching it at full stride.

It's not about D1 left sides (yet); it's about 3-foot-9 left sides who can loop the ball into the corner.

It's not about aces; it's about ace cheers.

It's about asking a kid on the sideline what position she plays, and she says "DS, but I don't know what that stands for because I play back row."

It's about parents cheering for every ball that makes its way back over the net like Stanford just scored on Texas. It's about bump sets, down balls, and everybody hustles to the ball. It's about droopy spandex and big dreams. It's about a kid running off the court and asking me, because I coach "big girls," if I saw that pass.

It's about no-tooth grins that are as bright as the lights on the court.

It's about fun.

It's about why we all got involved in this sport in the first place. I hope, personally, that I never forget that. This is a fun sport, and sometimes it takes an 11 or 12 year-old to remind an old man of that.



Goal Setting

By Coach Andrew Randolph

*In upcoming issues of **XCELLent News** we will feature articles from 16 White coach Andrew Randolph that leverages his expertise in the world of sports psychology and will supplement his discussions with the 15-18 teams. Coach Andrew graduated from California Baptist University (CBU) in Riverside, CA. After receiving his Bachelor's degree in Psychology, with a Minor in Coaching, he then remained at CBU for the 2018-2019 school year and earned his Master's degree in Sports and Performance Psychology.*



Creating a task, or multiple, for one to accomplish in a designated amount of time is the most basic way to describe goal setting. Goal setting can come in many forms. Just like most topics on mental performance, the different ones apply to each individual athlete uniquely. The purpose of goal setting is to challenge athletes/people to get a little bit better every day, in order to meet an agreed upon state of accomplishment, usually with oneself.

To start with setting goals, you must first decide what you are trying to accomplish, or where you want to end up. It is almost pointless to start working towards something with little to no plan of a final destination.

Wherever your goal ranges between 'getting a serve over the net' to 'being the top recruit in the nation', your end goal must be solidified in your mind. Until this happens, it's difficult to measure your success leading up to what you want to happen. Achieving one's end goal consists of making habits out of mini successes along the way. This can look like making lists or mental notes about what you want to happen. No matter what your goal is, you cannot expect it to come true randomly one day; it must be worked for, starting at the very beginning.

If your goal is to be the top recruit, then small things leading up to this possibility are what you can focus on



Left photo courtesy of
Lucas Abbott

daily. Think of things a top recruit would have to know or be able to do in order to be considered for this honor. Talk to coaches or reach out to players you know who have experienced something similar to this success before, or know enough about the process. Be diligent in your own work ethic and consistency of the game. If you do all these things over the course of a week, a month, or even a season they get to be noted as goals you have accomplished. One of the most common mistakes people make, and the main reason for giving up on goals, is they do not take time to celebrate the mini successes. No, simply talking to someone about your goal is not going to automatically make it happen. However, if that is the first step you need to take to work towards it, be satisfied and celebrate the fact that you did what you set out to do. You set a goal with a purpose, and did exactly what you set out to do. Now, the next phase is coming up with a new goal, with your newfound knowledge, that gets you one step

closer to where you want to be or the person you wish to be.

If you have ever considered doing goal setting before or looked into it in any capacity, you have probably heard of SMART goals. S-Specific, M-Measurable, A-Achievable, R-Relevant, T-Time Bound.





S - The most common mistake people make when choosing a goal is not making it specific. If you leave too much room for error then you won't get exactly where you wish to go. Making a serve over the net is a good start goal, but what happens when you finally get the ball over the net, but have no control of where it goes? That was a goal, but maybe not a SMART one. Think what do I want to accomplish, or why is this goal important? Be as specific as you can when first establishing your goal.

M - You want to be able to see your accomplishment and "measure" it, so you will be able to track your progress in real time. Pick a specific number or know exactly what the task is, so you will know the feeling of success when you've done exactly whatever it is.

A - Other words that can be substituted here include attainable or realistic. The whole point of setting goals is for you to imagine things that seem out of reach for you to achieve. You don't want something easy to do, or else you will not feel any satisfaction whatsoever when you accomplish it. On the other hand, choosing a real goal for yourself means knowing your limits, and accepting them. No one can fly on their own accord, so it would be a pointless and unachievable goal to say you wanted to learn how to fly.

R - What does your goal have to do with your desired success and/or task at hand? There is no point in having a goal that does not apply to what you are trying to accomplish in the long run. Make sure you really ponder what you are trying to maintain or work towards and tell yourself honestly if this new goal actually has something to do with what your end goal is.

T - Give yourself an end date to accomplish your goals by. It becomes so easy to give up or put off making the difficult decisions if you say you can "just do it whenever" or "do it some time in the near future". Those give way to slacking off and can cause problems down the road that continue to keep you from your desired outcomes. The more specific you are about the timing of your goal, the more motivated you are to complete it diligently. Know what you want and why you want to accomplish it. Once you have that in mind and have narrowed down your SMART goals, you can have a system of mini successes that lead you to doing the thing you set out to do.

"Focus, discipline, hard work, goal setting and, of course, the thrill of finally achieving your goals. These are all lessons in life." – Kristi Yamaguchi



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Tournament Travel/Lodging Reference Guide

Tournaments	Dates	12B	13B	14B	14W	15B	15W	16B	16W	17B	17W	18B	18W
Music City Championships - Nashville, TN	Jan 15-17											x	
JVA NorCal Winter Classic - Roseville	Jan 15-17	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
WCVBA League 1/2 - Roseville	Jan 22-23	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
WCVBA League 3/4 - City Beach or Sac Area (TBD)	Feb 5-6											x	x
Las Vegas Classic	Feb 19-21					x		x	x	x	x	x	x
NCVA 18s Sierra National Qualifier - Reno	Mar 4-6											x	x
WCVBA League 3/4 - Roseville	Mar 5-6	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
WCVBA League 5/6 - Roseville	Mar 12-13					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SoCal 18s Qualifier - Orange County	Mar 18-20											x	x
Hawaii Spring Break Madness - Honolulu	Mar 19-20		x	x	x		x						
SCVA Red Rock Rave 1 - Las Vegas, NV	Apr 2-4					x		x	x	x	x		
SCVA Red Rock Rave 2 - Las Vegas, NV	Apr 8-10						x						
USAV 18s Spring Nationals - Phoenix	Apr 22-24											x	TBD
NCVA Far Westerns - Reno, NV	Apr 23-25		x	x	x		x						
	Apr 29-May 1					x		x	x	x	x		
WCVBA League 5/6 - Roseville	Apr 30-May 1	x	x	x	x								
JVA West Coast Cup - Long Beach	May 28-30			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
49th AAU National Championships - Orlando, FL	Jun 19-22					x	TBD			x	TBD		
	Jun 23-26							x	TBD				TBD
USAV Jr Nationals (as qualified) - Indianapolis	Jun 23-Jul 4	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

**Tournaments and schedules are preliminary and subject to change. Tournament dates only, excluding travel days. Always check tournament websites for real-time information.*

- AAU Junior Nationals: [ESPN Wide World of Sports](#), 700 S Victory Way, Kissimmee, FL; [Orange County Convention Center](#), 9899 International Dr., Orlando, FL
- Hawaii Spring Break [Tournament Website](#): [Hawaii Convention Center](#) 1801 Kalakaua Ave, Honolulu, HI 96815
- JVA Norcal Winter Classic / WCVBA League: The Grounds [Placer Event Center](#), Event Center Drive, Junction Blvd, Roseville, CA 95678
- JVA West Coast Cup: [Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center](#), 300 East Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, CA
- NCVA Far Westerns: [Reno-Sparks Convention Center](#), 4590 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV; [Reno Events Center](#), 400 N. Center St., Reno, NV
- NCVA 18s Sierra National Qualifier: [Reno-Sparks Convention Center](#), 4590 S. Virginia St., Reno, NV
- SCVA Las Vegas Classic & Red Rock Rave: [Mandalay Bay Resort Convention Center](#), 3950 Las Vegas Blvd. South, Las Vegas, NV 89119
- USAV 18U Spring Juniors Nationals: [Phoenix Convention Center](#), 100 N 3rd St, Phoenix, AZ 85004
- USAV Junior Nationals: [Indiana Convention Center](#), 100 S. Capitol Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46225



Tournament Travel/Lodging Reference Guide

	Music City Nashville, TN	JVA NorCal Winter Classic Roseville	WCVBA League 1-6 Roseville	Las Vegas Classic Mandalay Bay	NCVA 18s Sierra National Qualifier Reno	SCVA Qualifier Hawaii – Honolulu CC
Tourney Dates	Jan 15-17	Jan 15-17	Jan 22-23 / Feb 5-6 / Mar 5-6 / Mar 12-13 / Apr 30-May 1	Feb 19-21	Mar 4-6	SCVA Mar 18-20 Aloha Region Mar 19-20
Travel ⁽¹⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players
Lodging ⁽²⁾	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾	SCVA: Stay to Play ⁽³⁾ Hawaii is not Stay to Play

	Red Rock Rave 1 & 2 Mandalay Bay	USAV 18s Spring Phoenix ⁽⁴⁾	NCVA Far Westerns Reno	JVA West Coast Long Beach	AAU Nationals Orlando ⁽⁵⁾	USAV Jr Nationals Indianapolis ⁽⁴⁾
Tourney Dates	Apr 2-4 Apr 8-10	Apr 22-24	Apr 23-25 Apr 29-May 1	May 28-30	[Jun 16-28]	Jun 23-Jul 4
Travel ⁽¹⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players
Lodging ⁽²⁾	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ Players and parents are responsible for getting themselves to tournament the day prior to start. Coaches will establish a check-in time for players to arrive.

⁽²⁾ Details to be provided to Team Parents, including booking instructions, once the tournament site opens for reservations.

⁽³⁾ In a “Stay to Play” tournament, clubs must select their stay from a list of pre-approved hotels supplied by the tournament. If teams do not use a pre-approved hotel, they cannot play in the tournament. In a “Support the Sport” tournament, teams go through KC Sports to book their hotel reservations.

⁽⁴⁾ As qualified.

⁽⁵⁾ Teams listed will attend this tournament unless they secure a Junior National bid at the Open or National level. Check AAU website for actual tournament dates for respective age groups.

Thank You for Your Support!



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