



CELent NEWS

MARCH 2023

VOL. 10 ISSUE #5

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UPCOMING DATES

- Mar 25-27: 16s-17s
Mar 31-Apr 2: 14B and 15s
Pacific Northwest Qualifiers (Spokane)
- Apr 1-2: 18B
NCVA Power League
Region Championships (Sacramento)
- Apr 22-24: 13B and 14W
NCVA Far Westerns (Reno)
- Apr 28-30: 18B
USAV 18s Spring Nationals (Columbus)
- Apr 29-30: 12s-14s
WCVB League 3 (Roseville)

Xceleration
Volleyball Club

John B. David, Editor

Spring Break... It's Madness!

Xceleration Brings Mayhem and Excitement at NorCal Spring Challenge, Red Rock Rave, Sierra National Qualifier, and League Matches; 18 Blue Takes 3rd at National Qualifier

If it's Spring, it must be time to turn our thoughts to basketball and, of course, *March Madness* – an interesting term, if we've ever heard one. In addition, particularly this season, we've had to deal with atmospheric river storms walloping the flood-ravaged and rain-soaked state. And we're not even getting into the Nor-easter conditions slamming the eastern portion of the nation still blanketed in snow. It's a month of MADNESS!

For Xceleration, our "madness" stems from tournaments that challenged us, bounced our teams from one venue to another, provided many life lessons along the way and, of course, continued development to sharpen our skills on the hardwood. This month, our teams traveled near and far to Roseville and Bay Area sites for the NorCal Spring Challenge and league matches, Las Vegas for Red Rock Rave, and Sacramento for the Sierra National Qualifier.

(Continued on the next page)



Like many, Xceleration teams will experience adversity and numerous challenges at this point of the season. These will include the grinds of travel, competing interests with proms and balls, injuries, and more. Each athlete will need to balance these interests and families will need to provide continued support.

“This is the time of the volleyball season when our athletes need to roll up their sleeves, buckle down, and adjust to juggle their schedules, complete their schoolwork, and re-balance their overall lives as young and responsible teens,” said club director **Leslie Ray**.

Xceleration athletes have been up to the task in their most recent matches during the month of March. Many of our teams have held serve and finished many tournaments near the top of the standings. Just to name a few, at Red Rock Rave 15 Blue claimed 4th place (of 137 teams) and 18 Blue secured 5th place (of 93 teams) in the competition. The 18 Blue also narrowly missed securing a bid to Junior Nationals with its only defeat at Sierra National Qualifier, finishing in 3rd Place (see “Bracket Busters” on the next page). The 13 Blue continued its meteoric rise with a 9-game winning streak (and counting) in league. Several others have finished their tournaments in Gold, Silver, or Bronze brackets.

Club owner **Jeremy Swann** said, “The club and coaches are extremely ecstatic with the progress that each team is making as we go through the club season. We’re even more excited for what is to come as we turn towards the homestretch. We have goals to reach and we’re almost there.”

Pics of the Month



Left photos, top to bottom:
Erin Mendoza (16 White), **Lila Siale** and **Monique Plummer** (17 White), and **Zepora Tia** (17 Blue)

Bracket Busters

Entering the Sierra National Qualifiers as the 9th seeded team in the Liberty Division, the 18 Blue got off to a roaring start by winning their opening pool, ending Day 1 undefeated and taking over the 4th seed. The team would post five consecutive victories by mowing down volleyball powerhouses Panda Volleyball, NCVC, Delta Valley, TVA, and Rage along the way, including two of the five matches in three sets.

The path to Nationals was slightly derailed after its first loss of the tournament to Marin Black, but the unit regrouped to keep its bid hopes alive with a chart-topping win over an elite Vision team to enter the semifinal matches.

“This is a fun group for sure,” said Coach **Andy Schroeder**. “We’re overjoyed and proud of these ladies, to be able to overcome the tough bumps on the road and still have fun. They’re enjoying playing together as a cohesive unit.”

With the first of two Junior Nationals bid on the line, the 18 Blue faced the top seeded team from Mountain View, MVVC,

which is an extremely solid squad that remained undefeated at this point. The match went back and forth but 18 Blue was unable to get to the winning points first and stretched each set to the limit. The team’s two lone losses in the tournament were against the two finalists to receive the Nationals bids – Marin and MVVC.

While the team almost reached its Nationals goal, it will have another chance at the NCVA Region Championships in a few weeks.

With a gaudy overall record of 43-14 after Sierra Nationals, the 18 Blue have finished in the Top 5 in the four tournaments they have entered – 3rd Place finishes at the SCVA and Sierra Qualifiers and 5th Place in the final standings at the Salt Lake City Showdown and Red Rock Rave.

Coach **Jeremy Swann** said, “We’re definitely not a Cinderella team. We’ve repeatedly proven that we can compete against the top teams in Northern California and the rest of the country.”



Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

18 Blue courtesy of Jon Low and Tomas Pineda.

BLUE



12



HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 Blue currently sits near the top half of standings (out of 37 teams) in league play with an overall 8-4 record, after posting two more wins against Encore and VVA in the second round.
- The team will look to move up in the standings and finish their season on a strong note in League 3 competition @the Grounds in April.

Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

BLUE



XCELERATION

13

NORCAL
SPRING CHALLENGE
2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- As the top seed in the pool, 13 Blue finished the first day with a 2-1 record.
- On championship Sunday, the team made it a perfect 2-0 day against NorCal Supreme and Hercules Dynamite to claim the Bronze B bracket. The squad finished 18th in the 56-team division.

“

The mighty 13B took a 4-1 record out of the tourney this weekend taking a Bronze bracket title. While we probably let one get away, there was a lot of solid play, and everyone contributed. We came to play!!!

— Greg Ginsburg
13 Blue Head Coach

”

BLUE

6



13



HIGHLIGHTS

- 13 Blue were crazy good and ran their overall league record to 9-3, after posting a sparkling, unblemished 6-0 record in the latest league competition.
- 13 Blue are elevating their game and getting tough when the tough gets going. They are currently riding on a 9-game win streak.

“

Perfection is hard to find but the mighty 13B did it this weekend, going 6-0 in league. Every single young athlete had a role in this outcome. We are beginning to rock the volleyball court!!! Lots of heart on this team, coming back from being behind several times and winning a three-game match three times. We are here to play!!

— Greg Ginsburg
13 Blue Head Coach

”

BLUE

7



HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 Blue had a promising first day, winning two of three against strong clubs TAV and LAVA.
- Round 2 was a challenge, but the team bounced back on getaway day to reach their bracket finals.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 Blue currently sits at #22 (of 75 teams) in league after another strong run in League 2.
- The team will have an opportunity to move up the WCVBA ladder in the final league event at the end of April.
- In the meantime, the team will now prepare for another big event – the Pacific Northwest Qualifier – in Spokane.



Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

WHITE



XCELERATION

14

NORCAL
SPRING CHALLENGE
2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 White maintained the top seed in their pool with three consecutive wins and entered the Silver B Bracket after the challenge match.
- The road got tough, but the team stayed competitive. 14 White was toppled in a highly contested match that ended 14-16 in the third set.
- The team finished in 15th place in the 56-team division.



HIGHLIGHTS

- League competition continues to present tough challenges for 14 White, as they faced many strong teams in the field. This is a testament to the solid contingent of clubs assembled by the WCVBA. The team is gaining confidence and effort is at 100%.

Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

BLUE



HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 Blue posted an 8-match win streak to reach the Gold Division semifinals.
- With an 80%-win clip, the team ended in 4th place in the 137-team division and the highest finish among the 21 teams from Northern California.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 Blue struggled to find their footing in League 3 after a difficult weekend against the top seeds in the Gold Division.
- This most recent competition, however, prepares the team well as they head into the qualifiers in the Pacific Northwest.

Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

WHITE



HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 White started sluggishly to open the tournament but then came back strong and with a vengeance.
- The team recorded six straight wins, which included four matches ending in three sets in the White's favor and taking the bracket.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 White remained steady with a 3-3 record in the Bronze Division of League 3 that included victories against SynergyForce, Encore, and Empire.

BLUE



HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 Blue had an up-and-down tournament but made huge strides in their development; the team was able to reach the Bronze competition, where Forza ended their run in three sets in the bracket finals.
- The team ended RRR in 46th place (out of 157 teams) in the division. Only one other team from Northern California finished higher than 16 Blue.



HIGHLIGHTS

- After starting slowly in both days of League 3, 16 Blue ended each day with victories and finished in the Silver Division for the age group.

WHITE



16



HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 White were resilient, bouncing back after each defeat to finish the tournament in a most productive way.
- The ladies had lots of touches and gained valuable experience against many of the top clubs in the nation.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 White collected four wins in League 3 to finish in the Bronze Division.
- 16 White pulled together a string of three consecutive wins against Empire, NNJ, and OMNI.

“
The giggling griddys of 16W had a solid weekend going 4-2. Lots of good defense carried the days. We are seeing a lot of improvement and are always working on 'bettering the ball'. Great job ladies!!

Greg Ginsburg, 16 White Co-Head Coach ”

BLUE



17B ending the weekend in the gold bracket! Let's keep getting better everyday ladies!!

Lucas Abbott, 17 Blue Co-Head Coach



HIGHLIGHTS

- 17 Blue reached the Silver B bracket after coasting to a scintillating 5-game win streak to start the tourney before skidding on the rocky road to the finals.
- The team finished near the top of the standings (29th of 121) to conclude a successful run in the RRR.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 17 Blue played hard and ended League 3 with two straight wins, against UC Elite and VVA, for a Top 10 finish in their age group.

Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

WHITE



HIGHLIGHTS

- 17 White (69th of 121) had a mixed day to start the tournament but found their groove by posting 4 straight victories to end at 5-3.
- The team defeated NW Arkansas Juniors Storm in three thrilling sets to reach the finals of their flight on get-away day.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 17 White turned in an outstanding performance in League 3 with a 4-2 weekend.
- The team won four straight in the Silver I Division to conclude league on a high note and will take this momentum into the Pacific Northwest Qualifiers in Spokane.

Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

BLUE

15



18



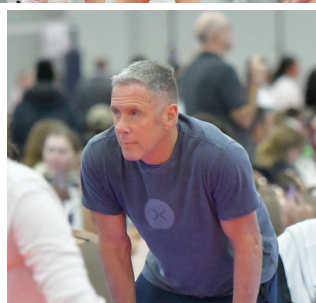
HIGHLIGHTS

- 18 Blue rocked the Mandalay convention center with an exceptional 7-1 record to finish in 5th place (of 93 teams) in the division.
- 18 Blue breezed through their first six matches to enter the Gold bracket, but it did not come easy. The team was able to pull away late in games until Bakersfield's Dartfrogs, who were riding on an 8-match win string, ended 18 Blue's run in three sets in the Gold quarterfinals.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 18 Blue were whiskers away from a Nationals bid after a 7-2, third place finish. Both losses came at the hands of Marin Black and MVVC Red, the eventual runners up and champion, respectively.
- The team now has four Top 5 tourney finishes – two in 3rd and two in 5th.



Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.

Know Yourself and Your Team

Part II

By Coach Andrew Randolph



*In upcoming issues of **XCELLent News** we will feature articles from 17 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.*

The quote by Knute Rockne (in third column on sidebar) has us contemplating what it means to have the best version of our team out on the court. He says he would rather play his best 11, rather than his 11 best. The 11 best would mean ranking every player strictly by skill, by all around talent.

For volleyball, it might mean you put your best players on the court and keep them there, the ones who all pass, hit, and serve the best. It might mean playing 6 who are the best at each of their positions. It would be difficult for an all star Outside to do her job without a good setter. While a more experienced team is going to see they're more hardworking and talented players on the court on a regular basis, there is still no substitute for solid teamwork.

We are assuming in this example that every single one of the top 6 players all get along with each other, or at least know the game enough to put aside emotions from off the court for awhile. What if that wasn't the case though? What if one or two of your best 6 didn't get along with the others, or started playing selfishly? Is it still a good idea to keep your "Top 6" at that point?

In one of my recent seasons, I had about half my team come to me and

say that one of the other girls was very difficult to play with because she thought she was the best and made them feel bad for not being as good as she thought she was. Now, she was a talented player, but that can only get you so far. One of my captains even went so far as to say she was okay not playing when this girl was on the court. One game, I benched her to see how she and the rest of the girls would respond. The team played one of their best games so far that year, and they kept encouraging each other to get better.

So, when I let the other player back onto the court with them, they already had a sense of security and success. They kept encouraging each other and did their best to stay positive regardless of what any one player was saying. The latter half of Rockne's quote depicts a situation like this one. Yes, if you have 6, 5, 11, or 20 players who get along great and are also the most talented bunch you must work with, they should be out there for as long as possible.

However, playing your 6 best means playing the ones who all work the best together, who put each other first, and who will make each other better the right way. If each player

(Continued on the next page)



“

The secret of winning football games is working more as a team, less as individuals. I play not my 11 best, but my best 11.

— Knute Rockne,
College Football Hall of
Fame Coach

”



Know Yourself and Your Team, Part II

By Coach Andrew Randolph

lifts the others up together, you have 5 people encouraging one constantly instead of one (you) trying to do it yourself.

Over the course of your life, you have probably come to realize that people are different from you. They don't think the same as you, act or react the same as you. Others don't have the same exact feelings or emotions that you do, and not everyone shares your likes and dislikes, your skills and abilities. Even when you find someone who does, he/she rarely has all those same qualities.

In fact, it would be very disturbing and a little weird if everyone felt, thought, and behaved the same way as you do. Our differences in our relationships are what make us special, they give us opportunities to learn from one another and grow.

Whether or not you believe in personality tests, the fact of the matter is they can help us learn about others to understand and appreciate our differences. They can also help us to gain a better understanding of ourselves, and ultimately how we can all work together.

Any solid team is going to have a few extroverts and introverts, several

several Type A and Type B personalities, a few logical thinkers and a few emotion-based ones. The same can be said on the court. In many instances, one's athletic personality differs from their normal everyday personality, but the purpose of understanding remains the same.

Myers-Briggs, Big 5, DISC, Enneagram, etc. There are many personality tests that exist (*and many versions of these tests. This is just one as an option, [Truivy](#)*) and each one confirms something different about yourself. Is any one perfectly accurate? Nope. Are they hints toward understanding who we really are, why we think and act the way that we do, and what motivates us? Definitely.

If you were to write down several things about yourself or qualities you know you had, and then took one of the tests honestly, you would see similar results. There would be things that you disagreed with and things that you didn't feel fully explained you, and that would be perfectly normal. There is not an exact science to understanding you, but these get you close if you dive deep into what they can each offer.

To be continued in next issue...



COMMUNICATING WITH THE COACH: 6 Ways to Approach Your Coach

Teaching Advocacy is an Important Part of Helping Them Success in Sports

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

Helpful
Tips

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 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

(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 that you are looking for, it will provide them a path to follow for the rest of their life.



Communicating with the Coach (continued)

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.

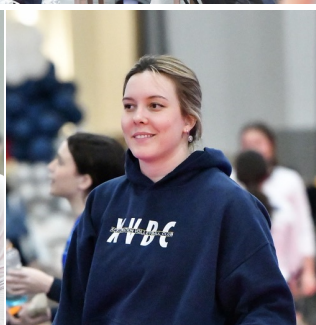
Be thankful – Beginning the conversation with a statement of gratitude for what the coach is providing to the team (i.e., his time, expertise) and then addressing the issue can put the conversation at ease from the start. Also, finish the conversation by thanking them for their time and for the opportunity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

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 SportsStars 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

(Continued on the next page)



Excellence is your personal best in each 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.



Excellence Defined (continued)

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.





WHAT I DIDN'T SEE MADE ME PROUD

By Jeffrey Kerns, Ed.D, Millard Public Schools, 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 returned, 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 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

(Continued on the next page)



Dear Xceleration Families,

We ran across a letter in a volleyball publication that was written by a father to his daughter, and we 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!

Jeremy

Why I Don't Pay for Club Volleyball

(Continued)

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



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. XCELlentNews will share them with you in future issues.

“For coaches: Athletes are the happiest when they are improving. That sounds obvious, but it’s important to keep in mind. A good way to build that good feeling of improvement with your players is to go over something specific with a player that you want him or her to get better at before practice. You can do that in a meeting, at the whiteboard or watching video. Then when you see that player perform the skill in practice the way you want it, you can share that moment with the athlete, and it makes for a very positive experience.”

– **Marv Dunphy, Pepperdine men’s coach, coach of men’s 1988 Olympic gold-medal team**

Stay aggressive after you get blocked. Likely, the other team will be looking for you to become tentative after you get blocked, so resist the urge to shoot or tip. Swing away with confidence. One block should not change your mindset.”

– **VolleyballUSA staff**

“Live by the Japanese axiom: “Get knocked down seven times, get up eight.” – **Bill Neville, former USA coach, national commissioner of coaching education for USAV**

“Watch the attacker, not the ball. Less experienced players tend to follow the flight of the ball, but that often means they miss the cues that will help them play better defense. Watch the hitter and set up your block or defensive positioning accordingly.”

– **VolleyballUSA staff**

“You don’t have to do anything extra for a match if you are giving your all mentally and physically every day in practice. Trust the hours you put in daily and let yourself enjoy showcasing that work during a match.”

– **Christa Harmotto, U.S. Women’s National Volleyball Team middle blocker, three-time AVCA All American at Penn State**



Karch Kiraly's Volleyball: Calm your nerves by focusing on things you can control

Reprinted from Volleyball USA

National team players get nervous just like any other player. Reaching the highest level of the game doesn't make you impervious to the jitters.

Part of the dealing with stress on the volleyball court is maintaining a composed demeanor so you look the same on the outside even when your insides are churning.

Another big factor is calming yourself by focusing on the little things. This is true when you're 12 years old and about to play in your first club tournament or 26 and stepping onto the court for an Olympic gold-medal match.

What should you think about between points? Try concentrating on what you'll need to do on the next play. Break it down into tiny things that you can control.

For instance, you might focus on the hitting cues that you have gone over repeatedly in practice. "Elbow up, shoulder back quickly," Things like that.

In a recent tournament, each of our position groups chose something they could do to help them fight through the bigger more stressful moments. The passers, for instance, decided that they would look each other in the eye before each point and make some type of physical contact – a high five, a tap on the shoulder, a pat on the back.

It may seem insignificant to go through a simple routine like this, but it's good for the whole team. It fosters a sense of unity before each serve, and it's a positive action that focuses your mind on something useful and away from the pressure of the match.



College Recruiting

5 Key Differences Between High School and College Volleyball

By Ashlee Lawson, Next College Student Athlete (NCSA).

The transition from high school to college can be a major adjustment. For the first time in your life, you move away from home and learn how to live on your own. It's your sole responsibility to go to class, study for tests, eat right and do your laundry. For volleyball athletes, the jump can be even more overwhelming. To help you prepare for what's to come, we outlined a few major differences between high school and college volleyball.

Being a college volleyball athlete can be like having two full-time jobs

In-season D1 athletes can expect to devote 75–80 hours per week to athletics and academics. Between early-morning workouts, classes, practice, team meetings, study hall and competition, the weekly schedule of an athlete is jam-packed from dawn until dusk. While it is important to branch out and befriend other students, only your teammates and other student-athletes will understand what it's like to balance the time commitment of college sports with the duties of being a full-time student. To survive, athletes need to be passionate about their sport and develop strong time-management skills. Keep in mind

that athletes who compete for D2, D3 or NAIA schools tend to have less-demanding schedules and a bit freer time.

Your college volleyball team is your family

Competing in high school or club volleyball is a great way to make new friends, but college volleyball can take team bonding to a whole new level. Athletes room together, eat together, take classes together, sit in study hall together and work out together. In many cases, volleyball athletes and coaches even spend holidays together. Your college teammates are much more than your friends—they are your family and your support system. They are the ones who make college feel like home away from home.

College practices can be more intense than high school or club games

The leap from high school to college can be massive. Athletes are taller, quicker, stronger and more skilled. Some athletes respond to the college atmosphere with nerves, while others rise to the challenge and up their level of intensity. Athletes fight tooth and nail during every practice and walk-ons grind it out for a chance to earn an athletic scholarship.



College Recruiting

Everyone on the team is there because they've invested a ton of time and energy into the sport. It's all about how you respond.

Travel time for competition is much longer

Since most teams in a high school conference are within 30-45 minutes of each other, traveling to most volleyball games takes an hour or two. In college, teams in the same conference will often be beyond state lines, and 6-8-hour bus rides or a flight away. This often means missed classes and weekends away from campus. While student-athletes can use this time to get homework done and study for tests, long hours sitting on a bus can be draining. Time management and balancing school, volleyball and lifestyle

becomes even more important.

Volleyball players are well-supplied with gear

How do you pick out athletes on a college campus? They often wear team jackets, sweatpants and gym shoes to every class. Many college sports teams are sponsored by athletic sportswear companies, which means athletes are constantly getting free shoes, shirts, shorts and more. Each new season means a new shipment of apparel and gear. In addition, teams that win the regular season title or conference tournament receive some added swag on top of a championship ring. It's a nice perk!

For related education and reading on the volleyball recruiting process click [HERE](#).



About the Author

Ashlee Lawson is the VP of Event Team Operations for Next College Student Athlete (NCSA). [Read more about NCSA.](#)





2012



Player... Professional... Coach... Booster... Family Man... Lucas Abbott

Lucas Abbott joined Xceleration in 2012 and has never looked back. In this feature, we asked Lucas about his journey since then, his time playing and coaching the game, as well as his role to help students reach their potential in his day job with Boost@BerkeleyHaas at the University of California, Berkeley. Most importantly, he discusses his role as husband to Kendall and father to Kiva and Tallac.

Q. You have a long history in the East Bay, tell us how you got started playing volleyball and about your younger days on the court through college.

Las Lomas HS (Walnut Creek) didn't have a boys volleyball team until my senior year and that is when I started playing. I had no idea about club volleyball, as I played other sports, some for fun and some on competitive teams. Growing up, I was also in soccer, baseball, basketball, golf, tennis, bowling, and swimming. And in high school, I played soccer and tennis for a year each.

I was a Middle Blocker and All-League performer at Las Lomas before heading off to play D1 volleyball at Humboldt State University in Arcata, CA. While at Humboldt, I was the team's starting Middle Blocker for four seasons and team captain my last two seasons, leading the squad to Nationals twice.

Q. You also played semi-pro in the (now defunct) Men's Premier Volleyball League, tell us about that experience.

My playing career continued until 2013, culminating with a season playing professionally with the PVL/NCVA's NorCal Premier Team.

(Continued on the next page)



Lucas Abbott, Co-Head Coach 17 Blue



The PVL was a grass roots professional volleyball league that began in 2012. It was made up of teams from among the 40 regional volleyball associations across North America. The USA PVL was sanctioned by USA Volleyball and offered tournament play and a League Championship event each year.

Q. Since then, you have coached for many years at Xceleration, tell us about this experience.

I have coached or played volleyball at a high level for over 25 years and I'm extremely proud to say that in the last several

(Continued on the next page)

Top photos:

Coach Lucas, along with Xceleration alum **Jade Santos** and current 17 Blue associate coach **Kayla Coleman**, have led Xceleration's teams to the top of the field in national invitational and AAU tournaments.



Lucas Abbott, Co-Head Coach 17 Blue



years, my teams have always finished Top 10 (Gold) in league play in both the NCVA's Power League and most recently the newly formed WCVBA.

In this most recent six-year span, teams that I have coached have earned multiple Junior Nationals bids and, in 2018 my 15 Blue team finished Top 5 in the Open Division at the AAU Girls' Nationals Championships in Orlando.

As a coach, I take pride not only on my teams competing at a very high level but also having fun while doing so and running fast-paced practices with lots of positive feedback for the players.

Q. When you're not coaching at Xceleration, where else can we find you on the sidelines?

I am currently Girls' Varsity Head Coach at Berean Christian HS in Walnut Creek, CA, where we have taken the team to the NCS playoffs in each of my eight seasons as the Head Coach, including making it to

Top photos:

Coach Lucas, assisted by **Jenn Uresti** (14 White), took the 2022 CIF Division 5 State Championship title home for Walnut Creek's Berean Christian HS Eagles.

With four straight five-set wins, Berean Christian Girls Volleyball closed out an incredible state championship run — the school's first ever in any sport!

the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) State playoffs three times and winning the Division 5 State Championship in 2022. I have also served as the assistant coach for the PVL/NCVA Men's NorCal Premier team in previous seasons.

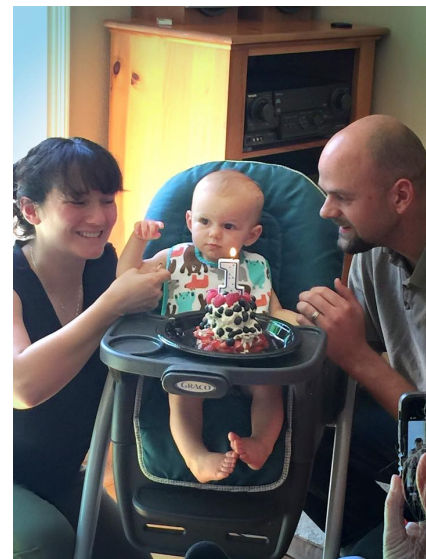
Q. You're also the director of a program called Boost@Berkeley Haas, tell us about this program?
www.haas.Berkeley.edu/boost

Away from volleyball, I have dedicated my 20+ year professional career to youth development, which I incorporate into my coaching. I am program director for a youth mentoring

(Continued on the next page)



Lucas Abbott, Co-Head Coach 17 Blue



outreach program at the University of California Berkeley's Haas School of Business, called **Boost@Berkeley Haas**. It is a four-year college readiness outreach program for Bay Area high school students from low-income, first-generation college graduate households.

In my role as program director, I am responsible for fundraising, curriculum planning/implementation, volunteer recruitment, staff training, and more!

Each cohort (9-12th grade) has distinct activities throughout the four-year continuum, such as case studies, team business plan development, leadership and communication, financial literacy, and helping them navigate through the college application process.

With the help of graduate students, corporate sponsors, and volunteer

(Continued on the next page)



Lucas Abbott, Co-Head Coach 17 Blue



mentors, the non-profit program helps our communities thrive and our students to build healthy, productive, and inspiring lives.

I love coaching and I love my full-time job and am always happy to talk to anyone about either of them! I recently was getting my teeth cleaned, talking to my dental hygienist about Boost and volleyball, and her daughter wants to tryout for Xcel next season!

Q. You and Kendall are raising two beautiful kids, what have been your most important roles as parents?

Obviously, we always make sure that we have set aside quality time for both as they grow up. With coaching and work responsibilities, the priority is always with the family. Kendall has been tremendous in keeping our lives organized and in order.

With a full-time job and coaching year-round we try to take advantage of any opportunity to spend time together. We love going for a walk with our two dogs around the neighborhood, going for hikes, doing a little backyard gardening, and getting up to Tahoe whenever we can for some camping.

One of my favorite quotes about parenting is that “the days are long, and the years are short,” so we are trying to soak up as much as we can with our kids.

Q. Kiva and Tallac are very uncommon names, where did that originate?

Kiva is 8 years old and Tallac is 4 years old, and their names originated from Lake Tahoe. Kiva is named after Kiva Beach and Tallac is named after Mt. Tallac which looks over Kiva beach.



Thank You, Friends and Families!



“

*Anything is possible
when you have the right
people there to support
you.”*

— Misty Copeland

”



Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.



Summer Camps - INDOOR



OFF-SEASON CAMPS - 2023 Schedule
All off-season indoor camps are open to all players.

SUMMER INDOOR: Xceleration Sports Facility at NorCal Courts
360 Ferry St., Martinez, CA

UPCOMING 5th-8th GRADERS

All weeks are Monday/Tuesday/Thursday (17 sessions), from 6:00 - 7:30 PM

- Week 1 I58: June 26, 27 & 29
- Week 2 I58: July 3 & 6
- Week 3 I58 July 10, 11 & 13
- Week 4 I58: July 17, 18 & 20
- Week 5 I58: July 24, 25 & 27
- Week 6 I58: July 31, Aug 1 & 3

Costs:

- \$55/drop-in
- \$140/week; \$95 for Week 2, July 4th week
- \$760 discounted for all 6 weeks
- No refunds will be issued for player absences or cancellations, but we will gladly offer credits to future indoor or beach camps.

Remit online payment [Here](#) and register [Here](#).

UPCOMING HIGH SCHOOL*

All weeks are Monday/Tuesday/Thursday (11 sessions), from 7:45 PM - 9:45 PM

- Week 1 HS: July 3 & 6, no camp on July 4
- Week 2 HS: July 10, 11 & 13
- Week 3 HS: July 17, 18 & 20
- Week 4 HS: July 24, 25 & 27

Costs:

- \$70/drop-in
- \$185/week; \$125 for Week 1, July 4th week
- \$680 discounted for all 4 weeks
- No refunds will be issued for player absences or cancellations, but we will gladly offer credits to future indoor or beach camps.

Remit online payment [Here](#) and register [Here](#).

* *First day of practice for high school is July 28.*



We invite you and look forward to having you on one of our teams next season... please save these Tryouts dates (subject to change) on your calendar!

High School 15s-18s

- Friday-Saturday, July 28-29
- Sunday, July 30 (makeup session)
- Wednesday, August 2 (Signing Night)

Pre-High School 12s-14s

- Friday-Saturday, October 13-14
- Sunday, October 15 (makeup session)
- Wednesday, October 18 (Signing Night)

Summer Camps - BEACH



**SUMMER 2023
BeACH**

OFF-SEASON CAMPS - 2023 Schedule
All off-season beach camps are open to all players.



SUMMER BEACH: Moraga Commons Park

1425 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, CA

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

UPCOMING 5th-8th GRADERS / HIGH SCHOOL

All weeks are Monday/Wednesday (8 or 16 sessions),
from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Month I (8 sessions)

- Week 1: June 5 & 7
- Week 2: June 12 & 14
- Week 3: June 19 & 21
- Week 4: June 26 & 28

Month II (8 sessions)

Week 5: July 3 & 5

- Week 6: July 10 & 12
- Week 7: July 17 & 19
- Week 8: July 24 & 26

Costs:

- \$465/month
- \$900 discounted full season (all 16 sessions)
- There will be no drop-ins for Beach due to limited enrollment. No refunds will be issued for player absences or cancellations, but we will gladly offer credits to future indoor or beach camps.

Remit online payment [Here](#) and register [Here](#).

Right photos (top to bottom): Just a few of our Xceleration alumni who have also had successful careers on the sand.

Kaitlynn Zdroik (San Jose State), **Emma Doud** (Loyola Marymount), **Dora Beilin** (Cal Poly SLO), and **Hailey Lindberg** (Santa Clara University).



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Tournament Schedule

Tournaments	Dates	12B	13B	14B	14W	15B	15W	16B	16W	17B	17W	18B
NCVA Power League - @The Grounds - Roseville	Dec 10-11											x
JVA NorCal Winter Classic The Grounds (Open) & Bay Area Sites (Club)	Jan 14-16	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
NCVA Power League 1 - San Mateo Event Center	Jan 21											x
WCVBA League 1 - @The Grounds	Jan 21-22					x	x	x	x	x	x	
USAV 18s Salt Lake City Qualifier - Salt Lake City	Jan 27-29											x
WCVBA League 1 - Bay Area Sites	Jan 28-29	x	x	x	x							
NCVA Power League 2 - @The Grounds	Feb 5											x
WCVBA League 2 - Bay Area Sites	Feb 4-5					x	x	x	x	x	x	
Las Vegas College Showcase	Feb 18-20											x
Las Vegas Classic	Feb 18-20					x		x	x	x	x	
WCVBA Presidents Day Showdown - Bay Area Sites	Feb 18-20	x	x	x	x		x					
NCVA Power League 3 - San Mateo Event Center	Feb 25											x
JVA NorCal Spring Challenge - @The Grounds	Mar 4-5		x		x							
SCVA Red Rock Rave 1 - Las Vegas, NV	Mar 4-6			x		x	x					
WCVBA League 2 - The Grounds	Mar 11-12	x	x	x	x							
SCVA Red Rock Rave 2 / OC Qualifier - Las Vegas, NV	Mar 11-13							x	x	x	x	x
NCVA 18s Sierra National Qualifier - Sacramento	Mar 17-19											x
WCVBA League 3 - Bay Area Sites	Mar 18-19					x	x	x	x	x	x	
Pacific Northwest Qualifiers - Spokane, WA	Mar 25-27							x	x	x	x	
Pacific Northwest Qualifiers - Spokane, WA	Mar 31-Apr 2			x		x	x					
NCVA Power League Region Championships Capitol Sports Center/McClellan, Sacramento	Apr 1-2											x
NCVA Far Westerns - Reno	Apr 22-24		x		x							
USAV 18s Spring Nationals - Columbus, OH	Apr 28-30											x
WCVBA League 3 - @The Grounds	Apr 29-30	x	x	x	x							
JVA West Coast Cup - Long Beach	May 27-29			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
50th AAU National Championships - Orlando	June 18-29					6/18-21		6/26-29		6/22-25		
USAV Jr Nationals (As Qualified) - Chicago	Jun 28-Jul 6			AQ	AQ	AQ	AQ	AQ	AQ	AQ	AQ	

Tournament dates only, excluding travel days. Always check tournament websites for real-time information. Do not leave tournament premises at the end of each day without knowing your next assignment or play schedule.

- **AAU Junior Nationals:** [ESPN Wide World of Sports](#), 700 S Victory Way, Kissimmee, FL; [Orange County Convention Center](#), 9899 International Dr., Orlando, FL
- **JVA Norcal Winter Classic / WCVBA League:** The Grounds [Placer Event Center](#), Event Center Drive, Junction Blvd, Roseville, CA 95678. Some events may be held elsewhere throughout the Bay Area, including other VBC facilities.
- **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/Showcase & Red Rock Rave:** [Mandalay Bay Resort Convention Center](#), 3950 Las Vegas Blvd. South, Las Vegas, NV 89119
- **USAV Pacific Northwest Qualifier:** Multiple [venues](#) in the Spokane area.
- **USAV 18s Salt Lake City Qualifier:** [Salt Palace Convention Center](#), 100 S W Temple St, Salt Lake City, UT 84101
- **USAV 18s Spring Junior National:** [Greater Columbus Convention Center](#), 400 N High St, Columbus, OH 43215
- **USAV Junior Nationals:** [McCormick Place Convention Center](#), 2301 S King Dr, Chicago, IL 60616

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Travel & Lodging

	JVA NorCal Winter Classic Roseville	WCVBA League 1-6 Roseville	Las Vegas Classic Las Vegas	NCVA 18s Sierra Qualifier Cal Expo Sacramento
Tournament Dates	Jan 14-16	Jan 21-22 / Jan 28-29 / Feb 4-5 / Mar 11-12 / Mar 18-19 / Apr 29-30	Feb 18-20	Mar 17-19
Travel ⁽¹⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players
Lodging ⁽²⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾

	JVA NorCal Spring Challenge Roseville	Red Rock Rave Las Vegas	Pacific NW Qualifiers Spokane	NCVA Far Westerns Reno
Tournament Dates	Mar 4-5	Mar 4-6 Mar 11-13	Mar 25-27 Mar 31 – Apr 2	Apr 22-24
Travel ⁽¹⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players
Lodging ⁽²⁾	Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players ⁽³⁾

	USAV 18s Spring Columbus	JVA West Coast Long Beach	AAU Nationals Orlando	USAV Jr Nationals Chicago
Tournament Dates	Apr 28-30	May 27-29	June 18-29	Jun 14-17 Jun 28-Jul 6
Travel ⁽¹⁾	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 ⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ Players and parents are responsible for getting themselves to tournament the day prior to start date. 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 the tournament website to book their hotel reservations.

For all travel and lodging-related questions, please contact [Normie Pineda](#).

2023 Information Sheet

Tournament Waves and Venues



March 25-27: 16 Blue, 16 White, 17 Blue, 17 White

March 31-April 2: 14 Blue, 15 Blue, 15 White

[Pacific Northwest Qualifiers \(Spokane\)](#)



April 1-2: 18 Blue

[NCVA Power League Region Championships \(Sacramento\)](#)



April 22-24: 13 Blue, 14 White

[NCVA Far Westerns \(Reno\)](#)



April 28-30: 18 Blue

[USAV 18s Spring Nationals \(Columbus\)](#)



April 29-30: 12 Blue, 13 Blue, 14 Blue, 14 White

[WCVBA League 3 \(Roseville\)](#)

