



# Xcelent NEWS

MAY 2023

VOL. 10 ISSUE #6

## In the News...

- The Road Trips
- Blast from the Past: Ruth Lawanson
- Know Yourself and Your Team, Part III
- College Recruiting: The JUCO
- College Commitments
- Fun Ways to Improve Your Beach Game & Keys to Blocking in Beach Volleyball
- Keys to Volleyball Greatness

## UPCOMING DATES

- JVA West Coast Cup (Long Beach)  
May 27-29: 14s-15s, 16W, 17s
- 50<sup>th</sup> Annual AAU National Championships (Orlando)  
June 18-21: 15 Blue  
June 22-25: 17 Blue  
June 26-29: 16 Blue
- SUMMER CAMPS  
Beach: June 5 – July 26  
Indoor Pre-High School: June 26 – Aug 3  
Indoor HS: July 3 – Jul 27
- 2023-2024 TRYOUTS  
HS 15s-18s: July 28-29  
Pre-HS 12s-14s: October 13-14

Xceleration  
Volleyball Club

John B. David, Editor

## Road-Trippin!

**“It's not the destination, it's the journey.”**

**15 Blue Take 2<sup>nd</sup> at Pacific Northwest Qualifier!  
18 Blue Qualify for USAV 18s Spring Nationals,  
then Finishes 3<sup>rd</sup> in Columbus!**

Whether you rock to the tunes of the Red Hot Chili Peppers or an enthusiast of Ralph Waldo Emerson's essays as our title and sub-title respectively suggest, our theme for the month of April is about the adventures, thrills, and bonding experiences from a road trip. These are only a few elements necessary for a successful road trip for Xceleration. Our teams also had goals of securing bids, titles, high finishes, and overall skill improvement in various tournaments that took us to Spokane, Reno and Columbus, along with the local sites in Sacramento and Roseville.

While the 18 Blue were vying for titles at the NCVA Power League Championships and USAV Spring Nationals, the bulk of the club was competing for bids at the Pacific Northwest and Far Western Qualifiers in Spokane and Reno, respectively. For the 12 Blue and 13 Blue, they headed to Roseville for one final time this season to conclude their 2023 journey.

“We're so thankful to the 12 Blue and 13 Blue for trusting in us to begin (or continue) their road to volleyball greatness, said club owner **Jeremy Swann**. “For the rest of the club, we've turned the corner and into the homestretch. This is where we dig deep – to

*(Continued on page 3)*





## SPOKANE CONVENTION CENTER



### Xceleration 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.



**BALLERS!** 15 Blue placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Pacific Northwest Qualifier in Spokane, WA, and narrowly missed a Junior Nationals bid to compete in Chicago.



### Girls' Power League



**OHIO BOUND!** 18 Blue qualified for the 2023 USAV 18s Spring Nationals in Columbus by earning a bid at the Region Championships. Read more about their journey in the pages that follow.



really look inside ourselves and see our potential. We use all we have to reach our goals, to live out our values, and to overcome obstacles.”

## **18 BLUE QUALIFIES FOR JUNIOR NATIONALS AT REGION CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The 18 Blue went to work and got down to business at the NCVA Region Championships to qualify for the USAV Junior Nationals in Columbus. The 18 Blue remained steady and maintained their 8<sup>th</sup> seed from start to finish, enough to punch their ticket to the Big Dance!

Xcel Superfan **Norm Haraguchi** (see [2022 XCELLent News #7](#), pages 20-24) observed that this team is special. He said, “One characterization of this team is that when they hit the floor on a misplay they get right up, dust themselves off, give the others a high five and get ready for the next play. No pouting and their game-face back on!”

Norm followed, “I am so happy the girls made it to the Nationals. Believe me, there is no team in the country more deserving of an invitation to the Nationals than our 18s TEAM. They were beaten by the Vision 18s Gold. But they did not wilt. They were just overpowered by a bigger, stronger, experienced team. But they had the bigger “heart.”

## **18 BLUE SLOG THROUGH EARLY ROUNDS BUT FINISH STRONG TO CLOSE OUT THEIR CLUB CAREERS**

At the Nationals, 18 Blue was one of 17 teams that were spread out over seven divisions at the national

*(Continued on the next page)*

## **Pics of the Month I**



### **LIGHTS OUT!**

**Dani Pagtakhan** (15 Blue) went on an incredible 24-point service run to start the match (undoubtedly an Xceleration record) and helped lead the squad to the top of the pool on Day 1 of the Pacific Northwest Qualifier in Spokane, WA!



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*Instagram*

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tournament that represented the Northern California Volleyball Association, which included perennially strong clubs like Absolute, Academy, Marin, Northern Nevada Juniors, NorCal, Rage, SF Tremors, SynergyForce, and Vision.

It was an inauspicious start for the 18 Blue at Nationals in the Buckeye State, finishing 1-2 on the first day of pool play competition. Early prognostication spelled an improbable podium finish for 18 Blue. The thought of this being the end of their club careers never reached the point of desperation, but determination and focus, highlighted by an amazing team effort in the biggest stage of the volleyball world.

The team regrouped and picked up the momentum after the three-set defeat at the hands of 1<sup>st</sup> Alliance from the Great Lakes region when the team followed it with another extended match but winning 17-15 in the deciding set against Rockwood Thunder Navy from the Gateway Region.

The 18 Blue then went on a string of four straight wins that propelled the squad to the Gold Bracket – the Elite 8 – in the Freedom Division by toppling teams from the Chesapeake (Columbia Black), Heart of America (417 Columbia), and Ohio Valley (Buckeye Black) regions for a spotless record on Day 2 of competition.

The team continued its stellar play against a pair of teams from the

Lonestar Region – SA Warriors and Houston Juniors (HJV) Premier. 18 Blue dispatched the Warriors in three but could not overcome the eventual Division champions HJV. The Freedom final came down to two undefeated teams: Houston Juniors and JJVA 18 Teal (Florida Region). The championship match lived up to expectations as HJV battled to a 25-21, 21-25, 15-13 win.

## 18 BLUE FUN FACTS

### In Rare Company

- **Aunyka Uresti** (Berean Christian 2022) becomes the 2<sup>nd</sup> Xcel player that was able to win a State Championship and medal at Nationals – the other is **Parker Jones** (Acalanes 2015).

### Comparisons vs. Teams in the NCVA at Junior Nationals:

- **Most wins:** Tied 1<sup>st</sup>
- **Fewest Losses:** Tied 2<sup>nd</sup>
- **Highest Finish:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- **Highest Win Percentage:** 2<sup>nd</sup>
- **Teams > .500 Record:** 6 of 17
- **Teams Ending in Gold:** 2 of 17
- **Teams in Medal Play (Gold-Silver-Bronze):** 5 of 17

### All-Tournament Team Selections

- **Annika Blas-Cedeno**
- **Kate Giang**



## Pics of the Month II



### MEDALISTS!

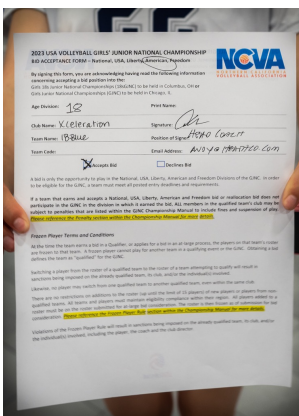
18 Blue ended their season with an overall record 53-21 and five Top 5 finishes in seven tournaments.

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



BLUE

## 18 Blue Qualify for USAV 18s Spring Nationals



18



### HIGHLIGHTS

- 18 Blue maintained its top seed in the opening round of the NCVA Region Championships by sweeping three opponents in pool play.
- Entering the Gold pool, the team temporarily grounded to a halt but kept the #8 seed with a split against UC Elite and Vision.
- The final finish allowed the 18 Blue to qualify for the USAV 18s Spring Nationals in Columbus, OH.

“

What a tremendous accomplishment by these young ladies and coaches! Leaders on & off the court. Special shout out to Coach Taylor Dixon, who both qualified herself as a former player on 18Blue and now as a coach of today's 18Blue. Spectacular!!

— Jeremy Swann  
18 Blue Co-Head Coach

”

Click [Xceleration Photo Galleries](#) for more pictures.  
Photos courtesy of Jon Low and Xavier Uresti.



# 2023 USAV 18s Junior Nationals

## 18 Blue Bring Home the Bling!



### HIGHLIGHTS

- Started 1-2 but recovered with four straight wins to enter the quarterfinal round of the Gold Bracket.
- Dispatched SA Warriors from the Lonestar Region in three sets to set up the semifinal matchup against the unbeaten and eventual Freedom Division champions Houston Juniors, also from the Lonestar Region.
- With a 6-3 finish and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place at Nationals, 18 Blue concluded their season with an overall 53-21 record and five Top 5s in seven tournaments.



I had the pleasure of seeing them at the Sierra National Qualifier. What I saw was a special "TEAM". They were very impressive in their effort to qualify for the Nationals. The team was balanced, played together, lots of energy and focused on their goal. What I saw was a group of players new to the team that played together as a cohesive unit in a relatively short time. They played their hearts out and missed the finals by a slim margin. There was no give up at all, misplays were immediately forgotten, and the team refocused quickly on the next opportunity. There was no figure pointing but players holding hands and continuing to attack the opposing team. I am sorry they didn't qualify but glad they still have an opportunity to make it to the Nationals.

— Grandpa Norm Haraguchi, Xcel Superfan

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



# Thank You for an Amazing Season!



**Bottom row, l-r:** Annika Blas-Cedeno, Marley Harrison, Kate Giang, and Olivia Wiseman.

**Top row, l-r:** Madison Low, Makenzie Ravera, Olivia Cooper, Coach Jeremy Swann, Breanna Davis, Coach Taylor Dixon, Ryann Jones, Aunyka Uresti, and Coach Andy Schroeder.

**Not pictured:** Lauren Atis, Kennedy Fabian, and Camryn Hirst.

# XCELERATION

## 18



### All-Tournament Selections

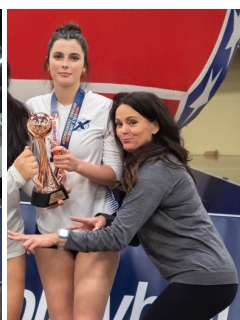


**HEY GIRL, YOU'RE AN ALL-STAR!**

Kate Giang (left) and Annika Blas-Cedeno turned in outstanding performances at Nationals to catch the eye of tournament organizers.

Kate and Annika will head east to play for Wellesley College and Pace University, respectively, next season!

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





## A Final Team Text: Path to the Podium

“  
The picture of many of you jumping for joy in front of the “Path to the Podium” made me understand how blessed I was to be one of your coaches.

Ultimately that's what we all embarked on back in late November, Path to the Podium! That was the Goal. Rest assured that every team wants to get there, but very few are willing to pay the price to get there. WE WERE!

We were willing to take all necessary steps to make this goal happen. Let's call it the journey. There were many ups, some downs, 30 power league matches, countless other matches, close to 175 hours of practices, and travel that took us to Salt Lake, Las Vegas twice, Columbus, Ohio, and many local locations. We had to be a Family first and foremost, and we were. We won 1000's of points and won 53 matches along the way. It took everything all 13 of you had; it always does if you want to get to the Podium!

Thanks again; as coaches (we weren't perfect), I can guarantee that we cared about each of you more than you'll ever know. You'll always be a part of this family! Please don't hesitate to contact us if you need a reference or testimonial. It's the absolute least we could do for you.

Finally, I know I speak for Jeremy and Taylor when we say how Proud we are of all of you. To put yourself on the line as you did and continually show up and compete at the highest level with passion, sincerity, and integrity was the greatest ever. I am going to miss all of you. I know one thing; the future is very bright for you all. One last thing!!! Let's GO!!!  
A-J-T

”



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



# BLUE



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Outstanding play from the 17 Blue catapulted the team to the Gold quarterfinal round of the Pacific Northwest Qualifier after a 5-1 record in pool play, besting teams from Colorado, Texas and Washington.
- 17 Blue closed the tournament in 5<sup>th</sup> place overall in the 32-team division.





# WHITE



# XCELERATION

# 17



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 17 White could not get untracked at the Pacific Northwest Qualifier but managed to secure satisfying victories.
- Three of the team's defeats were tight and took three sets to settle.
- 17 White will now take a short tournament break before closing out the season at the JVA West Coast Cup in Long Beach.





# BLUE



# XCELERATION

# 16



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 Blue turned in their best performances to date after an unblemished record in the first two days of the Pacific Northwest Qualifier with a 6-0 record.
- 16 Blue's chances of a medal finish in the Gold bracket was derailed by the Texas Legacy in the quarterfinal round and whose 2<sup>nd</sup> overall finish was only three steps ahead of the 5<sup>th</sup> place 16 Blue in the 47-team division.
- 16 Blue will have one final opportunity to play together as a unit in their last tournament in Orlando at the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual AAU National Championships.
- See pages 20-26 for a feature on Coach Ruth.



# WHITE



# 16



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 White had a mixed weekend at the Pacific Northwest Qualifier, finishing with an overall 3-4 record.
- The team rebounded with superb all-around play on Day 2 to lift the spirits.
- 16 White will now take a brief tournament respite before closing out the season in Long Beach at the JVA West Coast Cup.





# BLUE



# 15



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 Blue cemented themselves into Xceleration lore with a mind-boggling 24-point run to open their match against North Pacific Jrs from Bend, OR (25-1, 25-21) in the battle of undefeated teams for the top spot in pool play.
- The team continued its stellar run with three more sweeping victories in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round to vault into the Gold bracket where the team dropped two sets against the Madfrog Elite Green from Texas in the final.

“ ”

*This weekend took courage, effort and heart. I am beyond proud of 15 Blue; we finished second with an 8-1 record at a qualifier. One match away from earning a bid, 2<sup>nd</sup> overall after playing in a championship match and up into today we didn't drop a set. As long as we continue to get better the sky is the limited for this group of young women. Let's gooooo Xcel!*

— Leslie Ray  
15 Blue Head Coach



# WHITE

14



15



## HIGHLIGHTS

- The short-handed 15 White had a promising start at the Pacific Northwest Qualifier and valiantly tried to keep pace with the stronger teams in the field.
- The team continued to elevate their level of play as the competition got tougher and gained valuable experience playing against teams from Texas, Washington, and Colorado.





# BLUE



XCELERATION  
X

15

14



## HIGHLIGHTS

- After a promising start on Day 1 of the Pacific Northwest Qualifier, 14 Blue got a bit sidetracked before rebounding with three straight victories to snag the the Bronze bracket.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 Blue ended the month with a bang, going a PERFECT 7-0 at the WCVA League 3. The team dropped only one set during League 3 weekend.
- 14 Blue finished 17<sup>th</sup> overall in league play in a pool of 43 teams

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



# WHITE



## HIGHLIGHTS

- In one of their most successful tournaments this season, the 14 White strung together a remarkable 4-game win streak at the Far Western Qualifiers.
- The team hopes to continue their stellar play and take this winning momentum to their final competition of the season at WCVBA League 3.

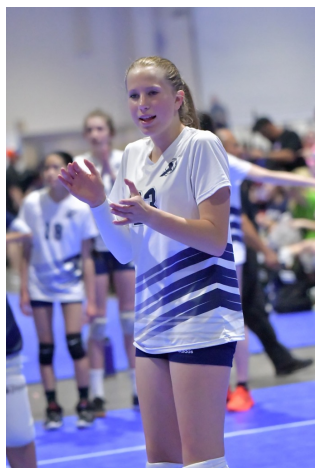


## HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 White continues to impress and improve in each tournament as the season progressed.
- Their journey to the next level in the 15s next season will continue and these ladies will be up to the task to face the bumps on the road head on.



# BLUE



17

13



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 13 Blue had a successful first day at the Far Western Qualifier by taking 2<sup>nd</sup> in pool play.
- 13 Blue was then challenged but vaulted up to the 36<sup>th</sup> spot at the end, after starting as the 68<sup>th</sup> seeded team entering the qualifier.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 13 Blue rattled off four straight wins to open the weekend but succumbed in two close matches against 805 Elite and Stingray.
- 13 Blue's knockout performance this season bodes well for a bright future in the sport and for Xceleration.

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



# BLUE



## HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 Blue closed their season with a 3-3 record in League 3 competition @the Grounds.
- The unit won 3 of 4 to start the weekend but lost the mojo in two hard-fought matches that both went to three sets, with 12 Blue coming up on the short end, 13-15 and 14-16, in their final two matches.
- The future is bright for Xceleration. These ladies – many are first time players to club competition – played their hearts out and gained valuable experience throughout the season. Their journey has just begun and they're off to a strong start!



“

Wanted to take a moment to recognize the young ladies of 13Blue and 12Blue who closed out their season with League 3 this past weekend. Normie and I enjoyed watching you all compete in the Xcel jersey. Do keep up with your game during off-season. And please look at how successful our older athletes are, particularly our 18's – because I think it's important for you all to understand that as good as our 18's are, each and every one of them started exactly where you are now. Xceleration VBC wishes you all the very best and we thank you for coming to Xcel.

— Tomas Pineda, Club Papa-razzi

”

# 12







## Player... Olympian... Professional... Coach... Legend... Ruth Lawanson

*Ruth Lawanson joined Xceleration in 2017 after an illustrious and storied volleyball career that took her from Fresno State to many parts of the globe. She has been involved with volleyball for nearly 40 years as a player, coach, and clinician. We are extremely privileged that she has chosen to coach for Xceleration to impart her vast knowledge of the game.*

**Since you joined Xceleration in 2017, your role has evolved. Aside from coaching the 16 Blue since that time, what else is or was in your Xceleration wheelhouse?**

*Yes, that's true. My role has been tweaked over time, which includes serving as the Club Coaching Technical Advisor, meeting with club management on skill technique and implementation procedures, assisting with the design and implementation of club wide practice plans, and running a series of "coaches training clinics" for all Xceleration coaches prior to the start of the season, among many others. I also serve (with Leslie Ray) as the primary club lessons coach.*

**Before we get into your collegiate and professional career and long list of accomplishments, tell us a little bit about yourself and how you got into volleyball?**

*Of course. I was born in Ibadan, Nigeria, which is the third most populous city in the country, but our family moved to the U.S. when I was two years old. My earliest connection with organized sports was in the 4th grade, when I tried track, and then continued down that athletic path at Clovis West High School in Fresno, CA. I was a sprinter and a competitor in the long jump and shot put, making it to the state meet in my sophomore through senior years.*

*My volleyball journey started at the urging of my high school track coach at Clovis West who kept imploring me to consider trying out for the volleyball team. As a multi-sport athlete in track and basketball, I insisted that I didn't have time. However, in order to appease my persistent coach, my mom Caroline and I decided to give it a shot and pay to attend a volleyball camp.*



Photos courtesy of Ruth Lawanson, Tomas Pineda, Fresno State Athletics, UNR Athletics.



## Ruth Lawanson, Head Coach 16 Blue

**Note:** Ruth's stellar play at Clovis West would lead to her being inducted into the Clovis West High School Wall of Fame and the Clovis Unified Hall of Fame.

Graduating from Clovis West in 1981, Ruth would move on to Fresno State University.

**That volleyball camp paid off and caught Fresno State Coach Overstreet's attention. You then hit the ground running as soon as you entered the university. What can you attribute your success as a Bulldog in the volleyball program?**

*I was a four-year starter through the 1984 season as a hitter-setter. Once I stepped foot on campus and the court, I was committed to do well in my studies, play to the best of my abilities, and I had great teammates. The rewards just came along with it. My senior year was just magical, and I had a lot of supporters to thank for it.*

**Note:** Ruth is the Fresno State volleyball program's career leader in hitting percentage and the 1984-85 Fresno State Female Athlete of the Year. She put together a historic career at Fresno State that saw her lead the Bulldogs to a program-record 26 wins that season. It was the best in school history as Fresno State jumped into the NCAA Top 20 rankings for the first time and ended up tying for fifth in the nation at the NCAA Tournament. The Bulldogs finished the 1984 year 26-13 and 11-1 in NorPac competition. Both are school records.

*(Continued on the next page)*

**Fresno State Coach Leilani Overstreet recruited Ruth Lawanson from Clovis West High School, where her skills were raw, but her talent evident. Lawanson would become the most outstanding athlete that Overstreet coached in her 20 years at Fresno State.**

*“ She was so strong and could jump so well, I knew I wanted her. She was only 5'8", but she could jump out of the gym. She was such a rock-solid player, just a delight to coach. So dedicated to working hard. Ruth could have excelled in almost any sport. She was outstanding in track and basketball, in addition to volleyball in high school. I think, physically, I had a few teams that might have been better, but that 1984 group had the heart and Ruth was the leader. ”*





## Ruth Lawanson, Head Coach 16 Blue



During Ruth's senior season in 1984, she ranked number one in single-season matches played, third in single-season sets played, fifth in single-season hitting percentage, sixth in single-season aces, and 10<sup>th</sup> in single-season kills.

As the most notable women's volleyball player in Fresno State history, Ruth was a two-time NorPac All-Conference selection in 1983 & 1984 and was named the NorPac Co-MVP or Co-Player of the Year, a First-Team All NorPac, a First-Team All-Northwest Region Selection, and a First-Team All-American by CVCA/Russell Athletic. She captured a spot on the ASICS/Tiger All-America Second-Team and was also honored with the Rosa Parks Award.

The hitter-setter was a three-time Fresno State volleyball MVP. Ruth still holds their career records for kills (962) and season

records for kills (488) and services aces (55). She became the first Bulldog ever to earn NCAA Division I All-America honors as a senior in 1984.

**Accolades from the Fresno State community continued past your college playing days, tell us about that.**

*It was an honor to play as a Bulldog and I greatly appreciate the recognition, the school officially retired my jersey number (No. 15) in 1985. Then more recently in 2019, there was an unveiling ceremony, and the jersey is now displayed in the rafters at the Save Mart Center.*

**Note:** Ruth not only rewrote the Fresno State volleyball record book in 1984 but she also made school history in women's athletics as she became the first female athlete and the first athlete in a sport other than football to have her No. 15 jersey retired.

*(Continued on the next page)*

**Fresno State honors Bulldog volleyball legend Ruth Lawanson with a special jersey unveiling celebration before the Mountain West match against Wyoming.**



## Ruth Lawanson, Head Coach 16 Blue

Since Ruth's jersey was retired, Wende Ward from softball and Wendy Martell have been the only other women student-athletes to have their jersey retired.

Ruth is a member of the Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame, Clovis Unified Hall of Fame and the Clovis West High School (Calif.) Wall of Fame, Ruth was also named one of Fresno State's Top 25 Greatest Athletes and one of the Central Valley's Top 25 Greatest Athletes of the 20th Century. She has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the American Volleyball Coaches Association.

**After your last season at Fresno State, you continued playing volleyball that vaulted you to elite levels. Can you tell us where volleyball has taken you?**

*Yes, volleyball has taken me around the world to compete against the best in the country and from other nations. Following my playing career at Fresno State, I played with the Dallas Belles and the Minnesota Monarchs of the Major Volleyball League (MVL) from 1987-89. I then spent four seasons with the U.S. National Team, playing for Team USA in the 1990 World Championships in Beijing, the 1991 World Cup squad in Osaka,*

*(Continued on the next page)*

“  
*Ruth is a very special person and player, and we decided to honor her in this way because of her tremendous contributions over her four years to Fresno State.*

— Leilani Overstreet  
2015 Head Coach, Fresno State, on the jersey retirement

”



“

*Ruth is one of the all-time great volleyball players in U.S. history and one of the best athletes in Fresno State's history.*

*Having an Olympian be a part of our volleyball tradition is tremendously valuable. It is the dream of most young volleyball players to play in the Olympics and play professionally. Ruth has excelled at the highest level in our sport and provides a great example for our team and community on achieving your goals and dreams. We are thrilled to have Ruth in the Save Mart Center on Saturday and to proudly display her jersey as the standard of a Fresno State Volleyball player.*

— Jonathan Winder  
2019 Head Coach,  
Fresno State, before the  
jersey unveiling

”



## Ruth Lawanson, Head Coach 16 Blue

*and the 1992 Summer Olympic games in Barcelona. My international competition as a pro ended in Italy and France.*

**Note:** Playing for the Dallas Belles and Minnesota Monarch, Ruth was named the MLV Player of the Year after setting league records in kills (497) and hitting efficiency (.309). Ruth and the national team earned a bronze medal in both the 1990 World Championships (over Cuba, 3-1) and 1991 World Cup. She was also honored with the national team's 1991 Judy Bellomo Players Award and won a gold medal with the 1992 U.S. Olympic Festival West Region team.

**Xceleration has the distinction to call one of its coaches an Olympic medalist, can you tell us about this once-in-a lifetime experience?**

*Playing for the U.S. National Team and our country is an honor in and of itself, but the years of hard work and effort truly paid off by winning the bronze medal at the XXV Olympiad in 1992.*

*We first had to qualify, and Team USA did that through the 1991 Women's World Cup in Osaka, Japan. Then at the Olympics,*

*there were 8 women's teams competing in two pools of four each. Along with Team USA, the first pool included Japan, Spain, and the Unified Team (formerly Russia). The other pool consisted of Brazil, China, Cuba, and Netherlands. With a three-way tie of 5 points each at the end of our pool, Team USA placed second after a single loss in five sets to Team Japan. In the final rounds, we easily defeated the Netherlands in the quarterfinals, but went down in a hard-fought match (2-3) to the eventual Olympic champions Cuba in the semifinals. Team USA went on to play magnificently the next day against Brazil (3-0) to win the bronze medal.*

*Volleyball started as an Olympic sport in 1964, with Japan winning the first-ever gold, and the U.S. women's team winning its first medal in the sport, a silver, in the 1984 games. There was a drought if you will, so we were excited to follow up with a podium finish "soon after" the '84 games in 1992. Team USA would not medal again until Beijing in 2008 and finally winning Gold in the 2020 Tokyo games.*

**After the Olympics, you resumed your professional career.**

*I returned to playing professionally in 1992 for three years for **Preca Moda Cislago** in the Italian professional league and for **Racing Club De France** in the French professional league.*

*(Continued on the next page)*





## Ruth Lawanson, Head Coach 16 Blue

*In my first season in Italy, we finished 2nd in Division 2 after starting 7-9 in the first half but we ultimately finished 21-11 overall after going 14-2 during the second half of the session. Unfortunately, I hurt my knee the last match of the season and I was unable to play in the playoffs to help my team move into the top division. I played my last season in France in the top division for Racing club and the team finished in the top 4 of the league.*

**You then jumped into coaching at the collegiate level before landing at Xceleration. Can you tell us about your coaching timeline?**

*Everything that I learned and experienced as a Bulldog, as a professional, and as an Olympian were essentially put into practice. I had stints with Fresno State and Purdue University as an assistant coach before taking over the head coaching job at Angelo State University in Texas. I was then*

*named the assistant coach at the U.S. Air Force Academy before getting another head coaching position at the University of Nevada-Reno.*

**Note:** In her career, Ruth has helped coached 25 all-conference players, one all-region selection and an American Volleyball Coaches Association honorable-mention All-American. She has also helped mentor 90 academic all-conference student athletes.

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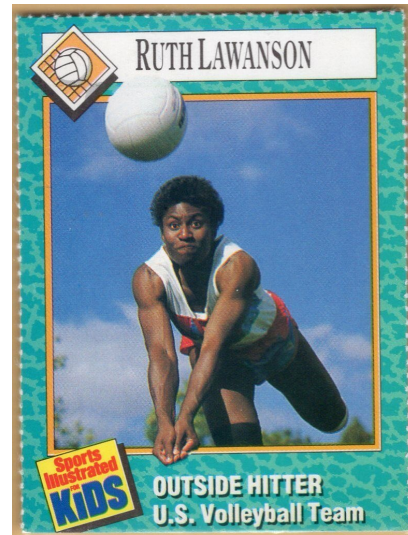
## Ruth Lawanson, Head Coach 16 Blue

**You're finally here at Xceleration, why our club and what's next?**

*I picked Xcel because there was a history with Jim Ross and Andy Schroeder, I knew them from when I was a college coach. Our core values aligned; they wanted to get players better and*

*help them play in college. Xceleration was a competitive club with family values!*

*What is next for me is to continue to help young ladies be the best version of themselves. Help them with their self confidence and to use their voice.*





# Know Yourself and Your Team

## Part III

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.*



Myers-Briggs, Big 5, DISC, Enneagram, etc. There are many personality tests that exist, 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.

One of the first tests that I try to have every player I work with take is the DISC personality test. The DISC is a commonly used test for everyday life, but with a varied version specific to

athletes. This informs us of the uniqueness we have in our general everyday lives, as well as how we act and think in competitive scenarios. The actual test takes about an hour to complete online if you take the extended version.

Unfortunately, as of now this is the only way to get accurate results in comparing your competitive, athletic self to your usual self. Regardless, the test will help you pick up tendencies that you might have on or off the court, explain why you feel or react certain ways to certain stimuli, and help you to appreciate and understand your teammates better.

DISC stands for Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness. Everyone is at least a little bit of each of these things, but the test focuses on which is the highest for you.

People who are **High D's** like to be task focused and results-oriented, time conscious, excel in achievement, and talkative.





# Know Yourself and Your Team Part III

By Coach Andrew Randolph

They tend to be very open about their need for results and can also show lack of sensitivity.

People who are **High I's** love making small talk and are very good at expressing their feelings. They can tend to exaggerate and be animated at some points, with a warm approach and friendly demeanor.

**High S's** are good listeners and are reserved with opinions. They can be patient, tolerant, curious, caring, cooperative, and agreeable.

Lastly, the **High C's** are task-oriented and very detailed. They want to know exactly what they need to do, and then for you to get out of the way so they can do it. They are typically orderly, meticulous, accurate, and time conscious.

The results and comparisons of these different parts of us are not exact, and we are not defined by just one of them. Not everyone who is a good listener has to be high in Influencing.

Not everyone who is patient has to be high in Steadiness.

Someone who is high in Dominance can be empathetic and approachable; someone who likes to set goals and focus on their tasks doesn't have to be high in Dominance or Consciousness.

The only thing a personality test like this one really does for you is break down and put into words what you already know about yourself. There's a reason you must take it honestly. No one else knows you better than you do, but sometimes the hard part is putting what you already know into words and explaining that to someone else. These are not meant to be excuses for how you act or think without having any repercussions or disagreements. Learn how to verbalize and explain these things about yourself and use it to first make yourself a better person, while in turn understanding those around you after seeing them in a new way.





# College Recruiting



## Recruiting Solutions: Dispelling the Myths of Junior College Volleyball

My name is Nick Cheronis and I am the head volleyball coach at Santa Fe College located in Gainesville, Florida. We are beginning the 9th year of a program that we built from the ground up; our first ever season was in 2014. Prior to this, I was the assistant at the University of Florida for 18 seasons, a high school coach for three seasons, and I am currently a club coach with Vision Volleyball Club, where I have been coaching the College Prep Team program. I tell you all of this because I come at the recruiting process from a variety of different perspectives. Rather than share advice on videos and recruiting tips, I am advocating an overlooked opportunity that exists... probably in your own hometown: Junior College.

One thing is for sure, junior college recruiting is a unique animal all in its own. The images that the words "junior college" conjures often makes recruiting potential student athletes and parents more challenging.

There are several objections that we have to overcome in order to have prospective student athletes even consider us as an option.

They are:

1. Academic Apprehensiveness
2. Athletic/Skill Development
3. Lower Level of Play
4. Going through the recruiting process again
5. Image

Let me address these one at a time because they are all legitimate concerns in people's minds when the suggestion of junior college volleyball is proposed.

### #1 Academic

**apprehensiveness** is the thought that the quality of education will not be as good as a four-year college. In some cases that is true, and in others that couldn't be further from the truth. The concept of community college was to develop as an educational training ground for members of specific communities to fill the specific job market needs of that community. For example, Gainesville has three major hospitals in a community of about 150,000 (not including UF students). Thus, Santa Fe is very strong in Health Sciences and has a nursing program that is more highly regarded than the University of Florida's.





# College Recruiting



## Recruiting Solutions: Dispelling the Myths of Junior College Volleyball (continued)

So, quality of education is completely dependent upon the student athlete's particular academic interest. In addition, most of the first two years of an academic career is spent in exploratory studies anyway. Most two-year colleges will have a variety of academic studies that students can use to discover their ultimate academic goals.

### #2 Athletic and skill

**development** is continual. This means that regardless of where a player goes to college, new skills will have to be acquired in order to compete at the next level. At four-year colleges that may mean a "red shirt" year in order to develop a player's potential. At the junior college level, incoming freshmen will need to contribute in some way on the floor very quickly. Freshman in our program develop higher level skills quickly and become more proficient faster.

At any college, the development of skills is ALWAYS dependent upon the teaching philosophy and abilities of the coaching staff. That can vary quite widely regardless of two year versus a four-year option.

**#3 Lower level of play** is one objection I get quite often. Most of those objections come from club coaches and directors, which in turn, come from players and parents. When I am approached about a specific player recommendation it is almost always followed with, *"She will need some work"*. Implying that her abilities are a match for a junior college.

The only way to really know if a potential player can play at ANY college is for the volleyball community at large to spend some time watching that team play. There is an extremely wide range of playing levels at every level, even NCAA Division I. Consider this: there are 335 NCAA Division I programs in the country... 64 make the NCAA tournament. Many other programs are competing at the level of those championship teams and competing at a high-level year in and year out.

However, without question, there are a number of Division I programs that are of similar abilities and level as the top Junior College programs. In order to understand and compare the level of play it's important to become familiar with the level by watching live.





# College Recruiting

## Recruiting Solutions: Dispelling the Myths of Junior College Volleyball (continued)

**#4 It is true that players will have to go through the recruiting process again.** That process for us begins in August of their sophomore season with early video and frank conversations between myself and the players.

The positive thing about going through the process with a 19-year-old is that she is MUCH more aware of the direction she wants to go than when she was 16. That three years of discovery and growing is probably one of the most enlightening of anyone's life. Think about it.... how much more were you aware about as a sophomore in college compared to a sophomore or junior in high school? When I am

working with this age group, it is much easier to guide and aid than when I am working with club kids. In addition, my Santa Fe players have a much clearer idea of what they want out of their experience as a student athlete than when they first come to us.

**#5 The image of a junior college or community college** is one of second-class education and poor level of play. I have addressed the reality of both perceptions already, but I have no argument for the real perceptions that exist in people's minds. It is important that clubs continue to share and promote former players who are competing at all levels, not only Division I, so that the





# College Recruiting

## Recruiting Solutions: Dispelling the Myths of Junior College Volleyball (continued)

athletes and parents stay open-minded through the recruiting process. I think they would find some pretty great and unique experiences waiting for them in junior college programs.

The two-year college model has existed in this country since 1901 with a long history of success. Many NFL, NBA, and MLB athletes have come from the junior college ranks.

When I counsel my Santa Fe and club players on choosing the correct college path, I always ask them to look for three things:

**1) Academic fit** – Not just academic disciplines, but distance from home, classroom sizes, academic support, size of campus, etc.

**2) Playing fit** – In other words, if all goes well, when will they play?

**3) Program fit** – Does the program win more than they lose or is there something specific going on in the program that would lead one to believe success is on its way.

There are nearly 300 junior college opportunities out there that could check all three of those boxes for thousands of prospective student athletes, and not just the ones who “*will need some work*”.



### About the Author

Nick Cheronis is the Head Women's Volleyball Coach at Santa Fe College in Gainesville, Florida.

Cheronis has accumulated a 109-49 record, including a trip to the NJCAA

Tournament in 2016 where the Saints finished fourth in the nation. In their inaugural season of 2014, Santa Fe won the Mid-Florida

Conference while capturing the Panhandle Conference title in 2018. The Saints have qualified and competed in the FCSAA Region 8

Tournament all five seasons.

Also in 2016, Coach Cheronis was named the AVCA Southeast Region Coach of the Year.





# College Recruiting



## 6 Facts About Junior College Volleyball and Why It Might Be a Smart Move

While many student-athletes focus on playing for a big-time Division 1 sports program, there are actually many reasons why junior college might make sense instead. Not only are junior colleges much more affordable and tend to be generous with athletic scholarships, but they also offer an opportunity to boost your grades before transferring to a bigger university. Additionally, many junior college rosters have talented volleyball players on them, and well-known programs like to recruit players from junior colleges because they know they're getting athletes that have college experience and can play right away.

There are more than 300 junior college women's volleyball programs in the US, and internal NCSA research shows that many volleyball coaches recruit from junior colleges. In fact, 77 percent of D1 coaches, 94 percent of D2 and NAIA coaches and 72 percent of D3 coaches recruit from junior colleges.

So, if you're interested in how the junior college recruiting process works, here are 6 facts to guide you, as well as how to take advantage.

How involved are junior college coaches in the recruiting process? In general, most families and student-athletes will find that junior college coaches are more involved in the [recruiting process](#) than high school coaches. Some programs want to be known as prominent feeder schools for bigger programs and help their athletes along the way. However, some do not. In the end, volleyball athletes and their families should be the ones who are the most active in outreach and communication with college coaches.

Is it a bad look for a junior college athlete to transfer out after one year?

The coaches at four-year schools don't think so! While junior college coaches would like to hold on to volleyball athletes for two years, coaches at four-year schools simply want to find the best talent they can get, whether that's a one-year JC player, two-year JC player, international player or four-year transfer player.

Do coaches from four-year schools recruit junior college players for starting roles?

Yes. Generally, coaches from four-year schools look at junior colleges for impact players that





# College Recruiting

## 6 Facts About Junior College Volleyball and Why It Might Be a Smart Move

can help them right now. With high school volleyball recruits, coaches have more time for them to develop and transition into the system. With junior college athletes, coaches want someone to compete for a starting position, get on the court and help win games right away.

When should junior college volleyball athletes start the recruiting process? Four-year college coaches are always recruiting, so it's smart to start outreach and communication in your first year of junior college. Some coaches may have a roster spot open in their sophomore class and may want to fill it with an experienced volleyball player. Some may have an opening right away. The important thing is to not wait until your second junior college season is done, as it may be too late to find a spot.

Is video important for getting recruited out of junior college? Yes. When scouting high school athletes, college coaches often like to attend high-profile tournaments where they can get a firsthand look at a lot of players. But many junior colleges are located in a rural area and may be difficult to travel to for college coaches.

That's why video is a critical part of the recruiting process for junior college athletes. Also, NCSA research shows that college coaches favor game highlights over skills footage but tend to evaluate through a mix of both.

Is the junior college search more targeted than in high school? Possibly. Student-athletes want to reach out to as many schools as they can but having one or two years of college classes under your belt tends to make the process more focused because of academic goals that are more defined. For example, if you're looking to major in Engineering and a university doesn't offer that major, it wouldn't make much sense to play there. Also, your athletic abilities should be more defined at this point, making it easier to tell which division level offers the right fit.

While there are still many more questions about the junior college recruiting process for volleyball, these should get you started off on the right foot. For more information, make sure to check out [NCSA's College Recruiting Guide](#) before setting up your [online recruiting profile](#).



### About the Author

This article is written by NCSA Athletic Recruiting. [Read more about NCSA.](#)





# COMMITMENTS TO DATE!

## CLASS OF 2023



**ANNIKLA BLAS-CEDENO**  
Pace University



**OLIVIA COOPER**  
College of San Mateo



**BREANNA DAVIS**  
Solano Community College



**KATE GIANG**  
Wellesley College



**MARLEY HARRISON**  
UC Irvine



**CAMRYN HIRST**  
Linfield University



**MADISON LOW**  
College of San Mateo



**AUNYKA URESTI**  
Messiah University



**OLIVIA WISEMAN**  
Rhodes College



*Congratulations!*

### WELL DONE!

With more announcements to come, we commend these athletes that have committed to play for their colleges or universities. We congratulate you and family for this momentous occasion.

We wish you continued success in all your future endeavors!

## CLASS OF 2024



**KARIS BISHOP**  
Cal Lutheran University



## 3 Fun Ways to Improve Your Beach Game

*Xceleration's indoor season is soon coming to an end, but do you think it's time to try something new? Registration for our beach camps is open and we invite you to take this opportunity to continue to work on your game... on sand! Whether you are new to Beach Volleyball, or an experienced sand player, the St. Mary's College staff, comprised of beach student-athletes, will work with all players with varying skill levels.*

*The next two articles are reprinted from **JVA Volleyball** and provide excellent introductions to the game.*

Technique and skill in any sport will only get you so far. To be at your best as a [beach volleyball](#) athlete or coach, it is essential to also enjoy your experience and have fun. That is usually the reason every athlete starts their beach volleyball journey, so why should it be any different when you are a veteran athlete or coach?

Todd Rogers, Founding Beach Nation Coach, Olympic Gold Medalist and now the Head Beach Coach at Cal Poly emphasizes the importance of having fun by saying

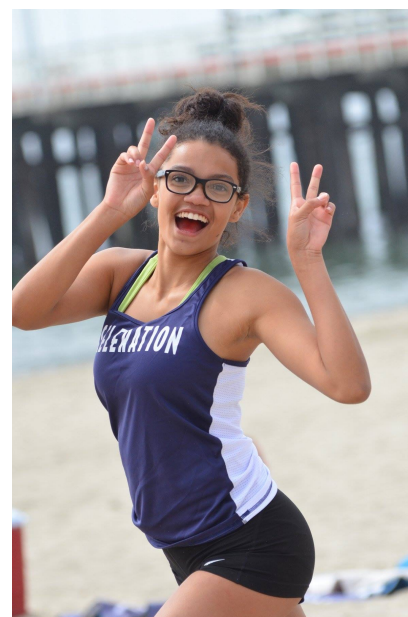
*"This puts into perspective what we all did at an earlier age. The why is because we loved the game and enjoyed challenging ourselves with what are kind of random touches, but what made us all better players. I still sometimes go outside in the yard and set the ball up and down to myself just because I enjoy challenging myself to see if I can still set a spinning ball cleanly.*

*It's not about competing with someone else...just competing with myself. It's not about working towards the Olympics.... but just because I can and because I enjoy it. At the heart of it is the pure essence of the game OR WHAT SHOULD BE THE REASON WHY ANYONE PLAYS."*

**Beach Nation shares 3 ways to improve your beach game while also having fun:**

### 1. Play as often as you can

Play with people older, younger better and not quite as good, every opportunity to play is an opportunity to improve your game. What is important is that you always stay focused, and when playing with players who are better than you, use the opportunity to learn and improve. When you are playing with players that are below your level it creates a fantastic opportunity for you to add more control to the game for them. Make sure your serves are placed where you want them to go.





### 3 Fun Ways to Improve Your Beach Game (continued)

Give your partner a better set to make it easier for him/her to place the ball. Help create a level of consistency that allows you to work hard and raise the level of the game on your side of the net. Every time you play you don't need a coach, you don't need to be seen, but you do need to play with focus, practice using your best technique and have some fun too.

## 2. Maximum touches

Bump and / or set the ball to yourself 50 times in a row. If you cannot do 50 yet, you will be surprised how quickly you will get better by doing this drill.

**Drill #1:** This is a drill that creates a lot of touches and helps you to develop a feel for the ball. Sitting on the floor (or a chair) get your platform out away from your body and keep bumping the ball. As you get better at this you can start to lift the ball higher or lower and work on that "feel" of the ball against your forearms. When you are done bumping work on your hands by hand setting. Keep your hands high and keep your wrists back. You want to keep your hands as soft as possible so that you never hear or feel a slap as your hands touch the ball.

As you get better with hand setting try and lift the ball higher and closer to the ceiling. Then when all this is done work on passing from one arm to the other, back and forth, left arm to right arm and then back again.

**Drill #2:** Putting a piece of tape up against a wall at 7'4 or at 8' and passing against it for 10- 15 minutes a few times a day is a lot of fun and will help you to develop a 'feel' for the ball coming off your forearms. This drill should always be led by moving your feet behind the ball, bending those knees and really working your platform so you eliminate arm swing (left with your legs not swing your arms).

Patty Dodd is now the Founder of MB Sand Volleyball club but before that she played professionally on the sand and before that she was an indoor player for UCLA. At 5'8 she an undersized outside hitter, but she worked hard and utilized the wall to get more touches.

As she says *"the wall shags for you and never yells at you!"*

As a way to advance the wall drill you can pass the ball off the wall and then bump the ball to yourself, set the ball to yourself and then bump it again off the wall. You can also work on setting balls off the wall and then progress that drill by setting it to yourself so you bump it back to yourself and then set it again against the wall (set, bump to your hand and set against wall).

You will get more touches in 20-30 minutes doing these two drills alone than most players get in two hours of practice.





### 3 Fun Ways to Improve Your Beach Game (continued)

#### 3. Take it outside!

Take the two drills above outside so that you can really work on getting your feet under the ball and then executing the skill. You can even do 10 minutes of these skill before you have a practice or incorporate some of these skills into your warm-up routine as well.

Beth Van Fleet is the Head Beach Volleyball Coach at Georgia State University. One of her favorite alone drills is the solo serve and pass-set progression. Using the same 7'4 or 8' line you marked on the wall for passing, you can work on serving. Take 6-12 steps from the wall and practice serving just above the line you drew. You can stand directly in front of the line or to either side to work on serving different angles. Serve a few sets of 10 and keep track of how many times your serve hits the wall just above the line. As you become more consistent, take a step back.

If you want to challenge yourself a little more (and have access to a slanted one-story roof – preferably with no windows below it), consider serving the ball onto the roof then running up to platform pass it when it rolls off the roof. You can pass to yourself, set to yourself, catch it and return to a serving distance to repeat.

Practice good technique in these drills every time you warm up and every time you play. Your game will improve because most good athletes are limited by bad technique. So, fix it here, fix that technique now, go have a ton of fun playing when and where you can, and get those alone touches. We play because it's fun, go be great and go have fun!

For more beach coaching education click [HERE](#). For related reading on beach volleyball click [HERE](#).



#### About the Author

Beach Nation is the beach education partner of the JVA. The world class coaching staff has unparalleled experience ranging from teaching the youngest athletes in club volleyball to winning the FIVB World Championships, winning an Olympic Gold Medal, and every level in between. At Beach Nation, you'll be coached by the top beach players, Olympic gold medalists, USA Beach National Team members, USA National Team Coaches and every level in between.





# 7 Keys to Blocking in Beach Volleyball

The blocker has a strategic role in beach that can be broken up into a few different segments. Think of playing defense as having two defenders, a front defender and a back defender. When the other team can play the ball in system one of the defenders plays at the net (front defender) while the other defender (rear defender) stays deep and works to play any ball that goes above or around the front defender. So, the job of a front defender is still being a defender, but a defender who is positioned at the net.

The front defender changes the way the attacker makes the ball cross the net either by blocking the ball or by eliminating angles and locations where the attacker can make the ball cross the net. Both results are good in that if the ball is blocked the point is won.

- If the front defender makes it more difficult for the attacker to make a good attack, then it gets easier for the back defender to make a good play.
- If the front defender takes away a strong angle that the attacker wants to hit the attacker may make a hitting error.

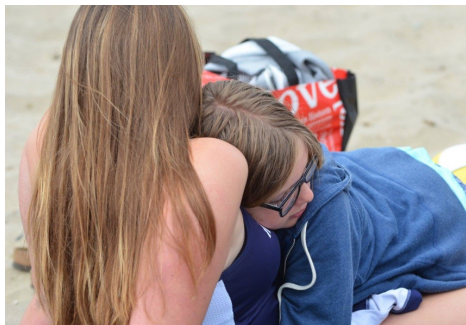
These are all good outcomes helped by the front defender.

The front defender can force the attacker to make a more obvious attack, and it gives the back defender an advantage. Also, when the set is too far off the net for the attacker to attack aggressively, the front defender will pull away from the net and become another back defender.

**Here are seven key strategies for blocking at the net from 3 time Olympian and Olympic Gold Medalist Phil Dalhausser:**

## #1 ATHLETIC STANCE

The first thing I do when I am at the net is make sure I am always in an athletic position. I am never standing straight up.





## 7 Keys to Blocking in Beach Volleyball (continued)

### #2 POSITIONING:

I like to line up with my head on the ball. What do I mean in regard to “head on the ball?” When the set is at it’s peak or apex, I want my head lined up on the ball directly across the net from where I think the hitter is going to contact the ball when it comes back in to play.

### #3 WATCH THE HITTER:

Once I am in a good position, I take my eyes off of the ball and watch the hitter. I am looking for any tells in his approach. For example, if he is coming full speed ahead chances are he is hitting the ball VERSUS SHOOTING THE BALL.

### #4 THE MOVE:

Now it is time to make my move. I take a mini step in the direction that I am blocking angle (cross court) or line. I try to time it and get as low as my 6’9 frame will allow so the hitter doesn’t see the move.

### #5 PENETRATION:

Next, I jump and with strong hands I reach over the net rather than putting them straight up. Reaching over the net is important because it cuts off angles for the hitter. I am also trying to keep my eyes open as long as possible before the hitter hits the ball. This allows me to see and react to the last second changes a hitter will make often times based upon my block.

### #6 DISTANCE:

Another tip is don’t jump too close to the net because it is harder to penetrate over the net. Plus you have a better chance of touching the net. I like to be about 3/4 of an arm length away from the net. Play with that distance to see where you are comfortable.

### #7 LANDING:

Lastly, land in an athletic position in case your partner gets a dig. If you do this, you will always be in a good position to make a move towards the ball.

Beach Nation is the official beach education partner of the JVA and is dedicated to raising the bar on teaching the game of beach volleyball to players and coaches. This is the first in our forthcoming series in improving your beach skills as a player and as a thinker. Beach Nation has assembled a team of volleyball coaches and elite players to use their knowledge of the game to help you, the player / coach to be better. Visit Beach Nation to see when we are coming to a location near you and to learn more about why you should choose Beach Nation as a resource to help you improve your game.

Photo credit: Craig Maccubbin Album



### About the Author

Phil Dalhausser is a 3 time Olympian and Olympic Gold Medalist (with Todd Rogers). He is considered one of the best blockers in the world today. Phil has 96 career wins with 56 AVP 1st places and 38 1st places on the FIVB Tour. He has been named as the best blocker in the world (FIVB) 7 times.







# 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.

“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.”

– **VolleyballUSA 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, 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.”

– **VolleyballUSA staff**





# Thank You, Friends and Families!



“

*Encourage, lift, and strengthen one another. For the positive energy spread to one will be felt by us all. For we are connected, one and all.*

— Deborah Day

”



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, Jul 28-29
- Sunday, Jul 30 (makeup session)
- Wednesday, Aug 2 (Signing Night)

## Pre-High School 12s-14s

- Friday-Saturday, Oct 13-14
- Sunday, Oct 15 (makeup session)
- Wednesday, Oct 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).





# 2023 Information Sheet

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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	
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
<b>Tournament Dates</b>	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
<b>Travel <sup>(1)</sup></b>	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players
<b>Lodging <sup>(2)</sup></b>	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players <sup>(3)</sup>

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

	USAV 18s Spring Columbus	JVA West Coast Long Beach	AAU Nationals Orlando	USAV Jr Nationals Chicago
<b>Tournament Dates</b>	Apr 28-30	May 27-29	June 18-29	Jun 14-17 Jun 28-Jul 6
<b>Travel <sup>(1)</sup></b>	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players
<b>Lodging <sup>(2)</sup></b>	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players <sup>(3)</sup>	Booked by Parents/Players	Booked by Parents/Players	Arranged by Xcel Booked by Parents/Players <sup>(3)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> 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.

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

<sup>(3)</sup> 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](#).



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## Tournament Waves and Venues



May 27-29: 14s-17s

JVA West Coast Cup



June 18-21: 15 Blue

June 22-25: 17 Blue

June 26-29: 16 Blue

50th AAU National Championships

