

6/72

Outrigger at the Volleyball Nationals

by Wally Young with Jerry Ober

The beginnings of the trip to the mainland actually got under way on April 17th with the highly successful Bouillabaisse party, at which 182 bottles of champagne contributed by Western Airlines, the "Champagne" Airline, were consumed by happy Outrigger members. The party was most successful as it provided needed funds for the trip.

All the logistics for the trip were arranged by team manager Wally Young who has years of experience in getting Outrigger teams to the mainland and back. The coaching was handled by Dennis Berg who in the course of the current season got more members interested in volleyball than anyone ever has before.

There were two teams sent to the Nationals, the AA and the Masters. In National tournament play, the Masters are referred to as the Seniors. The first group of players left Honolulu on Thursday, April 27th, arriving in Los Angeles on the 28th.

There were actually two sets of National Championships played on this trip. The first was the AAU Nationals, held at Costa Mesa College in Southern California, followed by the U.S.V.B.A. National Championships at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

The A.A.U. Nationals were a combination of "pool" play; two pools, 6 teams per pool, and a single elimination on the final day of the tournament. Our Senior (Master) division team commenced play at 4:00 p.m. the day of their arrival. Even with the long hours and time change, the Seniors did very well in their play. Their record for the games played was: (1) San Diego, OCC won two games straight; (2) Marines, OCC won two straight; (3) Balboa Bay Club, OCC lost two straight; (4) Los Angeles Sokol, OCC won two straight; (5) Long Beach, OCC lost two games straight. Outrigger won 6 and lost 4 in this pool and were the winners.

In the last day of play of the tournament playoffs, we won one and lost two to San Francisco Olympic Club,

which played the Balboa Bay Club in the finals. Outrigger took 3d and Balboa Bay Club was A.A.U. Champion.

The Seniors won a handsome bronze trophy, which is on display in the lobby trophy case.

In the AA play for the A.A.U. National Championship, the AA teams were comprised of 4 pools of five teams each. Outrigger's team started Friday morning, the 28th of April. The AA record for the games played was: (1) Long Beach, OCC won two games straight; (2) Balboa Bay Club, OCC lost two games straight; (3) New York West Side, OCC won two games straight; (4) Los Angeles Stars, OCC lost two games straight. Outrigger was eliminated from the finals and tied for 9th place overall in the tournament.

The games were played to sellout crowds at the excellent facilities of Costa Mesa College. While in the Los Angeles area, the family of player Tom Madison generously hosted the Outrigger AA team in their home on Balboa Island near Costa Mesa. The Masters were the guests for two nights of Gay Magee at her home in Long Beach. Gay is May Balding's sister. Gay and May also provided the cheering section for Outrigger, and were joined in Salt Lake City by Carol Sorrell, Ernie and Kaipo Young and Sharon and Tom Reiner.

Both teams once again boarded Western Airlines for their flight to Salt Lake City on Tuesday morning May 2nd for the U.S.V.B.A. Nationals. Both teams had carefully packed plenty of winter gear, the temperature prior to their arrival had been cold with 6" of snow only five days before. Upon their arrival it was 80 degrees plus, and beautiful spring weather was on hand even at the 4000' plus altitude.

The Tournament was held at the University of Utah's new athletic center, which is one of the most outstanding athletic facilities the writer has ever seen. It is a complex perhaps twice the size of the H.I.C. and probably holds in excess of 22,000 people.

There were five courts available for play and all were connected by an underground tunnel to the main amphitheater where the playoff matches were held.

The format for the U.S.V.B.A. Nationals was a regular double elimination play, rather than the pool system used at the A.A.U. The Outrigger Seniors began play on May 2nd and their record for the games played was: (1) Summit Y, OCC won two games straight; (2) Hobie Bakers, OCC won two games straight; (3) Balboa Bay Club, OCC won one and lost two.

The Seniors commenced play on Saturday May 6th in the losers bracket. They played four matches and their record for the series was: (1) Central Y of Honolulu, OCC won two games straight; (2) Hobie Bakers, OCC lost one, won two; (3) San Diego, OCC won two games straight.

Outrigger Seniors then appeared in the finals in the main amphitheater, to face Balboa Bay Club who had not played before that day. Outrigger lost two games before a crowd of perhaps 5000 people assembled for the playoffs. The Seniors took 2nd place and were presented beautiful individual medals.

The Outrigger AA team started play and their record for the series was: (1) Kenneth Allen of Chicago, OCC won two and lost one; (2) N.C.A.A. All Stars (the team that eliminated OCC in last year's Nationals), OCC won one and lost two.

In the losers bracket, the AA team scored the following: (1) Rubin's five, OCC won two games straight; (2) Dallas Y, OCC won two games straight; (3) Armed Forces All Stars, OCC won one, lost two.

In all, there was a total of 97 competing teams at Salt Lake City. The quality of play by all contestants was outstanding, this was especially noted by the United States Olympic Committee officials who were at the meets to make selections for the United States team to go to Munich, and the United States All Star team.

In the Senior's division, Tom Haine was selected first string All American. There could be no question in the mind of anyone who watched the tournament about the outstanding quality of Tom's play.

(See list of players, page 6)