

# OCC Boys Win Silver Title in Junior Olympics



Members of the Boys 17s crew.

By Bill Johnson

The Outrigger Boy's 17s volleyball team had a successful finish at the recently concluded Junior Olympic National Volleyball Championships in Reno, Nevada on July 15-18. Our boys won the Silver Championship, finishing 9th out of 40 teams in the 17s Division. Day one went well as we finished 3-0 in pool play beating a tough Fresno team in our last match. Advancing in the winners bracket on day two, we had our way with our first two opponents and then faced Mizuno Sports Performance of Chicago, one of the top clubs in the country. Splitting the first two games, we found ourselves down 7-11 in the third only to fight back to a 13-13 tie, then wound up losing 13-15.

Our 5-1 two day pool record allowed us to advance to the top 12 winners bracket. After playing so well on the first two days we hit a downer on day three and lost a tough match to Torrimar of Puerto Rico and played gamely but lost to the eventual tournament champion, Balboa Bay Club, which forced us into the Silver Division.

We showed up to play on day four which is a single elimination format. Giving our coaches heartburn, we lost every first game of the three matches, but dug deep and battled back to win all three contests.

In the Silver Championship match, we played Arcel Eagles of Puerto Rico, last year's 16 Open Champion, and trailing 9-10 in the third game we turned up the heat and took a 13-10 lead and coasted to a 15-11 win, finishing the tournament on a high note.

Playing against much bigger teams throughout the tournament, we found our success in good blocking, ball handling and the extraordinary play of outside hitter Kaimi Guerreiro who was selected to the All-American team.

Spreading the ball around to our hitters was our team captain and setter, Gary Johnson. Outside hitters Daniel Lam and Brian Zodrow displayed awesome power with their great leaping abilities and were ably backed up by big blocker Ryan Zabriskie and big hitter Max dewolff.

Middle blockers Kea Kometani, Justin Harris and Aka Beaumont ran our varied quick attack offense and made some great stuff blocks. Nate Jenkins came off the bench to give them some needed relief in the middle. Defensive specialists Matt Moore, Kekane Yuen and Tamahere McCabe provided us with steady passing, reliable serving and at times made some spectacular digs.

Coaches Rick Tune and Erik Pichel made some great adjustments during the matches adapting to the boys highs and lows. Bill Johnson, team rep, handled the myriad logistic problems of housing and travel and Moms Wendy Johnson and Maile Lam and Grandma Pilaii Johnson cheerfully washed jerseys, made sandwiches and cheered wildly from the sidelines.

## Mikasa Classic

In the Mikasa Boys Classic in Irvine, California, our boys team finished 13th out of 53 teams in this 18 and under tournament on June 23-26 which is the last competition for the very competitive Southern California Volleyball Association featuring the top teams from the

west coast as well as several top Midwest teams.

Our team went 5-1 in pool play on the first two days, only losing to Team LA 13-15 in the third game, a team which featured several Division 1 college bound players. Advancing to the final round of 16, we lost to Missouri Thunder and then lost a hard fought match to eventual tournament winner Saddleback Volleyball Club.

Our boys performed particularly well considering they were one to two years younger than their competitors, many of whom have secured scholarships to the top volleyball schools in the country. In fact, several of our boys have received favorable feed back from the many college coaches who scouted the tournament.

This competition was the final tune up for the Junior Olympics. Our Irvine participants included Daniel Lam, Gary Johnson, Kaimi Guerreiro, Nate Jenkins, Brian Zodrow, Matt Moore, Ryan Zabriskie, Tamahere McCabe, Kea Kometani and Aka Beaumont and the coaches were Steve Corbelli and Bill Johnson. The boys paid for this trip themselves and helped their cause by working two carwashes.

We want to thank OCC General Manager John Rader for his unfailing support throughout the year and especially thank the Outrigger for its financial assistance that carried us from January to July.

Finally we want to thank the players and parents who dedicated themselves to a successful season in which we also took a second at the Haili Men's Tournament.

