

# OCC 50's Repeat as USVBA Champions

By T. C. Gray

The OCC 50's team was the defending USVBA National Tournament Champion in the 50's division and fulfilled their destiny this year with a repeat championship winning effort. The team was composed of players 50 and over. The team members that competed in Columbus were Randy Shaw, Jon Stanley, Chris Crabb, Charlie Jenkins, Bill Johnson, Jim Bukes, Ilmar Tarikas, Robin Durand and Chris McLachlin.

Tom Madison trained the entire season with the team, but was unable to travel with the team. He was diagnosed with cancer in April, had surgery and was undergoing radiation treatment. Tom was in the hearts and prayers of the players competing in the national championships this year.

His life challenge is a reminder to all of us to take stock in what is important. The 50's and 40's rallied around Tom's battle. This year's championship run was for Tom. Get well soon, Tom.

The OCC 50's team was the defending champion in the Men's 50 division at Columbus, Ohio. They won the Division again this year without losing a game. There were 28 teams from across the USA competing in the Men's 50 division in four pools of seven teams.

The OCC 50's started the tournament as the first seed in their pool and the division. They finished first in their pool with a match record of 6-0 and a game record of 12-0. The team dominated through pool play only giving up 19 points or less per game. This earned a first seed overall for the double elimination format after pool play.

The OCC 50's continued to cruise through the early rounds of the double elimination tournament. They were pushed by Roof 50's of Northridge, CA in the semi-finals with scores of 25-20 and 25-22. The OCC 50's faced King's Mountain Fog of Woodside, CA the number two seed in the finals of the winners and again in the championship match. The OCC 50's won the national championship in two games 25-21 and 25-22. The medal winning teams in the Men's 50 Division were:

- 1st OCC 50s
- 2nd King's Mountain Fog of Woodside CA
- 3rd Roof 50's of Northridge CA

Charlie Jenkins was named Most Valuable Player. Jon Stanley, Chris Crabb and Randy Shaw were named to the all-tournament team.

## Men's 40's

The OCC 40's arrived in Columbus Ohio with eight players. Due to a last minute injury, John Zabriskie was unable to travel with the team. Columbus may have been wet and cold outside but the play inside the convention center was hot and intense.

The short-handed OCC 40's team played a very competitive tournament in the new rally score format. There were 18 teams from across the USA competing in the Men's 40 division in three pools of six teams. The OCC 40's started the tournament as the second seed in their six-team pool. They finished first in their pool with a match record of 5-0 and a game record of 10-1. This earned a second seed overall for the double elimination format after pool play.

The team did have some tough luck during pool play. Tim Walston sustained a calf muscle injury the first day of pool play. This prevented Tim from participating in front row action for the rest of the tournament. Tim played a courageous back row game through the end of the tournament.

Tim's injury reduced the line-up options for the team and resulted in other players playing without the opportunity to rest. This became a factor down the stretch as the other top tier teams travel with deep rosters of up to 15 players. This combined with the non-forgiving rally score format made comebacks almost impossible.

OCC 40's finished the tournament in 4th place behind the medal winning teams: RB Enterprises/TAC Depot.com, E's Club-40, and Eli's of Philadelphia, PA.

OCC 40's lost to the two teams that finished first and second in the division. The first loss was to RB Enterprises/TAC Depot.com of Huntington Beach, CA in three games 25-18, 20-25 and 15-11. The second loss was to E's Club-40 of

Orange, CA in two games 31-29 and 25-20. The first game was a thriller with both teams swinging for the game in the rally score format. Unfortunately OCC 40's came up short in the first game and were playing on fumes in the second.

The Men's 40's division all-tournament team did not include any OCC 40 players. The OCC 40 team played with the heart of a champion behind the inspirational play and leadership of Ralph Smith, Marc Haine, and Jay Anderson.

Ralph Smith, setter, was the quarterback for the offense. Marc Haine, normally an opposite hitter, played most of the tournament as a swing hitter along with Jay Anderson. Both played without fear in bombing and tooling the block on the outside.

Jon Andersen and Bill Lawson were the middle attackers who had to close the block every time the last three days of the tournament. They were critical to setting up the defense by slowing down the opposing team attack. Barney Robinson settled into the opposite position and was the right side weapon to balance out the attack. TC Gray and Tim Walston were utility players and provided back-row defense and passing. The team members on the 2000 OCC 40's team were Marc Haine, Jon Andersen, Ralph Smith, Jay Anderson, Tim Walston, Barney Robinson, Bill Lawson, T.C. Gray.

Thank you to Marc Haine, Jon Andersen and Randy Shaw for helping with this summary. I would like to thank the players and coaches who worked hard to achieve the results demonstrated at the USVBA National Championship Tournament. Thanks to each of you for exemplary representation of the OCC on and off the court. On behalf of the Volleyball Committee, the players and coaches I would like to thank all the family and friends who came to support the teams. A special mahalo to the players who have trained and practiced during the 2000 season but didn't travel with the teams. Your efforts contributed to the tournament success.



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