

Outrigger Boys 14's Volleyball Team Perseveres at Junior Nationals in Denver

By Bill Johnson

Coach Kanoa Ostrem traveled with a large team of 13 boys to Denver for the Junior National Volleyball Tournament on July 5-8. His goals were to ensure maximum participation and to remain competitive with this predominantly inexperienced team.

Day one of the four day competition proved to be a quick initiation into the rigors of national volleyball as we drew two of the top 10 teams. We struggled against a Laguna Beach team and then played gamely with the number one seed Puerto Rico, losing only 15-9 in the second game.

During the play of day two, the boys showed improvement as they adjusted to the altitude. Passing and serving well, they pushed two excellent teams to rally scoring and then finally beat a bigger Synergy Club team in convincing fashion.

Day three we played our best volleyball. Playing a little different format, we won four out of the six games we played, as we added good defense and consistent hitting to our passing and serving game.

Day four was a single elimination format, and unfortunately we drew a tough Alberta,

Canada team. We started off slow in game one, but in game two the lead changed many times before Alberta eked out a victory over our hustling OCC boys.

Coach Kanoa wanted to give all the boys the experience of playing in a national tournament with the hope that the more dedicated boys will return next year to field more competitive teams at the 14's and 16's level. Many of the boys showed great improvement in skills and court sense as the tournament progressed, and in this respect the trip was a great success.

Our team consisted of three sixth graders, outside hitters Max DeWolf and JP Loui, and setter/back row specialist, Makena Carr. Our seventh graders included co-captain setter Gary

Members of the Boys 14 team were, front, Max DeWolf, Makena Carr. Sitting, Jay Loui, Alex Town, Kai Young, Matt Cohn, Gary Johnson, Brian Cohn. Standing, Coach Kanoa Ostrem, Aka Beaumont, Arist DeWolf, Doug Hiller Jr., Shane Kingman. Not pictured: Billy Lawson.



Johnson, outside hitters Alex Town, Billy Lawson, Brian Cohn and setter Matt Cohn. Our eighth grade players included co-captain-opposite hitter Arist DeWolf, outside hitter Kai Young and middle blockers Doug Hiller Jr., Aka Beaumont, and Shane Kingman.

Our heroic team moms who worked so hard for all of us included Connie Young, Connie Carr and Bonnie Town and our driver dads consisted of Steve Loui, Doug Hiller Sr. and Bill Johnson.

We want to send a big mahalo to the Outrigger Canoe Club for generously providing approximately half the expenses of our trip and supporting us throughout the season. 🙏