

Outrigger 18's Volleyball Takes San Jose by Storm Win Silver Medals at Junior Olympics

By Scott Rigg

January

I received a call from Doug Ostrem informing me that the OCC Boys' 18's volleyball team had been approved for funding to travel and compete in the Junior Olympics in San Jose, Calif. in early July.

He named off a number of talented, enthusiastic, young players, all of whom have been raised on the OCC "baby courts." As the conversation progresses, the reason for the call becomes evident—they are coachless. I accept the offer.

February/April

The team trains one night a week, entering local tournaments on weekends. We are very big at the net, yet lack focus, ball control and consistency. By the end of April we are still a far cry from being even a top 20 team in the highly competitive 18 and under division.

May/June

We increase training to three nights a week. By the end of June we are starting to jell. The boys are beginning to realize what it will take in order to be competitive at the

Junior Olympics. We decide our short term goal will be to reach the Gold division in San Jose.

July 4 - 7

Junior Olympics at San Jose Convention Center. . . 96 teams . . . one pool per day. . . must place 1st or 2nd in each pool in order to have an opportunity to qualify for Gold division (top 7) . . . teams are all huge and very talented. . . most favored teams contain 2-3 top college recruits . . . time to "step up to the line."

Day 1

The boys have come ready to play, dismantling all teams in pool 1. . . advance to day 2 with undefeated record . . . middle attackers Clay Stanley and Koa Ostrem are unstoppable. . . our passing is excellent. . . we look very focused. . . great start.

Day 2

Another undefeated day in the gym. . . Outrigger "hammers" an excellent Nike team from San Jose, silencing many boisterous local fans in the process . . . our intensity and confidence are on the rise. . . we are turning some heads . . . on to the final 14.

Day 3

Our opponents begin to "key" on Clay and Koa . . . setter Dylan Fern wisely chooses to "go to the poles" and begins to set outside hitters Milo Haneberg, Scott Wong, Craig Gamble, and Dominic Griffin . . . with "one on one" situations on the outside, our offense continues to roll. . . we arrive undefeated to our gold qualification match against an all-star team from Manitoba . . . OCC is "on fire" against the Canadians . . . the match is not even close. . . on to the final seven. . . the word is out Outrigger is the team to beat.

Day 4

The final day sees us entered in a seven team double elimination tournament. . . we win our first match handily. . . we now face Sports Performance, the "Cadillac" of Midwest volleyball . . . game one is a disaster. . . a new line-up and incredible efforts by Chris Johnstone, Nate Jim, and Lindsey Breeden result in "nail-biter" wins in games two and three . . . an unbelievable comeback. . . on to face Balboa Bay Club, the Southern California "powerhouse" . . .

another three game thriller won by OCC . . . on to the finals against a very "stacked" Los Angeles Athletic Club team . . . the boys from Hawaii play with heart but fall in straight sets. . . LAAC is too much for us . . . Scott Wong makes first team and Dylan Fern second team All-American. . . OCC leaves the gym on "cloud nine". . . these kids are second in the nation and have blown away many of the tournament favorites, finishing with a 24-6 record. . . everybody starts thinking tradewinds . . . lucky we live Hawaii . . . let's go home.

Despite all-star selections, the success of the OCC 18's was surely a ten man effort. . . no "weak links" on or off the court. I can't say enough about this group's heart . . . they were truly awesome, and a class act, too.

Mahalo to the Outrigger Canoe Club and team parents for all your support. A special thanks to Ralph Smith for coming over from Santa Cruz to help coach and scout. We would not have gone as far without his efforts. Keep your eyes open for these junior players in years to come. ☺



The OCC Boys 18 volleyball team won Silver Medals at the Junior Olympics. Front, Dylan Fern and Chris Johnstone with the trophy. Standing, Craig Gamble, Dominic Griffin, Scott Wong, Clay Stanley, Koa Ostrem, Milo Haneberg, Lindsey Breeden, Nate Jim, and Coach Scott Rigg.

Duke VolleyBall

Don't forget to sign up
for the
Duke Kahanamoku State
Volleyball
Championships
at the Club
on September 7-8.