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### Balboa Bay, SCVC headline 17s Division

The 17s finalists each had reason to celebrate Sunday and it had nothing to do with bids.

Both Balboa Bay and SCVC had those wrapped up on Day 2 before meeting up in the championship match, the tournament trophy going to Balboa Bay in three games, 25-17, 18-25, 15-11, during the SCVA Boys Invitational at the ASC.

At the same time, SCVC reached the finals after downing the five-time gold medalist Ka Ulukoa in three games, 12-25, 27-25, 15-12, in the semis. It's believed to be the first time anyone has defeated the Hawai'i club.

It was also the first meeting between the top-two 17s teams in the SCVA points standings this season. Balboa Bay is No. 10 and SCVC No. 11.

SCVC downed MB Surf in two, 25-15, 25-23, in the quarterfinals to begin its gold-bracket plight. Balboa Bay, the No. 1 overall seed, started the day by sweeping High Line, 25-21, 25-22, before outlasting MVVC in three, 25-19, 25-27, 15-9, in the semis.

In the finals, Balboa Bay delivered a strong Game 1 performance before SCVC did the same in Game 2. The third game was much closer until Balboa Bay pulled away at the end.

Bobby Nolan's kill tied the score at 6 for SCVC. Balboa Bay took a 7-6 lead on Jack Wyett's kill, then extended it to 8-6 on Eric Matheis' block.

SCVC answered with a 3-0 run, starting with Vinny Pizzuti's roll shot. Two points later Pizzuti put away another ball and it was 9-8.

Balboa Bay scored the next two points on kills by Lucas Lamont and Brenden Sander and it was 10-9. A few plays later, Lamont scored again to make it 11-10.

SCVC tied it at 11 on Pizzuti's right-side connection. However, Balboa Bay scored the next four points to close it out. Three of them came off SCVC errors with a Mackennon Egan and Sander combining on a block to make it 13-11.

It was Sander's back-row kill off the block that gave Balboa Bay set point at 24-16 in Game 1.

The Invitational is always about the bids and which team can bring home the trophy, but whenever Ka Ulukoa is in the field the subplot thickens.

Baja managed to take the opening game off Ka Ulukoa in last year's 16s Division final at the Invitational before Ka Ulukoa rallied back to win in three. It would eventually finish the season with its fifth consecutive gold medal.

Ka Ulukoa swept SCVC, 25-17, 25-16, during Junior Nationals in July, with many of the same players on

SCVC's roster that were present Sunday.

However, after the opening game it looked like anything but a victory for SCVC, which then fell behind in Game 2 before fighting back and forcing a third set.

Connor Inlow's kill put SCVC up 11-9 in Game 3, but Ka scored two straight to tie it at 11. Matt Reilly's kill put SCVC back ahead, 12-11.

Inlow connected from the right side and it was 13-11. Reilly followed with another kill and the margin was up to 14-11. Two plays later Inlow's right-side kill set off a massive celebration.

SCVC hadn't lost to a 17s team this season prior to falling to Balboa Bay in the final.

Balboa Bay's only loss to a 17s team came to High Line at the last points tourney, but Balboa Bay beat High Line for the second time this season with a sweep in the quarterfinals.

by Chris Tobolski - Volleyballnow.net

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