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Balboa Bay Volleyball Club wins two national crowns

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Charlie Brande

The Balboa Bay Volleyball Club returned from the 2000 Junior National Championships in Reno with some great success.

While the outstanding seasons that the local high school teams enjoyed would indicate that the Balboa Bay teams should be very strong, the teams at the Junior Nationals are very physically gifted.

The teams from Puerto Rico, the Midwest and Hawaii add excitement and

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competition at the national event.

The Balboa Bay 18 Redsand won the national championship with a two-game sweep of Surf City from Huntington Beach.

Coach Travis Turner orchestrated his team's success throughout the tournament, escaping a couple of elimination possibilities to emerge as the national champions.

Corona del Mar's Kevin Hansen, who is on his way to play collegiately at Stanford, was voted the Most Valuable Player of the tournament.

CdM teammate Greg Stampley (a Southern California recruit) was also on the all-tournament team, along with future UCI player Kyle Martin, who prepped at El Toro High School.

Newport Harbor's Billy Clayton (another future Stanford player) was a major factor as he returned to the middle blocking position that he had

played during his junior season at Harbor.

Always a team player, the move allowed Balboa Bay to put its best athletes on the floor at the same time.

Balboa Bay's 17 Redsand team also won the national championship in their age division. With a thrilling three-game victory over Surf City, Coach John Hawks' Balboa Bay team put things together at the right time to secure the championship.

Led by Most Valuable Player Blake Robinson, who plays at Santa Margarita, and Newport Harbor's Blake Tippett, who was an all-tournament selection, they had to come from behind in the final game to win. CdM's Charlie Alshuler and Evan Burden were also key players for Balboa.

The Balboa Bay 16 Redsand finished third in its division. Coach Rich Polk had his team playing their best at the end. Coach Darren Utterback's Balboa Bay 16 Blue team finished third in the 16 club division. They were led by all-tournament selection Kyle Desmet.

These successes are the reward for years of hard work. The nationally renowned tradition for success of the Balboa Bay Volleyball Club has been built on 25 years of support in our community. With the great success at the high schools, coupled with the collegiate opportunities, the Newport-Mesa athletic community should be very proud.

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