

Inland Sports Volleyball Team Preview: Ontario Christian Lady Knights

Head Coach: Paige Liebhart (11th year)

Career Record: 168-94 Overall, 88-48 Christian ('09) & Ambassador ('10-present) Leagues

Last Year: 39-2 Overall, 14-0 Ambassador League (CIF-SS D5 & State D3 champions, Ambassador League champs)

Defending Tournament Champs at: REV & Ayala

Last volleyball season only three teams from our area made it to the season's final week with two reaching championship weekend. Ontario Christian played in Queens Court on the season's unofficial opening weekend & advanced all the way to 2018's final day making their path to the titles roughly three months. I had the chance via email to catch up with Lady Knights seniors Peyton Tazelaar, Jenna Holmes, Selena Balderas, and Giselle Vogel two weeks before they return to action at the 2019 Queens Court tournament in Anaheim. We get a look at their record setting year through the players eyes & also look ahead to the coming season.

1. Does anyone have a funny story in traveling to or from either championship gameday?

>>For Selena Balderas one of the funniest things was watching some of their fan base walk into the gym in green and gold bodysuits & tutus. Jenna Holmes, Peyton Tazelaar, and Giselle Vogel all pointed to the police escort they received en route to their state final match while in a party bus and seeing traffic stop while going thru intersections.

2. Being club players you all probably didn't have a lot of time between the end of your HS season and that first tournament weekend. When did you finally get a chance to sit down and reflect on everything that the Lady Knights accomplished in 2018?

GV>>I took time to reflect on everything right after the final match. It was kind of crazy that our season went on for so long. There was so much to look back on and very little time to do it with club right around the corner.

SB>>I had less than a month between the two. We pretty much reflected on everything throughout the school year. Our banner reveal was even on the last day of school and I'm still in awe of everything we did last year.

JH>>We had practically no time between the final HS match and club season starting. I took time to reflect on our season in the days following that CIF-State final and even now it's remarkable to think about what we accomplished.

PT>>For me it was during the middle of our club season when I realized what we had done last season.

3. What was your favorite post-championship event?

>>For Jenna Holmes, Peyton Tazelaar, and Giselle Vogel it was missing class time to pick up their championship rings. However Selena Balderas pointed to the post match party hosted by Dave & Wendy Tazelaar as her favorite remarking "It was really fun because most of our fans went and I felt kind of famous."

4. Is the pressure off now that you've won that elusive title or do you now face a different kind of pressure in trying to follow it up with another solid campaign? Describe what the environment is like in practice thus far.....

SB>>I think there was a different kind of pressure last year vs this year. In 2018 it was about turning a dream into reality but now we know what we are capable of. Our goals are the same but we're going to have to find an identity and have been working hard in practice to do just that.

PT>>It's definitely there this year. We have to follow up an almost perfect season from 2018 however our expectations are still the same as always: To win another Ambassador League title & make a deep run in CIF-SS division 3 if not return to championship weekend.

JH>>The pressure is less than last season because we were more favored to win. Success is now more of an expectation and we are working hard every practice to make sure that's a reality again this year.

GV>>To me it's more intense this year since we've won that title but in practice that's not our focus. We're locked in on doing the things necessary for a repeat performance in 2019.

5. After you got thru St. Anthony's and into the finals did you get any messages from players on other Ambassador League teams? Was there an opportunity to talk to past Ambassador League participants who had reached the title game (Woodcrest Christian, Notre Dame or Loma Linda Academy)?

>>Selena Balderas had the opportunity to speak with a player from Loma Linda Academy who won the division 6 title in 2017 and hear about what it was like to play on that stage.

>>Peyton Tazelaar said "I remember going thru that handshake line at St. Anthony's and Saints players/coaches telling us to go out next weekend and win it all."

6. Make the case for Ontario Christian having the best collection of restaurants within walking distance of campus within Southern California...

When I used to visit Ontario Christian as the basketball & volleyball scorer for Woodcrest Christian I remember being jealous at the fast food within walking distance of campus. As a visiting team you didn't even have to board your bus because of the number of places within walking distance. In & Out was something the Lady Knights immediately pointed to when

answering this question with Holmes remarking "When you think of California fast food what do you think of? In & Out which we have right next to campus alongside Waba Grill, Starbucks, and my favorite Taco Bell." Balderas added "Visiting teams are often jealous of the fact that we have an In & Out right next door. I often find myself grabbing a coffee or tea from Starbucks on my way to school."

7. When the year ends how do you want to be remembered in the annals of Ontario Christian volleyball history?

JH>>I want to be remembered as a team player who not only added to her team mentally but physically.

PT>>I want to be remembered as a good teammate and friend when I leave Ontario Christian.

GV>>I want to be remembered as a good teammate who worked hard at everything when I leave here.

SB>>I want to be remembered as one of the best liberos to go thru Ontario Christian as well as a hard worker and a good leader.

8. What has college recruiting been like for you all? Share something you've learned during the process even if you haven't committed anywhere...

SB>>College recruiting is definitely stressful because there are so many aspects to finding the perfect school for you. I've learned that you have to be more than a volleyball player. You have to show personality and be yourself when talking with coaches and playing in front of them.

JH>>I've learned how to tell the difference between coaches who are genuinely interested in you playing for them & those who just wanted you to attend their camp.

PT>>College recruiting is **Stressful** however everything works out and I was able to find a home at UC Santa Cruz.

GV>>I felt like I was on one long rollercoaster ride but I'm happy to have found a place to play at Baylor.

Getting to know the Champs: Jenna Holmes

1. Coldstone, Baskin Robbins, or Creamistry? **Coldstone**
2. Karaoke go to? **I'd never do Karaoke but if I did "Don't Stop Me Now" by Queen**
3. Best & Worst subjects in school? **Best>>Math & Worst>> History**
4. Celebrity Crush? **Dacre Montgomery**
5. Favorite Movie? **Either Meet the Parents or Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire**
6. Favorite College volleyball venue in SoCal? **I don't know**

7. Guilty shopping pleasure? **Clothes I know I don't need**
8. Dream country to play in internationally? **I wouldn't want to play internationally**
9. Favorite Amusement Park & Roller Coaster? **Six Flags, Twisted Colossus**
10. First or Last to ref? **First**
11. Dream Car? **Tesla**
12. Favorite city you've been to for Girls JNC? **Indianapolis**
13. Where are your state & section championship rings? **We combined them into one which is in my room.**
14. Driver or Passenger? **Driver**
15. Aisle or Window? **Aisle**

Getting to know the Champs: Peyton Tazelaar

1. Coldstone, Baskin Robbins, or Creamistry? **Creamistry...best ice cream hands down**
2. Karaoke go to? **We Will Rock You or Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen**
3. Best & Worst subjects in school? **Best>> Math & Worst>> English**
4. Celebrity Crush? **Liam Hemsworth**
5. Favorite Movie? **Harry Potter & Hunger Games**
6. Favorite College Volleyball venue in SoCal? **Pauley Pavilion at UCLA**
7. Guilty Shopping Pleasure? **LuLuLemon**
8. Dream Country to play in internationally? **I don't want to play internationally**
9. Favorite Amusement Park & Roller Coaster? **Gotta love Six Flags**
10. First or Last to ref? **Definitely first to ref.....**
11. Dream Car? **Range Rover or Mercedes**
12. Favorite city you've been to for Girls JNC? **Indianapolis**
13. Where are your section & state championship rings? **Funny story here...my ring was ordered way too big and it doesn't fit me so my mom wears it.**
14. Driver or Passenger? **Driver**
15. Aisle or Window? **Window**

Getting to know the Champs: Giselle Vogel

1. Coldstone, Baskin Robbins, or Creamistry? **Creamistry**
2. Karaoke go to? **Don't Stop Believin** (Scott Brummel if you read this I hope it puts a smile on your face)
3. Best & worst subjects in school? **Best>>US History & Worst>>Math**
4. Celebrity crush? **Chris Hemsworth**
5. Favorite movie? **Any Marvel Movie**
6. Favorite college volleyball venue in SoCal? **Galen Center (USC)**
7. Guilty Shopping Pleasure? **LuLuLemon**
8. Dream country to play in internationally? **Italy**
9. Favorite Amusement Park & Roller Coaster? **Not a big roller coaster person**
10. First or last to ref? **First**
11. Dream car? **Volvo XC 60**
12. Favorite city you've been to for Girls JNC? **Dallas, Texas**

13. Where are your section and state championship rings? **On my desk at home**
14. Driver or Passenger? **Passenger**
15. Aisle or Window? **Aisle**

Getting to know the Champs: Selena Balderas

1. Coldstone, Baskin Robbins, or Creamistry? **Coldstone**
2. Karaoke go to? **We are a Family**
3. Best & worst subjects in school? **Best>> Math & Anatomy, Worst>> English**
4. Celebrity crush? **Corey Seager**
5. Favorite movie? **Up**
6. Favorite college volleyball venue in SoCal? **The Pyramid @ Long Beach State**
7. Guilty Shopping Pleasure? **Shoes**
8. Dream country to play in internationally? **Italy**
9. Favorite Amusement Park & Roller Coaster? **Disneyland & Silver Bullet**
10. First or last to ref? **First**
11. Dream car? **BMW 428i**
12. Favorite city you've been to for Girls JNC? **Dallas, Texas**
13. Where are your section and state championship rings? **On my desk in my room**
14. Driver or Passenger? **Passenger**
15. Aisle or Window? **Window**