

Rivals U18 girls were surprised and excited to receive the American Bid to the U18 USA Nationals held in Dallas, TX. After a 3rd place win in the bid tournament and a finish at PNQ that did not win them a bid, the team thought they were out of the running to represent the Evergreen Region in the 2017 Junior Nationals. But after 2nd place bid winner, Shockwave, won a bid at PNQ, their bid was then passed down to the Rivals U18 team just a few short weeks before Nationals. After very short consideration, the team decided to jump at the chance to go. Most of the Rivals players had attended a Nationals tournament with their previous teams and knew that this was something they didn't want to pass up.



The team was made up of girls from all over Spokane and Idaho. Players included, Sydney Johnson (CV, 2017) Amanda Chan (Mead, 2017) Allie Williams (CDA 2017) Maddie West and Ellie Rivard (G-Prep, 2017) Miahna Waters and Katie Maher (Mt. Spokane, 2018), and Hanna Hansen (Freeman, 2018.) Although these girls came from all over, they played well as a team.

On the first day of play, we had PM wave which allowed the girls to get used to the time difference and get a little extra sleep. They lost their first match to a strong defensive team, then went on to win the next two matches including earning a huge victory over one of the big Texas teams. The pool ended with a 3-way tie forcing them into a playoff match for second place against the team they had previously lost to. One game to 25, and Rivals were victorious. This victory pushed the team into the top tier of pools Saturday.

After a great first day outcome, we were pushed to the morning wave. So we finished play around 9 pm Friday and had to get back to the rooms for rest so that we could be back at the gym 7 am the next morning. After two tough losses on Saturday morning, to teams that ended up finishing in the top 8, the girls were in a predicament. Win the third match and get into the Bronze bracket, or lose and end up finishing in a flight. The girls knew what they wanted.



They went out and played their hearts out beating a Hawaiian team to push them into the Bronze bracket. The girls really came together in this game, holding nothing back so they could finish where they wanted to.

Sunday started out against a strong Southern California team, the girls fought hard and ended the 3 set match with a win. We were all pretty excited going into the final match of the day but were unable to pull out a win. Over all, the girls had a 5-4 record which we were all pretty proud of. Many of the players ended their volleyball career with a pretty amazing experience.



Visiting Dallas was also a highlight of the experience. They got to see where Kennedy was shot, ride the Longhorns in the cemetery/park and try some pretty amazing Texas BBQ. What a great experience that the girls and parents will have memories of for a lifetime.

