



Stingray's

record (13-6 overall / 3-4 Prep League)

Volleyball Weekly Recap

Week #8 - Wed-Apr 29th @ Chadwick // Fri-May 1st vs Pacifica Christian (last home game)

Chadwick – after watching CIF #3 **Chadwick** warm-up coach 'B' felt the **Stingrays** had a chance to surprise the **Dolphins** on their home court. But as often happens the warm-up session revealed little about how strong Chadwick is once the whistle blows. And frankly put, **PacLu** just wasn't up to the task on Wednesday, offering little resistance to the Dolphins offense, in fact gifting several points via unforced errors. Chadwick is not a team that makes many errors, and they quickly put away a team that turns it over with free balls, lollipop serves and over passing. One fan said the **Rays** looked "nervous", another said "tight", but most agreed if they'd played like that each game the end result might have been different. Senior captain **Josh Sanchez** (4 kills; 1 ace; 4 blks; 4 digs) played well in each set, but really caught fire in #3, stuff blocking three straight spikes and finally throwing the momentum to the **Rays** side of the court. And though they finished strong, they also proved once and for all - you cannot give a good team a big lead and expect to come back. Chadwick went on to beat **Flintridge Prep** 3-1 on Friday, giving them sole possession of 1st place in the **Prep League** and a probable bye in the first round of the play-offs as a top seed. The Flintridge will go in as the 2nd place rep from the Prep League, and Pacific Lutheran has locked-up the 3rd place spot.

Pacifica Christian – competing without a league as a freelance team in Div IV **Pacifica** arrived at Calvary Assembly with less than a full complement of boys, due to sickness, but still loaded with the same athletic players that had taken the **Stingrays** basketball team by the neck the past two seasons. So the **Rays** had plenty of incentive to play well, even though the match had no bearing on their chances of making the CIF play-offs. The **Rays** had achieved that goal by beating **Rio Hondo Prep** last week. It was the **Seawolves** opportunity for the play-offs that was on the line, and after the 1st set ended they looked like they had mailed in the result. **PacLu** came out fast to take big leads early in the 1st set 8-3; 11-4 and 14-6. That cushion was more than enough for the **Stingrays** to carry the set to a surprising finish at 25-12. **Pacifica** evidently heeded coach Lee's remarks in set #2 as their offense and defense began to stir. The **Rays** were now in a battle, and their go to hitters – **Josh Sanchez** (21 kills; 1 blk; 7 digs) and **Kordell Faatolo** (9 kills; 2 aces; 1 blk; 9 digs), were more than up to the task. Sr-**Corey Maulupe** played a particularly inspired match with outstanding net play, service and setting, often off of miscued passes from the back row (5 kills; 3 aces; 2 blks; 7 digs; 39 assists). First year player **Marcus Staton** played front row opposite to DS-**Jared Riva**, and managed to produce his best match of the season with several block touches, near stuffs, net digs and sound defense on the **Stingrays** right side. Sophomore outside hitter **Nick Crandall** (4 kills; 7 digs) also played a solid match by anchoring the **Rays** left-side block and off-blocker defense, specific skills he has been working hard on in practice. The match went back-and-forth in sets #2, 3 and 4 with the **Stingrays** taking the 2nd – 25-21, the **Seawolves** returning the favor in the 3rd – 21-25; and the 4th set playing the 'dog fight' – 23-25. So here we were again in a winner-take-all 5th set scenario. In the pre-set huddle the **Rays** looked a little tired and frustrated at not having finished off the **Seawolves** sooner, but no fear or doubt appeared in their eyes as they know, better than any prior **Stingray** team, how to shut-down an opponent in the 5th set. In seven attempts this season they have come away successful SEVEN times – and they were determined the eighth time would be no different. Trailing 3-1 early on, they played solid defense and outstanding 'quick-to-the-hit' offense, *ala Maulupe*, to finish the match 3-2 winning the 5th set – once again – 15-8. **Amazing!**

Next Week – Wed-May 6th @ Rio Hondo – 3:30pm / Fri-May 8th – 'Talent Night' (please come)