

## Top 10 reasons why to go to Durango

### Top 10 Reasons Why an Athletic Director Should Accept an Invitation to Durango.

- 10.) Expose your weaknesses. You can play a sloppy, unfocused, lazy "B" game against lesser opponents and your players can think they're playing good. You can even take your "A" game to Durango and get your weaknesses exposed, while there is still time to fix them before your state tournament.
- 9.) Expose yourself. Not only do your players get exposure to college coaches, like at a qualifier or nationals, but it plays well in the local newspapers, which makes you look good (job security). And think of all those young, impressionable, up-and-coming, future volleyball studs who are asking their dads why they can't live in your district.
- 8.) Establish a benchmark. I don't mean the cross-linking match that makes John's job easier; no, make him work ..... if that is what you call jet-setting around the country watching volleyball. That isn't what I mean by benchmark. Every coach has a vision of where he/she wants the team, and some even have a plan for getting there. I applaud the Texas coach who took his team to Nike, for he has a benchmark of where his team presently stands vis-a-vis other states.
- 7.) Multiply the state experience by a factor of six. It is one thing to put on your school's colors and take on the best your state has to offer, it is quite a different thing to represent your city, your state, even your region by competing against the best the nation has to offer. This year at Durango, there were at least 6 state champions.
- 6.) Take your game to the next level. Somehow a synergy develops when two great teams play each other that allows each team to take their game to a higher level. And once you reach that new plateau, you seldom go back. You learn things about yourself that you take back with you as a source of strength for future matches, not just at your state tournament, but college and club as well.
- 5.) Bragging rights. It is a chance to meet and make friends with players you may be playing with or against in college. And even if you don't go on to play in college, you can be sitting in your dorm room with your roommates watching a college match on TV, and proclaim, "Number 27? Yeah she's OK, but I roofed her in Vegas."
- 4.) What happens in Vegas doesn't have to stay there. Everything worth learning in High School doesn't just happen within the walls of your school, or the boundaries of your state. Not only was being in Vegas as a sophomore and junior without a parent there to wipe their nose a growing experience, so was the process to get there. Daughter up-reffed at grade school jamborees, where at 8AM she had to deal with a coach who started-out the match complaining that the net was too high, and ended it complaining that she had rushed the match so she could get out of there earlier, even though every team played the same amount of time regardless of match scores. I could kiss that guy. What she learned will help her throughout life, whether it is behind a cash register or in the boardroom.
- 3.) Play the Hawaiians. I'm not sure, but it looked like they had more fans there than any other team, and I am sure you have to wash a lot of cars to fly to the mainland. Their fans are a lot of fun; they shared their food with our girls and when you compete against them, their fans know how to p-a-r-t-y! They rock as much as the Puerto Rican teams at AAU nationals! It was an honor playing them. Even the 90% of the fans who wanted them to beat us walked out of the gym knowing they had just witnessed something special.
- 2.) Play the national champ. Every athlete in every sport wants to test their skills against the best possible competition, but how often do you actually get to play the national champ? At Durango, you had that possibility for at least the last 3 years I've seen. John could probably provide a longer history.
- 1.) Silence the critics. If you've compiled your 45-1 record in let's say Vermont, what does that really mean to someone in Texas? If you've got that special, once-in-a-blue moon team that only happens when the planets are aligned, why hide them under a bushel basket? To turn down an invitation to Durango is to squander a golden opportunity.