

New initiatives highlight fall meeting

State powerhouses dominate All Staters

The MGVCA held its annual postseason meeting on Thursday, November 11 (Veteran's Day) at the MIAA Headquarters in Franklin. Twenty-four member coaches attended the 10 AM meeting.

President Rob Slavin (Sacred Heart) presided over the three and a half hour session by first updating membership information. The three term president noted that voting privileges for the All State teams was one of the many benefits of membership to the association which represents over 200 coaches.

Slavin revisited the previous Sunday's Hall of Fame ceremony held at Joe's on the Waterfront (see front page). He noted that such activities can only be funded with a large turnout at annual clinics.

The next induction is slated for the fall of 2006. Association members are encouraged to nominate past and present coaches for consideration to the Class of 2006. Criteria and forms are available on-line for that purpose.

Vice-President and MIAA Rep. Tom Turco followed with notes from the last MIAA Volleyball Committee meeting. State tournament sites were among the topics discussed by those present.

Discussion regarding the new MIAA alignment for 2005-2009 followed. Turco, a member of the alignment subcommittee, stated that some of the geographical boundaries had to be modified to balance the sections.

The selection process for the association's All State teams was next on the agenda. By overwhelming vote of the member coaches last year, there will be three such teams (by division) starting in the fall of 2005. Current MGVCA officers and selected representatives will oversee the process.

A casual lunch, with pizza from nearby Papa Gino's, provided a natural break in the proceedings.

The vast majority of the meeting, as is almost always the case at the year-end

gathering, then turned its attention to the selection of the MGVCA All State teams.

A total of forty nominations, both mail-in and from those coaches present, were discussed at length before being voted upon.

Two separate votes, for First and Second Team selections, were taken only after all coaches present had a chance to speak on behalf of their own or other players placed into nomination.

Eventual Division I State Champion Barnstable was the only school to place three players (Liz Auger, Delia Glover and Carly Newton) on the First Team.

Marlboro (Division 2 Champs),

Chelmsford, Quincy, Case and Medfield placed two players each among the state's top twenty-five.

Ale Kuncaitis (Canton) and Nicole Cahill (Quincy) were the only athletes from last year's teams to repeat. Brookline's super-soph Emily Harburg was the sole representative from the Class of 2007, and Case's libero Amanda Machado was the first-ever player at that position (instituted two years ago) to be selected to the All State First Team.

As in the past, selections were made available to the local media. Most of our selections are generally represented on the [Boston Globe](#) and/or [Boston Herald](#) All Scholastic teams.

MGVCA 2004 All State Selections

Liz Auger	Junior	Barnstable High School
Molly Barrett	Junior	Medfield High School
Maxine Barry	Senior	Chelmsford High School
Erin Connolly	Junior	North Quincy High School
Tatinna Freitas	Senior	Marlboro High School
Delia Glover	Senior	Barnstable High School
Emily Harburg	Sophomore	Brookline High School
Ale Kuncaitis	Senior	Canton High School
Amanda Machado	Senior	Case High School
Katherine Masson	Senior	New Bedford High School
Carly Newton	Junior	Barnstable High School
Nicole O'Sullivan	Senior	Quincy High School
Hilary Teichart	Senior	Bourne High School

Second Team

Jasmine Bonanca	Senior	Case High School
Catherine Burrell	Senior	Medfield High School
Jenn Byrne	Junior	Chelmsford High School
Nicole Cahill	Senior	Quincy High School
Jordan Ireton	Senior	Westboro High School
Danielle Jenkins	Senior	Marlboro High School
Marcella Lobo	Junior	Doherty High School
Yesenia Marrero	Senior	Brockton High School
Stephanie Marshall	Junior	Medway High School
Ashley McQuillan	Senior	Lincoln-Sudbury High School
Shaylyn Murphy	Senior	Plymouth North High School

AVCA News

Annual Convention highlights
the best in college volleyball

Long Beach State hosts national event

The National AVCA Convention continued its recent warm-weather swing with a stop in Long Beach, California from December 13-18. The 24th annual event last ventured to the left coast in 2001 when San Diego was the host city. The Westin and Hyatt Regency hotels served as the hosts for over eleven hundred college, club and high school coaches from around the nation.

New England, especially the Bay State, was well-represented by both collegiate and high school level coaches. MGVCA members Tom Turco (Barnstable), Jack Hastings (Medfield), Joe Reardon (Bishop Feehan), Bill McShane (Dennis-Yarmouth), Jack Olson (Brockton) and Rob Slavin (Sacred Heart) were among the attendees.

College coaches ranging from Sandy Hoffman (Bentley) to Andrea Leonard (Boston College) were representative of the numerous Division 1, 2 and 3 area coaches who ventured west.

Toshi Yoshida, the retiring USA women's coach, presented the pre-convention seminar on Tuesday. The eight hour session, which featured both men and women from the national teams, focused on Yoshida's unique blending of eastern and western approaches to the sport of volleyball.

Yoshida's methods are somewhat controversial among American coaches, but have had a profound impact on players such as Stacy Sykora (National Team

libero) and Oganna Nnamani (Stanford).

The bulk of the convention highlighted a series of on-court and classroom sessions which touched on a wide range of topics from out of system offenses to swing blocking.

On Saturday, the NCAA hosted a free local YES clinic at Long Beach State University's spectacular Pyramid which was attended by nearly 500 area kids ages 10-17. Needless to say, the popularity of volleyball is far greater in this part of the country among youngsters than it is in the northeast.

The high school/club meeting presented initiatives to increase the membership of its constituency. The AVCA at present has 1,200 high school/club coaches as members (the largest group), but there are over 50,000 such coaches around the country.

The key rules issue nationwide is the National Federation's vote on whether or not to use the libero in 2005. Currently, Massachusetts remains the only high school association using NCAA rules.

Thursday-Saturday sessions were broken up by the annual Player of the Year and Coach of the Year banquets. This year's Division I National Coach of the Year, to no one's surprise, was Washington University's soft-spoken Jim McLaughlin.

Player of the Year Honors was a split decision between Ohio State's Stacy Gordon and Stanford's Oganna Nnamani.

The outspoken Nnamani was soon to become the tournament MVP as well on Saturday afternoon.

The Women's NCAA Final Four (semifinals and finals), always a highlight of any convention, were held at Long Beach Arena in downtown Long Beach. The participants this year included only one regional #1 seed (Minnesota).

The PAC-10 provided the other participants with Washington, Stanford and defending champs USC. The Women of Troy were trying to become the first team ever to win a third consecutive title.

The Southern Cal stay was short-lived, however, as upstart Minnesota (33-4) blasted the PAC-10 runner-ups in four games. The height of Emily Adams and Bibiana Candelas in the middle for USC was no match for the defensive minded Golden Gophers led by super-libero Paula Gentil. John Dunning's Stanford Cardinal had a tougher time with Washington, but also prevailed in four.

So it was the veteran Stanford club (ranked #11 in the last AVCA Coach's Poll) against The Big Ten rep Minnesota in Saturday's matinee final. A crowd of nearly 12,000 witnessed a devastating performance by 2004 Olympian Nnamani who finished with 38 kills in a surprising 3-0 sweep.

An injury to Gentil in the third made the task a bit easier for Stanford which returned the trophy to Palo Alto for the fourth time in the last fourteen years.

Start-up Volleyball League begins in February

Looking for a cost effective way to get keep your girls playing volleyball in the off season? Well Coach Al Mirabile (Archbishop Williams/Braintree) might have a solution. Here's the best part: it's only \$65.

Al is starting a league which will run ten weeks from Sunday, February 13 through the end of April (Easter excluded). Girls in grades 8-12 are eligible to try-out on February 13 at the Williams gym in Braintree. Teams will then be determined by the pool of available candidates.

The ten-week program will continue from noon-5 PM

on consecutive Sunday afternoons. Teams will scrimmage for three 25 point games (with referees) each Sunday. Exact times will be determined by the number of teams participating (max: ten teams). Efforts will be made to accommodate players' schedules whenever possible.

"I was simply looking for an alternative to Junior Olympics to keep kids involved in the off-season," says Mirabile. "And Williams is easily accessible to kids from a large area."

Any coaches or players interested in this league should contact Al at <aemirabile@yahoo.com> or 1-781-413-1857.

New alignment impacts schools across the state

In January 2000 the MGVCA proposed the idea of a third division for girls volleyball at the MIAA winter meeting. The concept involved adding a new division primarily comprised of small Catholic schools, technical schools, and low-enrollment public schools across the state. With the new MIAA alignment for 2005-2009, that idea will now be more fully realized.

The new alignment adds a few new wrinkles to the present system. First, a new section has been added in Division I to create four sections statewide. Those new designations will be North, South, Central-East and Central-West. There is currently no Division I status in the West.

In addition, new geographical guidelines have been determined. As a result, some teams have been moved from South to Central and from Central to North. Most of this movement was done to balance the sections in terms of number of teams eligible for postseason play.

The most significant shift, however, is the number of schools formerly in Division 3 that have been bumped to Division 2 based on new enrollment figures. Three of the state's perennial powers - Bourne, Medfield and Medway - have all moved up to D-2.

Although subtle shifts exist elsewhere, either by division or section, the guiding principle for the MIAA was current female enrollment figures in grades 9-12. The entire realignment can be viewed at the MIAA web site (www.miaa.net).

Schools wishing to make changes to the new alignment had to petition the MIAA by December 21, 2004. Those petitions for all fall sports will be heard by the various sport committees in January 2005.



from front page

bers and friends, to mingle among the other seventy-five guests for about an hour as the brunch proceeded.

The formal presentation of the inductees began with Bill Bates, longtime Cambridge Rindge & Latin Athletic Director, accepting on behalf of Linda Town (posthumously). Bates graciously catalogued the twenty-five year teaching and coaching career of Town, a true pioneer in the development of girls volleyball in the greater Boston area.

Next to the podium was Chris Prendiville, coach and official, who presented and accepted on behalf of Quincy's Ray Whitehouse. Currently teaching at Archbishop Williams, Whitehouse won two state championships in his seven year tenure at Quincy.

Current Notre Dame (Hingham) freshman coach Mary Ann Curley spoke fondly of her mentor Helen Castros, the third inductee of the day. Castros, who started a fledgling program in Waltham, reminded those present of the number of changes that the sport has undergone since the 1970's. The affable New Hampshire resident called her induction as "surprising as the Red Sox winning the World Series."

The Merrimack Valley's Dana DeFilippo was introduced by her veteran assistant Karen Lococo. Lococo, who played for Chelmsford, recalled how Coach DeFilippo over the years developed a special trust and rapport between "player and coach." DeFilippo thanked the entire Chelmsford community. "My daughter could not have had better "big sisters" than the Lion players that I've coached over the years."

Roy Condon, North Reading's Athletic Director, then introduced inductee Vicki Hill, whose twenty-eight year career came to an end following the 2003 season. Hill's impact brought an entire community together to celebrate the many successes of the North Reading program during her tenure. In Hill's acceptance remarks, she fondly recalled some of the early 1980's meetings of the coaches' association.

Judy Katalina, Lincoln-Sudbury's head coach, proudly spoke on behalf of Judy Kennedy (Newton South).

Hall of Fame

Katalina noted that "Coach Kennedy cares about her players both on and off the court." Kennedy, who has served tirelessly as a member of the MIAA Volleyball Committee for over fifteen years, is largely responsible for the development of boys volleyball in Massachusetts.

An emotional Holly Rendle spoke of her father Jim's career in building the program at North Quincy from the ground up. He started in the mid-80's because his daughter and her friends needed a coach for a new program. A teary-eyed Jim Rendle spoke proudly of the numerous student-athletes who went on to college on scholarships because of volleyball.

Tri Valley legend Harry Romsey was introduced by current Medway coach Scott Blanchard. The MGVCA Treasurer spoke of how Romsey had "raised the bar" throughout the entire league. Romsey's acceptance remarks focused on the work ethic and desire of his seven state championship teams.

Nancy Stanton addressed the numerous career accomplishments of her sister Christine, Case High School's legendary mentor. With state titles in Divisions 1 and 2, Stanton has one of the most storied coaching resumes in the history of high school volleyball. Now a school administrator, she spoke about volleyball as providing an opportunity for young women to develop life-skills through sport.

The reigning Division I State Champions from Barnstable are led by the day's final inductee, Tom Turco. Presenter Lorraine Dunnnett noted that within two weeks of his 1986 hiring, Turco was a sponge for knowledge about the game. In accepting his honor, Turco credited fellow inductees Dana DeFilippo and Christine Stanton with providing him with their valued input in the late 1980's which served as the building blocks for his own success.

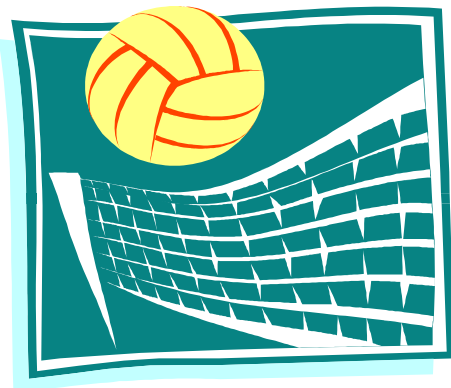
The day concluded with desert and coffee along with group photographs of the newest inductees. As much as anything, this event provided a vivid and lasting history of high school volleyball in our state over the past forty years.

Between the Lines

Vol. 5, No. 12

MGVCA Newsletter

Winter, 2005



MGVCA DIRECTORY

Rob Slavin, President (508)-896-9530
Tom Turco, Vice Pres. (508)-430-1497
Tammy Webber, Secretary (508)-473-6335
Scott Blanchard, Treasurer (508)-653-4097

Tom Turco, MIAA Rep. (508)-430-1497

Main Office (508)-896-9530
Fax number (508)-896-9530
Mailing address P. O. Box 2193
Brewster, MA
02631

e-mail address mgvca@aol.com

Boston College coach Andrea Leonard will conduct this year's annual MGVCA coaches clinic on Saturday, March 5 at Bishop Feehan High School (Attleboro). Information will be available within the next two weeks. If you have specific topic ideas for the clinic, please let us know.

Hall of Fame Ceremony honors ten new members

The second MGVCA Hall of Fame induction was held at Joe's on the Waterfront (Boston) on Sunday, November 7, 2004. Ten honorees, along with their presenters and guests, joined 1999 inaugural inductees Linda Zacchilli, Joyce Skiff and Mary J. Thomsen among high school volleyball's coaching elite.

Association President Rob Slavin welcomed the guests at the first-ever brunch on a beautiful sunny New England morning. He noted that the connections between so many of the past and current coaches made the event a real "family affair." Coaches from all four decades in this sport's history at the high school level were feted in the three-hour celebration.

After acknowledging the numerous contributions of the MGVCA officers and the Hall of Fame Committee over the past eighteen months, Slavin turned the microphone over to his wife Elin (head of Sacred Heart's Religion Dept.) for the invocation.

Milton coach Robin Lee, who made extraordinary contributions to the day's planning and organization, then made a few introductory remarks prior to the buffet-style brunch. Lee's impact could be seen around the room from the tasteful flower arrangements to the stunning award plaques.

The intimate setting allowed coaches, along with their family mem-

 *more on back page*

MGVCA seeks new coaches to enhance membership

During the past five years the membership of the MGVCA has risen from 25-30 coaches to its current total of over 200. Sadly, however, that number represents only 122 of the 216 MIAA member schools (56%) which participate in girls' volleyball. Junior varsity, freshman and assistant coaches now constitute almost 50 percent of our members. In short, we're just not reaching all our coaches.

Our goal for 2005 is to establish an organization of over two-hundred and fifty high school volleyball coaches statewide. To do that, we need to reach about 75% of our member schools (varsity, jv, and freshman coaches). Please take a minute to send in the enclosed membership form. Varsity coaches can really "help the cause" by enlisting their junior varsity/assistant coaches at this time. Additional forms are available on-line at www.mgvca.org.

We will continue to keep dues at the nominal fee of \$15 per year. Multiple year memberships are also available. Those dues entitle members to (1) School/Coach Directory, (2) access to our Video Lending Library of over 150 instructional tapes, (3) future newsletters, (4) Internet Updates and (5) Membership Card.

The revised School/Coach Directory will be sent out upon receipt of your membership dues for 2005. **Please be sure to update all your information so that the Directory (including the on-line version) is current and accurate.**