

“Two Coppell Freshman Making Waves on the Beach Volleyball Scene”

Alexa Bass and Jamie Stivers, both Coppell High School Freshman, began their volleyball careers together playing indoor volleyball for 900VB. Their indoor coach, Bivin Sadler, was a former pro beach volleyball player from California. They followed Bivin to 692Beach where they began to learn the game of beach volleyball. Although not partners, the girls each began to master the game and quickly became two of the strongest players in their age group.

Their coach, Bivin Sadler has this to say about the girls: “If there are any solid truths in this world, one of them is that Alexa Bass and Jamie Stivers are two of the best high-school Freshman to have ever played the game of beach volleyball. I have had the privilege of coaching them since they were 11 years old and their development has been nothing short of absolutely amazing! I am so proud.”

Alexa began competing in athletics at the ripe old age of 4. That is not surprising considering her family pedigree.

Her older brother Nick was a four year varsity letterman in swimming at Coppell High School with a school record still on the board, and swam on the collegiate level at Ouachita Baptist University.

Her older sister Katie was a four year letterman at Coppell in soccer and was a member of the 2009 State Championship team. Katie won two US Youth Soccer National Championships with her club team, Dallas Texans Red 92, and played collegiate soccer at Southern Methodist University.

Her older sister Mikayla “Bear” Bass was a dual sport athlete at Coppell. Bear was a three year varsity letterman in soccer and also a member of the 2009 State Championship team. She was also a four year letterman in volleyball and a member of the 2011 State Championship team. Bear was the first Coppell volleyball player in 19 years to play varsity as a freshman and she is the only Coppell athlete to ever win State Championships in two different sports. Bear is now playing on the collegiate level at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio.

In this collection of athletes it would be easy to get lost in the shuffle as the baby of the family, but not Alexa. Sadler had this to say about Alexa’s beach game, “Alexa is a firecracker whose pure passion for the game has coaches, spectators and college recruiters in constant awe. Her extreme athleticism and limitless energy combined with her commitment to giving her all in practice has earned Alexa not only my respect but the respect of all who know and love the game of beach volleyball.” Alexa was one of the first 13yr old players to ever be chosen for participation in the USAV High Performance program. Bass says, “I really love the HP program. It is so cool to be able to train at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista and to be coached by great college coaches like USC Head Anna Collier and Olympians like London silver medalist April Ross. In 2012, Alexa and her partner Francesca Goncalves won the silver medal at the AAU National Championships and then the very next weekend won the silver medal in the HP National Championships playing with Jamie. “To be able to participate in those National Championships was such a great honor, and to do so well was a real thrill. Francesca and Jamie are both such dynamic players that they make it so much fun to play” says Bass. Alexa has already begun her 2013 beach season with a bang by going undefeated with her partner Francesca Goncalves in the Gulf Shores College Showcase tournament at the beginning of May.

An accomplished indoor volleyball player as well, Alexa plays for TAV 15 Black. She and her club teammates have qualified for the USAV Junior Olympic Tournament for the second year in a row. Her club coach Jason Nicholson added, “To be successful on the beach a more rounded skill

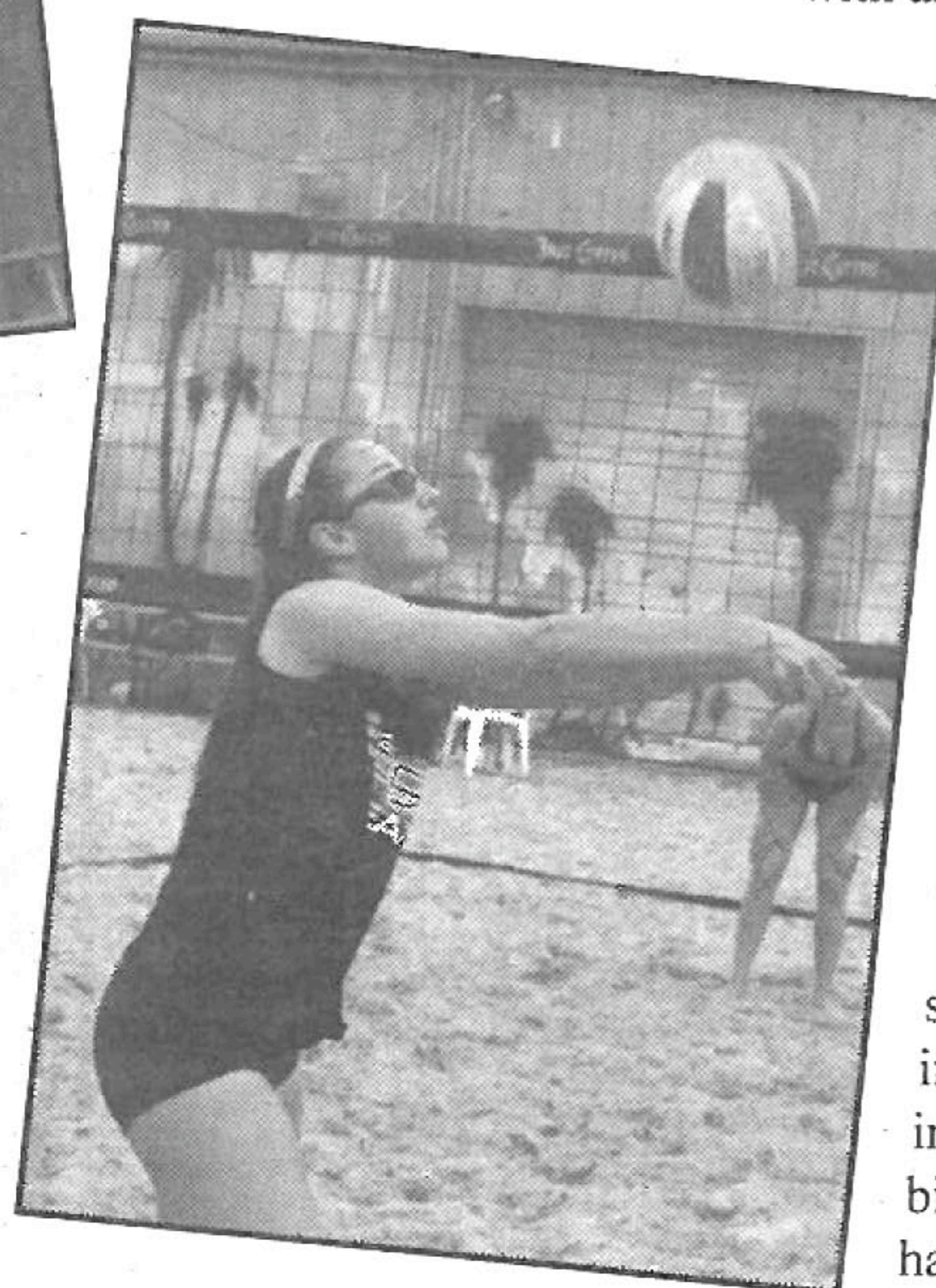


set is required than in the indoor game. By playing on the beach Alexa has had to develop a more complete game which makes her a huge asset to our team. The hours upon hours Alexa has spent in the gym and in the sand have allowed her to raise her level of play. Alexa and the level at which she competes will have a huge

impact on how far this team will go in its bid for a 15 Open National Championship.”

Jamie Stivers began playing indoor volleyball with the YMCA and quickly grew to love the game. She currently is an outside hitter for Tejas 15Nfinity, and recently helped them qualify for Nationals, which will be played in Dallas this summer.

Her Coach, Michael Denardo has been impressed with both her physical and mental game. “Every great athlete I have ever known trains a lot (all the time). They don’t just play the game, they live it. Jamie has all the markings of a great athlete. She not only trains indoor, but outdoor in the sand as well, and is a true student of the game. She definitely puts in her “time at the office” and “time off” is spent analyzing game and practice video – she lives this sport. Leadership and learning how to win are lessons she gets every week. She is used to covering a court with only two players in the sand, a skill set that leads to incredible defense and court awareness when she moves her game indoor. Our opponents quickly learn the “tall girl on the back row” is NOT the player you target with your serve, The best players are great in both arenas, Karch Kiraly, Gene Selznick, Nina Matthies, Misty May and Kerri Walsh all played both to get better at each. Jamie has been proactive at following that path and I expect great things in her future.”



While she still loves the indoor game, her passion for beach has continued to grow exponentially with each season. Jamie has had a lot of success on the beach scene. The Dallas area has a very strong contingent of beach volleyball athletes, so playing locally was a key to her early development. In 2011 Jamie and her partner Alexis Martinez finished in the top 3 in every tournament in which they entered with most being gold medal finishes. They qualified for the USAV Nationals in Chicago and took 5th place. This success continued in 2012. While still a member of the 14U age group, Jamie and Alexis competed at the 16U level finishing 2nd in Galveston and 1st in Dallas securing a bid to USAV Beach Nationals again last summer. The girls fought hard and are the current 14U bronze medalists.

Training at the Olympic Training Center was the highlight of Jamie’s year. Her sister Lindsay is also an established and successful beach player and sharing the OTC experience was a special treat for the girls! Wrapping that up with a silver medal finish at USAV Beach High Performance Nationals in Hermosa Beach was great way to finish out a summer season. 2013 has started off with a bang as well. Jamie was at the OTC for holiday camp and won the queen of beach tournament at the end of camp. She and Ashlan Cunningham traveled to Las Vegas and won the 16U AAU qualifier to earn a bid to the AAU Junior Olympics in Hermosa Beach this summer. Coach Bivin Sadler says “Jamie is what I might call a “beach academic.” I have no doubt that once she hits the collegiate and professional ranks her nickname will be “The Professor.” Jamie learns something from every coach she trains with, every game or video she watches, and from every match she plays. Her tremendous focus and attention to detail has provided her with an uncanny court sense and equally unbelievable ball control that is second to none. “Go Professor!”

What does the future hold for these athletes? The sky is the limit. Both girls and their partners look to compete on the National stage again this summer. While the younger age in a 2 year age bracket (16U, the girls are currently 15 and 14 respectively), they are expected to be battling it out in the final rounds of every tournament. It says a lot about these high school teammates that they can be compete against each other at such a high level and still remain friends. On both the indoor and sand courts these girls compete against one another with steely determination, and high five and hug one another once the game is over.

“Beach volleyball for juniors is a relatively new sport and 692 has been lucky enough to make such an impact on it. Our program has been the most dominant in the nation for the last eight years and two of the biggest reasons are Alexa Bass and Jaime Stivers. We have trained some amazing players in the past, but the skill and athleticism of Alexa and Jamie are a step above anything we have ever seen. These two players are able to play the game at a level that would challenge even the best adult players, and they are only high school freshman! The colleges that are interested in recruiting these two are nothing short of the top programs in the country! I take great pride in taking these girls to tournaments and watching them represent our program. Alexa and Jamie are two of the biggest reasons that 692 has been so dominant in beach volleyball. I look forward with great pride to see what these girls can accomplish in their bright futures.” Says Scott Stover the Director of 692 Beach Volleyball

Coach Bivin Sadler wraps it up perfectly by saying “Words simply cannot convey how proud I am of Alexa and Jamie. I am proud of the players and people they are and am excited about the players and people they are working hard to become. They are both Masterpieces ... I am proud to have had a brush stroke on these modern day athletic “Mona Lisa”s.”