

# AA TOURNAMENT REVIEW

By Jim Williams

## CHAMPIONSHIP SATURDAY: NOTRE DAME WINS GOLD!



*Notre Dame Jugglers win GOLD! Photo Ron Peters Photography*

Championship Day! Gold will be won, all-stars bestowed, but really 13 teams will be winners as they played in the BCs and made memories.

Since the quarter finals were three East Valley teams on top and four Vancouver Sea to Sky teams on the draw's bottom, the Valley teams and the Vancouver teams play each other for fifth place. Langley Fundamental Titans will have a rematch of their East Valley zone semi final with the host MEI Eagles, and Mulgrave will have a rematch of their Pool D and zone bronze medal games with West Point Grey Academy. Mulgrave swept West Point Grey Academy 2-0 in the

consolation semi-final. Outstanding hitting and serving from Mia and Eva Ruse led the Titans to a second straight win over the Wolves. With a young team, the Titans promise to be tough again next year. The Wolves' Coach, Sarah Pool, allowed her assistant to run the game, and WPGA gave Mulgrave everything they could handle. Maria Fotiou had an excellent game as libero, but it was senior Michaela Jefferson who turned heads with cross court and down the line shots that once they found floor echoed through the gym. Mulgrave plays in the fifth-place game later today.

Langley Fundamental took MEI in 3 sets in the second consolation semi-final. Fundy won the first game of the morning at the Middle School 25-15, but then the Eagles woke up and won a tight 25-23 set. In the third, Fundy defended their way into the 5<sup>th</sup> place match 15-11.

The Placement Draw was held over the final two days of the tournament and was a round robin affair. These games allow schools who rarely play each other to play avoiding a long trip to play only one match. Holy Cross beat zone rivals MacNeill 25-6, 25-23 and Prince George's D.P. Todd 25-18, 25-21. On Saturday Holy

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Cross handled Archbishop Carney in 3 sets 25-17, 28-30, 15-13, and SMUS to go 4-0 and take 9th. SMUS handled Archbishop Carney in 3, lost to MacNeill in 2, and beat D.P. Todd in 3 epic sets going 26-28, 29-27, 15-12. Carney beat MacNeill in the third 16-14.

### Championship Semi Finals

The championship semi final saw #1 Abbotsford Christian play #11 Brentwood. Bump, set, spike – point! ACS opened the semi final like every coach draws it up. The Knights looked confident and left-handed server Maia Olson staked Abby Christian to a 7-2 lead forcing Brentwood to take an early time

out. Eden Kampman, a Knights' senior, pounded the ball right side and star middle Meghan Vaags crushed the ball inside the attack line. ACS took a 12-3 lead. Megan Munroe, the Knights' senior setter kept finding Vaags, Kampman, and captain Lauren Bowman who found the floor again and again to make it 16-5. The girls in blue continued their dominance to take the first set 25-13.

In the second set Brentwood found their legs and traded points with Abby Christian. Hard hitting Sophie Horn made several kills, but it was the Knights who had a four-point run at 9-10 to go up 13-10. Then a second run gave them an 18-11 edge. Brentwood went on a 7-2 run to close the gap to 2, but Kayla Schuurman pounded a point to take it to 22-19. A deep push by Vaags caught the Islanders off guard, and ACS finished the match with Kampman hitting down the line for a 25-20 win. The third set

seemed anti-climactic as Abby Christian swept Brentwood with a final set 25-17. The number one seed had done its job getting to the finals. Would Notre Dame hold its number two ranking?

Notre Dame, the formidable Catholic school on Renfrew Street, had a semi-final similar to Abby Christian. Three straight wins 25-22, 25-21, and 25-20 gave the Jugglers a championship berth. Notre Dame took a 12-10 lead and York House's time out

star middle Rusciti for a 20-13 lead. York House's setter Chloe Ng served the Tigers back into contention reeling off eight straight. Then the magic seemed to be spent as four quick points gave Notre Dame the lead and on the precipice of a championship appearance. A strong serve finished York House's reign as defending champion as Notre Dame advanced to the final.

### 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Places

Mulgrave, seeded 12<sup>th</sup>, finished their season with a victory to place 5<sup>th</sup> in their school's first



*MVP Ella Ungemach during the Gold Medal Match*

could not stop the run as the lead increased to 14-10. ND's Ella Ungemach made a huge diving dig to save a sure point, enabling her teammate Adriana Rusciti to win a net battle. Notre Dame's slick setter, Hope Curman, who was injured in the first game of the tournament, set a perfect quick to second team all-

appearance at the AAs. Coach Ruse was elated on the sidelines as the team controlled the second and third sets 25-19, 15-6. Mia Ruse, a tournament all-star, pounded the ball from the back row. Fundy's coach, Brent Magnowski, subbed liberally as the Titan's setter, Ella Dolphin, was injured the previous



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NOTRE DAME 1st PLACE GOLD. Photo Ron Peters

night. Madison Magnowski showed her all-star status as she kept Fundy in the game. Despite the loss Fundy was still pleased with the players' performance in the latter half of the final set as they placed 6<sup>th</sup>.

WPGA beat MEI 25-19, 14-25, and 17-15 to take 7<sup>th</sup> place. The Wolves ate up the Eagles as they forced passing errors while the Eagles scored at the net. MEI placed 8<sup>th</sup>.

### Bronze Medal to York House

Brentwood started quickly 7-1, but that would be their best highlight as York House stormed back to tie it at 7. The game went to the Vancouver school 25-17. The second set saw first team all-star Chloe Ng leave her blood, sweat and tears on the floor as

York House went on to win 25-10. Brentwood's attack was weakened as Sophie Horn was injured in the semi-final against Abby Christian. Avery Duncan, the Tiger's grade 10 middle, took full advantage of Horn's absence while Emmett Eng made some amazing tip saves enabling the Tigers to score.

The third set featured a see-saw game with multiple one-point leads and lead changes until Brentwood went up 19-16 and it looked like a fourth set may be needed. Brentwood setter, Maxine Polluck, ran a solid offense gaining her a second team all-star selection. York House took a time out to try to halt the run, and Brentwood scored an ace to go up 20-16. Brentwood's middle, Jocelyn Lenarcic, hit a step-around

shot, but York House regained the serve with a cross court by Nolin Lee-Pii to go 22-19. York House's Taylor Hari hit deep side to go 22-20. The York House took the lead 23-22, but Brentwood won a net joust to tie it at 23. Another net joust won by York House made it 24-23, and on the next point York House won bronze.

### Notre Dame Wins Gold in Three

The first point of the match went to Abby Christian off a hit by Eden Kampman. First team all-star Lauren Bowman kept the pressure on, and the Knights scored to make it 2-0. Notre Dame tied the score at 3 with first team all-star Hope Curman's tricky dump into the corner. A



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humorous moment occurred when Bowman bounced a spike off of Notre Dame's first team all-star member Ella Buric's back. Early in the match both teams were tight as they tried to find a rhythm. The score was 9-9. Abby's Meghan Vaags, another first team all-star member, scored off a quick then a serve that rolled down the net. 11-11. Ella Ungemach, the powerful outside hitter and tourney MVP, tipped over ACS's block and then blasted two cross court shots for a 12-11 lead. ACS coach Jason Klassen took a time out to stop the four-point run. It worked - side out. 15-12. 19-15. A huge three-person block by Buric, Ungemach, and Di Fluri on Vaags created a 22-15 Juggler lead. ACS had a match-up problem as Vaags was in the backrow and ND's Ungemach was in the front. Buric hits deep for a 24-17 ND lead. Abby Christian scored four straight to force Notre Dame's coach Deanna Schaper-Kotter to ask for a time out at 24-21. Notre Dame finished the set off, and Abby Christian, the number one seed, looked shocked.

Like the first set, Abby Christian raced out to a 9-5 lead. First team all-star, Kayla Schuurman, hit one down the line. ND's Ungemach served a bullet, but Bowman hit the floor to score. Schaper-Kotter took a time out and the momentum changed as the Vancouver girls went on a five-point run and took the lead 10-9. Abby's Kampman went down the line to close the gap to 13-12. Buric answered with a cross shot 14-12. Three more points by the



*Abbotsford Christian Silver Medalists. Photo Ron Peters*



*York House Bronze Medalists. Photo Ron Peters*

Catholic girls gave them a commanding 17-12 lead. 19-16. 25-20. Notre Dame wins! The second set was in the book, and it looked like this match was Notre Dame's to lose. Relentless defense led by the tournament's outstanding libero, Ella Andreola, and pounding attacks had the Knights on their heels. The third and final set began with a 7-2 Abby run as second team all-star Megan Munroe, the Knights' setter, distributed the ball

effectively, keeping the Jugglers unable to set up a wall block. Notre Dame took a time out, and then started to play. Eventual MVP, Ungemach, pummelled a back row attack – point. Block stuff on Vaags – point. Bullet serve – point. 7-5. 8-5. ACS float-serve 9-5. Olivia Kuna, #10, challenged Vaags at the net. Buric blocked well with Curman. 12-10 ACS led. Kuna tough serve: 13-12. Tied at 14, 19, 20. Notre Dame went up 21-20.



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Buric tipped over Vaags, found the hole, and the Jugglers were up 22-20. Coach Klassen called a time out. The Notre Dame bench was ecstatic! 23-20, 23-21, side out Knights. Bowman blasted through a block - 23-22. Tied at 23. The Knights regained the lead 24-23, but a huge block by Buric on Bowman tied it at 24. Notre Dame scored to go ahead 25-24. Klassen called a time out for the last time. ND's Kuna served, Buric blocked the return, and the Jugglers win the BCs.



1st Team All Stars: Chloe Ng, Meghan Vaags, Kaya Schuurman, Lauren Bowman, Hope Curman, Ella Buric. Photo Ron Peters



MVP: Ella Ungemach,  
Outstanding Libero: Emma Andreola.  
Photo Ron Peters



2nd Team ALL Stars: Adrianna Ruscitti, Avery Duncan, Maxine Polluck, Madison Magnoski, Megan Munroe, Mia Rose.. Photo Ron Peters

FINAL FINISH						
1	2	3	4	5	6	
Notre Dame	Abbotsford Christian	York House	Brentwood	Mulgrave	Langley Fundamental	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
WPGA	MEI *	Holy Cross	SMUS	DP Todd	Archbishop Carney	MacNeill

\* Top Sportsmanship Team Award

