



October 1, 2014

Dear BVA Members,

2013-14 was another successful year for volleyball in Bermuda, both domestically & internationally.

The BVA is extremely pleased that participation and enthusiasm remains strong with our Leagues and Tournaments. We are excited that leagues continue to grow and our membership is keen to keep the ball flying! Winter league continues to grow with the popularity of the co-ed leagues. We saw a nearly filled Spring league and the introduction of a Spring Beach League which took place on Sundays. The Summer Beach Leagues continue to be our most popular and we had leagues running Sunday through Thursday each week. Those leagues included competitive and recreational co-ed 4s, competitive & recreational King / Queen of the Beach as well as the introduction of a new co-ed 2's league. The organization of our leagues & tournaments are spearheaded by our Vice-Presidents, Amy Chan, Adam Veriker and often assisted by other members of BVA Exec. However, our job would be impossible were it not for all the volunteer league directors who keep things running each night. We VERY much appreciate their support.

The Bermuda Open is an international club team invitational tournament, open to teams in the US & Canada, etc. This year's installment was held in April 2014 and welcomed 6 women's teams from the US & Canada. The tournament was sponsored by the Bermuda Department of Tourism and we would like to thank them for their continued support of this event. The Bermuda Open 2015 is looking to expand to include both men's and youth divisions.

The Junior National Team has continued its successful development in 2012-13. Our girls and boys teams each travelled abroad to compete in tournaments. These events gave the teams much needed exposure and experience.

In March, the JNT Girls travelled to Boston to participate in the New England Regional Pre-Qualifier Tournament for Nationals. The 2 day event showcased 25 courts for both junior & adult play. The team, comprised of girls ranging in age from 12yrs-18yrs, was led by head coach Donna Smith and the rest of the Junior National Coaching Staff. Due to the age requirements, the team was forced to play up to the U18's division despite the majority of them falling within the 16yrs-17yrs age range. They finished a strong 15th out of 27 teams in the highest Club Level. This was the first event on the girls' competition calendar, and in some cases the first overseas tournament for some of the players. The play was intense, exciting and fast paced. Our national team girls played hard and really stepped up to the challenge. Head Coach Donna Smith noted "This was the best the team has played and was a big improvement over last year. It was a great experience."

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In April, the JNT boys travelled to Antigua & Barbuda to participate in the U19 ECVA Championships, led by their head coach, Mark Hamilton. Bermuda faced off against Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada, French St. Martin, St. Vincent & St. Lucia. Our boys played extremely well and went to 5 sets with 2 of the top teams, but unfortunately finished outside of the medals. This was the first overseas competition for almost all of the boys, and it will prove to be a great learning experience for future events.

The BVA has shifted its focus to youth development and have been working with the Dept of Youth, Sport & Recreation to launch volleyball in their After School Program. This program will introduce volleyball into the public primary schools. Each term 5 different public primary schools will be selected and one day a week, the BVA will be on-site working with the program volunteers & kids. The ASP kicked off in September. We are optimistic that this will lead to an increased awareness & participation in the game.

The BVA is also working on creating better coaches and referees to push the sport forward. The BVA continued with its annual Bermuda Referee Clinic, lead by Bill Bucci & Philipp Meihe turning out some great local referees, both Level 1 and Level 2. In addition to the Referee Course, in January, the BVA offered a Learn the Rules Course for members which proved to be a great success. This 2 evening course let those people who wanted to learn more about the game do so, without the added pressure of becoming a referee. We will be offering this same course in October 2014. The BVA also works to send our national team coaches to the US in order to qualify as US certified coaches.

During the summer beach season, the BVA launched the Sand Lizards Club. This is a new BVA program aimed specifically at developing skills and strategy for 2s beach volleyball. The Club is open to current BVA members, men and women, preference to those playing in Competitive beach leagues. Each 2 hour training session includes both skills practice and game play. The Club has also proven to be a success and we will look to expand it for the 2015 beach season.

Our Volleyball season is also highlighted by our various tournaments which continue to prove their popularity. Special thanks to all of our sponsors for making these week-end events what they are (Docksiders, Barritts, Makin Waves, Coppertone, Corona and WKD).

At the beginning of our fiscal year, the BVA launched our new website and logo. The updated site provides easier navigation, more information and calendar functions to keep our members up to date. Check out [www.bva.bm](http://www.bva.bm). Special thanks to Kristina Mierzejewski & Cosmic for the great work!

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Overall, 2013-14 has seen the sport of volleyball continue to grow in popularity and become a bigger part of the Bermuda community. We intend to keep this moving forward. To that end, the BVA has worked to nurture relationships with its sponsors and partners and will continue to do so in the future.

On behalf of Mike Bengson and myself, we would like to thank the members of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, National Team Committee & Youth Committee. Both Mike & I will be stepping down as Co-Presidents of the BVA, and would like to thank those who made our jobs so enjoyable over the past decade.

The BVA is a 100% volunteer run organization and their commitment, energy and passion for the sport of volleyball are examples to all of us in the volleyball community.

Thanks and see you on the court!

Elisabeth Rae & Mike Bengson  
Co-Presidents, Bermuda Volleyball Association

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