



JVA CLUB OF THE MONTH

April 2013



Grand Stand Juniors
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

[Website](#)

Organization structure: 501c3

Club Director, Alex Sing, can remember the very moment the idea came. He was sitting and watching his daughter's volleyball game. The play on the court was very bad and neither team could keep a rally going. He kept saying to himself that someone has to help these girls improve. The next thought was "what about me? Could I help?"

Alex had a long volleyball history as a player and even owned a volleyball clothing company called "Sets". Many of his friends were players and a few were even coaching. He remembers going into gyms with his Sets company and seeing these young girls working and training for volleyball. He knew that was what was needed in our area. There was not a competitive club program locally. He called a few of his friends and they launched Grand Strand Juniors in the fall of 2007. Many who helped start GSJ are still involved. At the first parent meeting they had no idea what to expect. They sat out about 30 chairs. 15 minutes before the meeting there were maybe 10 people sitting and for a moment Alex was thinking this might not work. All of a sudden people began pouring in and they had about 75 people show up, and the club was born.

With limited coaches and facilities, GSJ started with 3 teams the first season. It was the first club experience for most of the girls. Our high school teams were very weak and most of the female athletes were playing other sports. GSJ's best advertising after that first year was the girls who played for the club. Fast forward to 2013 and Grand Strand Juniors has 18 teams and operates out of its own 3 court facility. The number of teams has grown, but also the quality of the players. Area school teams are now challenging for state titles and the club's seniors are getting volleyball scholarships. Just the other weekend GSJ had its first Region Champion with the 13U Nfinity team; two others were top 5.



"Throughout the process of starting the club our vision has been to model ourselves after those clubs who seem to be setting the standard for performance and education. That has led to us joining the JVA. We want to give our athletes every opportunity to succeed" states Alex. GSJ is one of the few clubs in South Carolina with a facility. Having its own facility has allowed the club to provide more practice hours and training for its players. In addition to the weekly team practices offer skill clinics so players can focus on specific areas they

need help with. Plus, the club encourages its most experienced coaches to spend time with each team helping train and develop the younger coaches and players.

GSJ was the first club in the state to host a Convention Center tournament. The club also hosts the Winter Bump Volleyball Classic during MLK weekend, which draws over 200 teams from 6 states and 4 USAV regions. Also, in May, it hosts the AAU Super Regional Coastal Classic Volleyball Championships.

In addition to helping operate the facility, monies from its events allow the club to provide scholarships for some players and keep the club fees to some of the lowest in the state. GSJ makes a point to remove the obstacles that keep players from playing club as much as possible. Future plans have Grand Stand Juniors moving out of the sports complex and build from the ground up.



GSJ's program would not be complete without the outdoor season. After all, the club is located in Myrtle Beach, SC. The club has practices with its teams outdoors and many players participate in outdoor tournaments. Every summer GSJ hosts the Battle at the Beach for juniors. Last year 47 teams gathered for the event.

Grand Strand Juniors hopes to develop an indoor boys program for 2014. The club has generated interest from boys in the summer with beach and hopes to keep the boys together and play an indoor season as well.

One of the coolest things about the 2013 season has been having a number of former players return as coaches. Grand Strand Juniors' motto "We are GSJ" gives everyone a sense of family and support. The club hopes that no matter where its players go after their experience with GSJ, they leave with great memories and a love for the game.

Interested in nominating your club for JVA Club of the Month? [Here's how.](#)