



JVA CLUB OF THE MONTH

June 2013



Hampton Roads Juniors Volleyball Club
Hampton Roads, Virginia

[Website](#)

Hampton Roads Juniors Volleyball Club (HRJ) was formed in 2004 by Elizabeth Wirt and Willard Thomas. The driving force was to expand volleyball in Hampton Roads. The mission of HRJ has always been to provide quality volleyball training that emphasizes teamwork, leadership, competitiveness, and technique while maintaining a fiscally responsible club. During the 2005-06 season, the club fielded one 17& Under team. In the 2006-07 season, the club grew to five teams (14-18 & Under), eight teams (13-18 & Under) in the 2007-08 season and nine teams (12-18 & Under) in the 2009-2011 seasons. Hampton Roads Juniors had seen moderate tournament success during its brief existence until this past season. The club saw a big jump in competitiveness among its 14's, 15's, and 18's age groups. HRJ teams medaled multiple times at tournaments, and had one player named on the all-tournament team at the Capital Hill Classic, and one player named on the 2013 JVA Watch List.



Today the club is Co-directed by both Tommy Thomas and Amy Donate. HRJ prides itself on the club's ability and its coaches' dedication to giving its athletes (both boys and girls), as many options as possible for their futures. In the past two years HRJ has graduated the following:

4 D1 athletes

6 D2 athletes

5 D3 athletes

and for the first time in club history this year two boys signed to play in college next school year.

This marked the first year that HRJ had a grassroots volleyball program for boys and girls ages 8-14. This is one of the first programs in the area that introduces volleyball to children of that age range. The Hampton Roads Juniors Volleyball Club Grassroots program was started to introduce young and new athletes to the sport of volleyball.



Basic instruction on technique and understanding the game is the primary goal, along with having a lot of fun. All athletes received 24 hours of instruction (over an 8 week session, an HRJ Grassroots t-shirt, and a volleyball with their registration. While individual skill building was the primary focus of all sessions, game like drills and 6 on 6 games were stressed during the second half of each session. To participate in both 8 week sessions it was a \$200.00 fee and there were between 15-20 kids in each session. This was a great success for the first year and HRJ hopes to increase numbers each season and more kids interested in volleyball in the Hampton Roads community.



In addition, Hampton Roads Juniors added three new fundraisers to the club this season to help families with their yearly dues. One fundraiser was with Chik-Fil-A and UNO's for a one night and one night only event. For every order that was purchased at these two places of business, HRJ volleyball club received a fair percent of that orders total price. It was a great success for both of the restaurants and HRJ as families from every team supported the event.

Not only has HRJ developed a successful girls program, it has also developed a growing boys program as well. Over the past four years the club has fielded an 18 and under boys team. Due very few schools that offer boys volleyball in the area, marketing has been a challenge. But a big part of the program's success has been due to

word of mouth. The boys that play for HRJ enjoy the experience and coaching they receive and they want to come back. Many of them typically bring their friends. HRJ will be expanding its boys program in 2013-14 to include a middle school boys team.

HRJ hopes to continue to grow by expanding its boys and girls programs, as well as offering grassroots and developmental teams for beginner athletes. The club is also actively involved in getting a dedicated volleyball facility. All the coaches and the directors of Hampton Roads Juniors have worked long and hard to improve the volleyball community in the area, and dedicated to making all programs affordable. Many of HRJ's coaches are volleyball enthusiasts that also coach local high school programs and/or play for local colleges. Each year they complete both USAV training through IMPACT as well as the Positive Coaches Alliance through AAU. In addition, HRJ coaches are encouraged to attend additional CAP training and coaches training sessions through various universities.



The coaches are not only focused on coaching volleyball, but want to improve the quality of life for their athletes: teaching them discipline, time management skills, and how to work hard for a common goal. HRJ is changing lives and creating opportunities these athletes never thought possible.

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