

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **16U Male Athlete of the Year**

**Jackson Maris**

**NAVC Gold Bears**

Jackson Maris is dedicated to the sport of volleyball. Since the age of 12, he has been making the two-hour drive into Edmonton for practice with his NAVC team from his home in Edson.

His dedication has paid off. In 2006, 2007, and 2009 his Bears team won the AVA Provincial Championships. Jackson was named to the Provincial Championship All-Star team in both 2007 and 2009.

Jackson's accomplishments do not end at the provincial level; his team has been quite successful on the national stage as well. In 2008, his NAVC team won the Silver medal at the 15U Canadian West Open. One year later, they returned to the Olympic Oval in Calgary and avenged their loss by winning a hard-fought three set victory in the National final. The 16U Canadian Open Championship Banner was only part of the hardware as Jackson was nominated to the tournament All-Star team.

Never one to limit his sports, Jackson is also involved with hockey, soccer, basketball, badminton, snowboarding, wakeboarding, and beach volleyball. In 2007, Jackson and his beach partner won bronze at Provincial Championships.

In addition to being an athlete, Jackson also coach's volleyball, basketball, and fitness within his community. His community involvement, on court successes and athletic abilities are why Jackson is the 2009 16U Male Tachikara Player of the Year.

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **16U Female Athlete of the Year**

**Kyjsa Brkich**

**Elite U16**

Kyjsa is a phenomenal leader in every way.

She has been captain of her team for the past 2 club seasons- a role she takes very seriously. Kyjsa has consistently and voluntarily taken on as much of a leadership role as possible. At times, she could almost be considered an assistant coach as she helps organize team meetings, dinners, and extra practices.

Kyjsa's consistently positive attitude and unparalleled work ethic have been referred to as "the driving force behind her team's success". She has dedicated hundreds of extra hours in the gym, including sport specific practices as well as physical conditioning, to be nothing less than the best player and captain that she can be.

Leading up to the 2009 Provincial Championships, she had each of her teammates write a few paragraphs about every other member of the team. Kyjsa's combined the responses to make individual books for each player comprised of the positive and encouraging words from their teammates. Each player was thrilled to receive their book at provincials- her work definitely contributed to the team's results.

In 2008 her Elite team was Provincial Champions; in 2009, they finished with a silver medal. On both occasions Kyjsa was selected to the tournament all-star team. Elite also posted the best result of all 16U Girls teams at the Canadian West Open this year- finishing tied for 5<sup>th</sup>. Kyjsa's abilities have earned her a place on the 16U provincial team on two occasions- as a 14U and again as a 15U athlete. The possibility exists that she could be named to the 16U Provincial team again this summer for a remarkable third time.

Even though the club season has come to an end, Kyjsa's has orchestrated another teambuilding activity. The Elite team is planning on volunteering their time at a homeless shelter in June or July.

Kyjsa's maturity shows through both on and off the court- her career will be something to watch!

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **18U Male Athlete of the Year**

**Jarron Mueller**

**Canuck Red**

“I have never coached a player that has been a more positive role model and leader for his teammates,” states Jarron’s Coach Phil Brown.

Referred to by many as the ‘top male setter in the province of Alberta,’ Jarron was a natural choice for this award. In fact, this will mark the second time Jarron has received a Tachikara Achievement award; he previously won the 16U Male Athlete of the Year award in 2007.

Jarron was the centerpiece of his Canuck Red team which finished fourth at the 18U Canadian Open in Ottawa earlier this year. His consistently high level of play, coupled with fantastic decision making, solidified his nomination to the tournament All-Star team. Additional accomplishments of Jarron’s include representing Alberta as a member of the 19U provincial team in 2007, 2008 (winning the National Team Challenge Cup) and again this summer in 2009. Jarron also received the 2008 Al Taylor Award as Calgary’s top volleyball student-athlete.

Not only is Jarron an accomplished indoor player, he has also thrived on the Beach. In 2007 Jarron and his beach partner won the provincial championships and represented Alberta winning the Beach Western Elite championships. In 2008, after winning a Bronze medal at the 18U Beach Provincial Championships as 17U athletes, Jarron and his partner went on to finish 9<sup>th</sup> at Nationals all the while competing with athletes one year older.

However, Jarron’s contributions to the sport come from more than just his physical talents. He is a vocal, confident leader, who treats his teammates and coaches with the highest level of respect. His strong work ethic and humble attitude help improve the skill level of all of the athletes he plays with.

He is a top junior golfer and high school basketball player, a mid-80’s student, a volunteer at the Mustard Seed, and an official for junior high volleyball and basketball. He is sure to continue to contribute to both his sport and community when he attends Mount Royal College in the fall.

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **18U Female Athlete of the Year**

**Camille Saxton**

**Canuck Menergy**

An athlete as exceptionally gifted as Camille Saxton is a rare find. No one who has seen her play can doubt her outstanding abilities and physical attributes.

She has been successful at every juncture in her volleyball career. Since winning her last Tachikara Achievement award in 2006, she has won a Provincial Championship (2007), two Provincial Silver medals (2008, 2009), and a National Silver Medal (2008); along with an All-Star award at each of the previously mentioned championships. Camille also led the Canada Prospects team to the Volleyball Festival Finals in 2007, marking the first time a Canadian team ever made a final since the tournament began in 1983.

Astonishingly, these accolades only include her indoor results. On the beach, she has accumulated three Provincial championships (2006, 2007, 2008), two Western Championships (2006, 2007), and two medals at Beach Nationals (Silver in 2006 and Bronze in 2007).

However, this award is not simply being awarded to Camille based on her tremendous athletic accomplishments. She has a natural ability to lead her teammates both on and off the court. Her quiet and oftentimes overlooked leadership skills motivate her teammates to play beyond their perceived capabilities. Camille provides her teammates with the confidence to believe in themselves and go after their dreams. A humble athlete, Camille always demonstrates a gracious attitude in the face of both defeat and victory.

Camille's career is barely underway- we look forward to watching her develop in her next quest when she represents Oregon State in the Pac-10 conference.

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **16U Male Team Coach of the Year**

**David Jones**

**NAVC Gold Bears**

Jones, a former University of Alberta Golden Bear, was the first president of the Northern Alberta Volleyball club when it was established in 1984. He has coached within the club and high school systems for over 20 years; today he is being recognized for the work he has done coaching the NAVC Bears team from 2007-2009.

David has worked with the same team for the last two years. Forty five athletes tried out for the 2008-2009 edition of his team- which is a large testament not only to the work of the NAVC club & high schools in Edmonton, but to the coach himself.

“He takes the time to really get to know all of the boys and their families, and is always interested in what is going on with them at school, at home, and with other sports they compete in,” comments Team manager Steve Ponich.

David led his team to medals at all three Premier tournaments en route to the 2009 Provincial title. He stressed the importance of having high-standards and improving every individual player’s skills. The team obviously thrived under this foundation as they overcame a tough White Rock, B. C., squad in the third set of the Canadian Open final to capture the Division 1 Tier 1 National Championship Banner.

The NAVC Bears’ victory was the first time since 2000 that an Alberta team has won the Canadian Open. The victory also brought redemption as the same team lost the final in the 15U category at the 2008 Canadian Open.

“(David) is not only a great coach, but a firm disciplinarian, a loving father figure, and friend, and a mentor to all twelve (of his players).”

Congratulations to David Jones, the recipient of the 2009 16U Male Coach of the Year

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **16U Female Team Coach of the Year**

**LeAnn Kinvig**

**Dinos 15**

LeAnn's playing experience speaks for itself; a former Team Alberta member, LeAnn began her post-secondary career at Grande Prairie College. She was then recruited to the Montana State University Bobcats, where she played from 2002 until 2005. LeAnn is also an avid beach player. In 2008, her and her partner won the Silver Medal in the Open Division at Provincial Championships.

It would be an understatement to say that LeAnn Kinvig's head coaching debut was successful. The reality is that her Dinos team swept the entire 15U age class- winning all three AVA Premier tournaments and Provincial Championships.

Not only did the Dinos win all four AVA events, the Dinos 15 team actually posted an undefeated record at all three Premier tournaments; losing just two sets over the three weekends. With these kinds of results, it came as no surprise when the 2009 Provincial Banner found a home in the Dinos gym.

The only blemishes to the Dinos perfect season came at the 2009 Canadian West Open. On their way to very respectable fourth place finish, the Dinos won their first seven matches. Monday brought the National semi-final, and a heart-breaking third set loss to the Durham Attack team. Later in the day, the team also lost to Brandon's CVC team. Considering there were 88 teams from five provinces represented at the Open- fourth place is something to be extremely proud of.

LeAnn's commitment and passion for coaching were evident throughout the season. As a talented up-and-coming coach, she still has a lot to give to our sport.

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **18U Male Team Coach of the Year**

**Jeremy Deeks**

**NAVC Bears Gold**

A former NAVC player himself, Jeremy spent a year playing for Grant MacEwan College followed by a year with Mount Royal College. He has been coaching with the NAVC Bears club program for the last four years. Throughout this time, Jeremy has had an extremely challenging schedule. He has been taking a full course load from the University of Lethbridge. Over and above his scholastic commitments, he has also held down either a part-or-full time job. Somehow, he still finds the time and energy to give back to the sport.

In just four years, Jeremy has racked up an impressive 3 Provincial Gold medals (2006, 2007, and 2008), 1 Provincial Silver Medal (2009), three fifth place finishes at Nationals (2007, 2008, 2009), and a National Silver medal (2006).

This season proved to be challenge for the Bears team. Early on, they struggled to transfer their capabilities to game performance. Jeremy demonstrated his commitment to his team by soliciting feedback from his assistant coaches and players. Most importantly, he was able to incorporate this feedback into practices and games. This adaptability resulted in late season performance- the team won Premier #4 after finishing no higher than fifth at the first three Premiers.

Although his teams have been quite successful, Jeremy has always kept his players grounded. Being “successful young men” has always been stressed over winning. Jeremy has also helped his athletes believe they could be successful at the post-secondary level. Nine of his 2009 players will be moving onto to play at the post-secondary level- three players will be competing in the CIS, with six athletes playing in the ACAC.

Jeremy has provided his athletes an extremely strong foundation- his athletes will be sure to remember their NAVC coach throughout their careers.

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **18U Female Team Coach of the Year**

**Reid Brodie**

**Dinos 18**

Reid began her post-secondary career at the University College of the Caribou. In 2001, Reid transferred to the University of Calgary Dinos where she played between 2003 and 2005. In 2004, her Dinos won the CIS National Championships; they followed up with a Bronze medal performance in 2005. Reid was named to the tournament all-star team on both occasions. As a member of the Canadian National Women's B Team in 2003, she competed at the World Universiade Games in Korea. Her stint with the National Team continued through the summer of 2004.

She has transitioned from a successful playing career to a successful coaching career. She was an assistant coach with the Team Alberta program for two summers. In 2008, her Dinos 17 team won the Provincial Gold and National Bronze medals. In 2009, she led the more mature version of her team, now Dinos 18's, to a 32-2 record at AVA events. Considering that half of the AVA events involved the new power pool format, this record becomes more impressive. As the winners of the 2009 Provincial Banner, Reid's team improved on their 2008 bronze-medal performance by taking home the silver medal at the 2009 Canadian Open.

Practicing with her team an average of four times per week, Reid has committed herself wholeheartedly to her athletes. Not only was she willing to run any extra practices requested, she also was regularly involved in her athletes lives outside of the team. She attended school functions, helped with school work, and facilitated post-secondary opportunities. She stressed high standards and sportsmanship at all times. She educated her athletes in all areas of the game including physical and mental preparation as well as the importance of healthy eating.

Reid is considered a role model for all of her athletes- and they will continue to look to her throughout their lives as a friend and support system.



## Alberta Volleyball 2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards

### **Official of the Year – Arch Beck**

Arch Beck, this year's recipient of the Tachikara Achievement Award as Alberta's Referee of the Year, is no stranger to the volleyball community. Arch's passion, knowledge and abilities have been honed over years of experience in all facets of the game. His involvement in the community involves time as a player, coach, referee and supervisor. He continues to be involved in the community, currently serving as one of Alberta's top referees, where he is well respected for his contributions both on and off the court.

It is amazing to watch the reaction of participants and coaches alike when Arch walks in the gym on an assignment, as there is a visible relaxation because of the intangibles that he brings night in and night out when refereeing. Arch's on court endeavours this year were nothing short of astonishing, whether he worked at the High School level, the University level, or anywhere in between. His performance this year landed him an assignment at the Canada West Final 4 held in Edmonton in February 2009, where he worked the Women's Gold Medal match as the first referee and the Men's Bronze Medal match as the second referee. It also garnered him an assignment as a major official, representing Alberta at the 2009 Men's CCAA Championships held in Fort McMurray in March 2009. While there, he was assigned as the first referee on the Bronze Medal match. Each time out, Arch does excellent work and he is looked upon as a role model for his abilities to observe and read the game and what it dictates.

Arch is also very active off court, as he contributes a great deal both his local association and to the provincial association. During the 2008/2009 season, Arch served as the President for the Edmonton Volleyball Officials Association, assisting with the implementation and use of The Arbiter (a database program for assigning officials), and numerous clinics within the zone. He also sat as a member of Alberta's Level 3 (Regional) upgrade committee, providing his expertise to the Level 3 candidates across Alberta. This role took him to Red Deer, Calgary in January in -40 degree weather, and Grande Prairie for evaluations. Arch also served as a Referee Supervisor for the ACAC Men's Provincial championships held in Grande Prairie in February 2009, where he taught the working officials the importance of the 'big picture'. He is an active mentor, and works to develop officials in Edmonton and across Alberta.

Arch has certainly had a busy season in 2008/2009! For his endeavours this year, it is only fitting that he has been chosen as Alberta's Referee of the Year.

## **2009 Tachikara Achievement Awards**

### **Volunteer of the Year**

**Heather Wishlow**

**North 49 Volleyball Club**

Heather Wishlow has been volunteering for the North 49 Volleyball club in Calgary for four years. This may not seem like such an amazing feat; however, one must consider the fact that her daughter began playing for a different club two years ago.

Heather is the club coordinator at North 49. With the exception of actually coaching the teams; she is involved at every level. She works tirelessly to book hotels, organize transportation, process paperwork, and arrange snacks and meals for the club. Not surprisingly, the job that gains her the most notoriety is her role as 'food mom'. Heather not only plans healthy meals for all of the North 49 teams (as many as five teams per season), she actually cooks the meals and packages them to be taken on the road. To top this off, she has also been known to feed AVA tournament whips- as they often are students with a keen appreciation of home-cooking.

Heather enables other parents within the club to contribute to the sport too as she organizes and instructs a scorekeeping seminar for North 49 parents. Her expert advice is very much appreciated as the score sheet can appear quite ominous to people new to scorekeeping. Never one to stand by the wayside, Heather herself has also stepped in to score keep for the club when necessary.

In addition to her efforts with the North 49 club, Heather also supports the Dinos club program (her daughter's new club). Once again, she lends her food planning expertise. Her organizational skills are also put to work as Heather helps facilitate the Annual Nathan Bennor Memorial Golf Tournament that supports the University of Calgary volleyball teams.

Heather's dedication to our sport has a huge effect on numerous athletes- all of her hard work is definitely appreciated!