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## **Xceleration Volleyball Club Team Earns Junior Olympics Bid**

*Submitted by Tom Owen*

Xceleration Volleyball Club's 18s team recently qualified for the Junior Olympic Tournament, to be held in Reno, Nevada. The team won all nine matches in a grueling three-day competition, against teams from Texas, Utah, Arizona and Kansas, as well as two of Southern California's most powerful clubs, Elite 951 and TCA, before meeting Club West in the final game.

Against Club West, captain and setter Mary Diamantidis, of Moraga, recorded 15 assists in the first game, flanked by Campolindo's Alex Shurtz and Anisa Smith, and Las Lomas' Morgan Borch, helping her team win the game 28-26. Club West came back to take the second game 25-20, and both teams fought hard in the deciding game, with Club West prevailing 15-12.

"I am tired after playing ten matches in three days, but I am so happy to be playing for such a great team," said an elated Mary Diamantidis. "Everyone at Xceleration, from my great teammates to my coaches Andy Schroeder and Jeremy Swann, team assistant Paul Harrison, club director Jim Ross and club college recruiter Jack Cowden, has been wonderful to me. This is the best club experience I have ever had in my seven plus years as a volleyball player."

Jim Ross, a resident of Orinda, is Xceleration's Club Director and is from a family very involved in Miramonte High School volleyball; his daughter Shannon Ross was a Miramonte four-year varsity player and is currently the head coach of Miramonte's girls varsity team. His younger daughter Kelsey Ross is also a Miramonte volleyball alum and a star player at Rutgers College.

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