

**California Community Colleges  
Commission on Athletics  
Women's Volleyball Championships**

*Irvine Valley College  
December 6 - 7, 2003*

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## **Golden West Aims for Unprecedented 11th Consecutive State Title**

*By Eric Montgomery*

Conventional wisdom says that streaks are made to be broken. Is this the year that Golden West has its streak of 10-straight state championships ended?

The task will not be easy for the three other teams joining the Rustlers at the California Community Colleges Commission on Athletics Women's Volleyball Championship in Hart Gymnasium at Irvine Valley College.

Two-time all-state selection and two-time defending Orange Empire Conference Most Valuable Player Ashley Jensen leads the charge for head coach Albert Gasparian and the Orange Empire Conference champion Rustlers. Jensen, who had 18 kills and four blocks in the title-clinching win over San Joaquin Delta last season, is hitting at a .435 clip and averaging 3.5 kills and 1.2 blocks per game. All-region performer Taylor Love leads the team and is 8th in the state with 1.54 blocks per game. Nicole Ryan completes the three-headed offensive monster with team-highs of 214 kills and 3.8 kills per game.

Joining Golden West out of the south region is tournament host Irvine Valley, who upset #2-ranked Orange Coast in a five-game thriller to reach the state tournament for the first time since 1999. All-state setter Katie King directs the Lasers attack, averaging 12.1 assists per game to rank her third among the state leaders. Her biggest weapon is Audrey Sipkovich, 9th in the state at 4.1 kills per game while hitting at a .306 clip. Katie Martinez patrols the middle and averages 3.1 kills per game while hitting .372 on the season.

The top seed out of the north and last season's runner-up is San Joaquin Delta, champions of the Bay Valley Conference Gold Division. All-state honoree Cassie Sharp, a member of the all-tournament team last season, ranks fifth in the state with 4.3 kills per game and totaled 365 for the season. Setters Jennifer Emerson and Katie Hoag split time directing the offense behind Sharp and all-region selection Sarah Buhr.

Rounding out the field of four is Coast South Division champion West Valley. The Vikings are led offensively by Erin Murphy, who hits at a .412 mark and has 245 kills on the season for a per game average of 3.2. The defense is guided by Michelle O'Riley, averaging just over four digs per game while setter Malia Peneyra dishes out just under nine assists per game.

With a newly-approved single-elimination format in place for this year's championships, no team can afford any slip up. This could provide the chance for a team from the north to capture the championship for the first time ever. Perhaps Irvine Valley will use its home court advantage behind a pro-Lasers crowd to win its first championship.

All three teams will have to end one of the most impressive streaks ever compiled in the state regardless of sport. Gasparian and his squad would like nothing more than to make 11-straight and title number 15 overall for him in 21 seasons.