

# BALANCE

December 2023 NEWSLETTER



## THIS MONTH'S NEWCOMER TO BALANCE

 **BECCA KUEHN- CL CENTRAL-17's**

**How long have you played volleyball?** I have been playing since 2nd grade at Immanuel Lutheran in Crystal Lake.

**Why did you choose Balance?** I chose Balance because of the things I heard about the club, how it's flexible with my schedule and how good the program is.

**What are you looking forward to this season?** I am looking forward to making new friends, becoming better at Volleyball - and the fun tournaments!

**What other sports do you play?** I used to play basketball, but now I only play volleyball.

**What kind of teammate are you?** I think I am a reliable, comforting, compassionate teammate.

**What are you most nervous about in regards to starting at a new club?** I think I am most nervous to be setting, especially at a new club, because it's my first year at setting and still learning. I was an OH before this.

**What do you hope volleyball will do for you in the future?** Grow as a teammate and learn to work hard. I hope volleyball will give me opportunities in life so I can succeed.

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**OPEN GYM DECEMBER 22nd!**

Teams will be split and announced by DECEMBER 29th

How do we make decisions on where to place players?

1. Master coaches from each positional training give input.
2. Age group coaches then take that information and discuss their needs
3. We do our best to make decisions that are best for the team
4. We discuss each player and do our best to put each player in a position that is best for their development and their experience.

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***MT PERFORMANCE PRE-TEST TOP PERFORMERS***

***Vertical Jump***

***13's- Emerson Gres 26.2"***

***14's- Kanyon DiSomone 23.9"***

***15's- Joanna Kruzolek 27.5"***

***16's Sophie Komar 28.5"***

***17's Kristina DeLeon 26.3"***

**Shot Put Speed- POWER**

<b>13's- Jordyn Johnson</b>	<b>23.1 MPH</b>
<b>14's- Maya Mangan</b>	<b>22.5 MPH</b>
<b>15's- Zoe Freund</b>	<b>23.8 MPH</b>
<b>16's- Sophia Komar</b>	<b>25.9 MPH</b>
<b>17's- Destiny Parsons</b>	<b>22.6 MPH</b>
<b>18's- Allison Wenzel</b>	<b>23.1 MPH</b>

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***WELCOME TO THE FAMILY, BALANCE BABIES***



**ELLA and ARCHER!!!**

♥ **Coach Loxl**

**1 year off to be a Mama**

**Coach Annlo** ♥

**15 White & be a Mama**



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## ***REMINDERS-***

- 1. AAU Membership complete? Did you attach your daughter to BalanceVBC**
- 2. All 13-18 year olds are encouraged to attend as many positional training sessions as they would like to attend.**
- 3. ADDED an open gym December 22nd! This will be a fun day of play**
- 4. Once teams are selected, we will be asking for TEAM REP that will help the coach keep the team organized and assist in communication. Please start thinking if that is a role you would like to have this year!**
- 5. Do not wait too long to start booking housing and airfare to Orlando as the tournament is expected to grow significantly again this year!**
- 6. 16's and 17's age group, it is never too early to start putting together a highlight video to send to colleges. Once it is done, please send to Coach Patty for review.**
- 7. Please do not skip weight training!! So important to get ready for the long, grueling season ahead!**

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### **FAVORITE PIC OF THE MONTH**



## MEET ONE OF OUR BALANCE COACHES

### JULIE WAGER

#### 14 White- Assistant Coach

**Growing up....** I grew up with 3 older brothers, who were MUCH older than me, so my love for sports started young. It was probably because the only attention I got from them was when I was their goalie and they could kick stuff at me :-). If it was a sport, I played it. Ghost in the graveyard, football with the neighborhood boys, soccer, backyard volleyball... if there could be competition, I WAS IN! I played soccer from in my mothers womb (or so she says) through club leagues in college. I played volleyball for as long as I could, until my knee gave out and my dr said I could only be a 1 sport athlete. At the time, I was tall and could jump, so I know you won't believe me when I say it, I did play middle. Emphasis on the word "could" when I say jump ;-)

**In college...** In college, I was a math major, so that was my main focus. I was involved in a church on campus as well as played as much as my schedule could handle along with working. I played Rugby for Illinois State University, won "Rookie of the year" my first year playing. I continued to play in soccer leagues as well as a competitive co-ed volleyball league run through the school. I also took a volleyball class for credit, my mom said that was cheating, I said "you gotta get credits to graduate, I may as well enjoy it!" ;-)

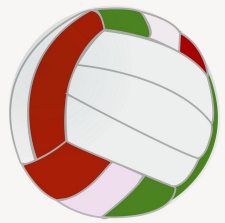
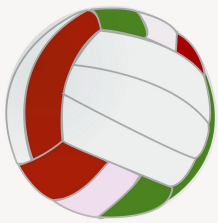
**What is your other job?** My other job... I am a full time Uber driver and Uber Eats delivery person... aka, I am a mom of 3 kids! I have a sophomore son, an 8th grade daughter and a 6th grade daughter :-). They all play sports so we are always on the go. I am also very involved in my church's youth group, so I spend a lot of my time with kids, doing silly games, organizing events and most of my summer is spent at Silver Birch Ranch. It is a youth Christian camp in northern Wisconsin. I also coach volleyball at Trinity Oaks Christian Academy. My real job other than being a mom, I am a high school math teacher.

**Why did you become a coach?** I am in a classroom each day with high school students. I love building relationships with kids and being there to support them in all areas of life. The classroom only gives me limited time with them. I love that coaching allows me to get to know these kids on a different level. It might come as a shock to you when you read this, but not every kid loves math class ;-). So, coaching allows me to get to know kids in an environment that they love! I still get to know them and support them.



**What do you love about coaching?** I love seeing kids grow in their love for the sport as well as their skill. I love to see the twinkle in their eye when they start to see their own potential instead of just hearing about it. I love supporting the whole kid. Encouraging them, loving on them and being one of their biggest fans.

**At the end of a season, what do you hope your players reflect on in regards to you as their coach and their season?** At the end of the season, I hope that they know I loved them, I cared for them and that they are valuable. Their value doesn't come from a stat, (although as an AP Stats teacher, stats are fun! ;-)) there is no number out there that can fully define them. Their worth and value come from so many other things. I hope they look back at this season and feel loved, had fun, grew in their love of volleyball as well as in skill.



## SENIOR SPOTLIGHT.....

**ERIN NOTHDORF**- McHenry HS- Illinois Institute of Technology Univ



**Why did you choose Balance?** I chose balance because I was a multi sport athlete. I have played basketball my sophomore and senior year and track my sophomore year so I wanted to play for a club that would allow me to play those sports. I really enjoy being a multi sport athlete and balance is the only club that allows me to continue to play other sports

**What is the biggest obstacle you have had to overcome in volleyball?** The biggest obstacle I had to overcome in volleyball is my back injury. Last year at the JVA World Challenge my back began to hurt really badly. After the tournament I found out that I had 2 bulging discs in my back. This injury has been a constant battle for me ever since then. I was in physical therapy for a few months and just played through it. This injury caused me to miss a few tournament days and really challenged me. I have learned how to manage it though so hopefully I am clear for the future.

**What are your college plans?** My college plans are to go to Illinois Institute of Technology to play volleyball and study **Astrophysics**?!?!?!?!?!?

**What do you love about the game?** I love the mental challenge that the game brings. Playing through lows on the court and being pushed by my team to be the best version of myself make me love the game. I also love the team aspect of the game, how everything that you do has to be together. I think that playing together as a team and celebrating each other just makes the victories so much more worth it.

**What are things that I wish I would not have stressed about when I was younger?** I wished that I would've stressed less about joining a new team. When I was younger I was always scared to change clubs or go onto a new team because I wouldn't know anyone on the team. I have always been pretty introverted so that made me stress whenever I would join a new team and have to meet new girls. As I have grown up, I have been a part of many different teams and on every team I have made really close friends. I am still close with some of those girls. On all of the teams I have been on, we always became close really quickly and my nerves quickly disappeared.

**Did you ever think about quitting?** I have never thought about quitting. I have had a few really tough years that have drained me mentally but I always loved the game so much that I just wanted to play no matter what challenges I faced.

**Advice for younger Balance players.....**My advice for younger players would be to not put yourself in a box. Don't be afraid to try new positions or go to different position trainings. Being able to play many positions will help you in the future because you may not be the same position on every team as you grow up. Also learning other positions can help you with your main position because you can bring different skills that you learn by practicing other positions. It may be weird to play other positions but it can only help you in the future



*In her free time, she loves to cook and bake! We cannot wait to see what she*

*makes for the 18 white team this season!!*



## *College Update*

# *Hannah Baudin*

Here is Hannah's story, as she chose to play Junior College volleyball at MCC and transferred to Division 1, Indiana State University

### **Why did you choose the Junior College route?**

I chose to play at the JUCO level because I wanted to be close to my family and I didn't want to have to leave them yet. It was my dream to go D1 but I realized I needed more time to focus on school for the first couple years. I also loved the coaches at McHenry County College and I saw how successful their program had been.

### **What did you enjoy about Junior College volleyball and what honors did you receive?**

I loved that I was able to stay at home. I didn't have to worry about coming home after a long day of school and volleyball to figure out what to eat because my mom was there. I also loved how my family was able to go to any games they wanted to because they were all so close to home. I also got to continue to coach at Balance which was a bonus. I was a 3x All American, 3x first team all conference, all tournament at the National Tournament and all tournament at different tournaments.

### **How difficult was it to transfer from JUCO to D1?**

My coaches at Indiana State made the transfer super easy, I came in the spring which was nice because I didn't have to come to a new school and figure everything out on top of starting a season. Moving away from my family was hard, but the girls and the coaches made me feel so welcome.

### **Why did you choose Indiana State?**

I chose Indiana State because the coaches accepted me for who I was. Many D1 coaches aren't going to take someone who has my personality. If you know me I am a character, yet they welcomed that. They also treat their players like their own kids and if we ever need anything they are just a call away, even if I just want to pet my coach's dog I'm welcome whenever.

### **What is the biggest difference between JUCO and D1?**

One thing we take more seriously is lifting and conditioning all year round. Along with having multiple practices a day sometimes. If you don't love volleyball and don't want it to be your whole college experience I wouldn't recommend going D1 because it is your life.





**What is your favorite part of being a D1 athlete?**

My favorite part is having tough competition and never having an easy game. I also love when we go somewhere big during our preseason to have a tournament with girls I used to watch on TV. I also love that most of our games are on ESPN+.

**What is the hardest part of being a D1 athlete?**

The hardest part is not having a lot of time to work on your school work. You are always traveling or playing volleyball so it can be a little stressful sometimes.

**What type of academic support does your school offer you as an athlete?**

There are free tutors whenever you need them, there are also study tables that you are required to go to, which helps you get a lot of your homework done. The teachers are also very flexible when it comes to your schedules and giving extensions.

