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Mayor?s Breakfast of Champions Spotlight: Storm Volleyball?s Storm Avalanche



By Mike Jones

Getting an early start helps Storm Avalanche develop into champions

In September of 2013, ten 11-year-old girls started their competitive volleyball careers as part of the Storm Avalanche team. But, competitive teams in the Ontario Volleyball Association (OVA) only start at 12 years of age so the girls faced an uphill battle.

With the challenge of always having to play teams that were older, bigger and stronger, they knew that in order to be successful they would have to work harder than their opponents. Even when they lost, opposing coaches and parents would often comment on the never give up attitude of the team.
Win or lose, the girls loved to play. They even played up in tournaments against teams two years older. The Avalanche lost their fair share of matches that season but continued to work hard with a goal of improving with each tournament. In the end, they qualified for the U13 Ontario Championships as the 10th ranked team in the province and finished tied for 9th at the tournament ? not bad for a U12 team.

As the saying goes, ?what a difference a year makes?. With some growth spurts over the summer and the addition a few new players the team went from the little squirts to one of the tallest teams in the U13 age division.

Learning from the losses of last year had paid off and the team won their first two U13 tournaments. But the competitive nature of the team did not change and they continued to also play up in U14 and even one U15 tournament. By the end of the regular season, the team had won all their U13 tournaments without dropping a single set.

They went into the Ontario Championships as the team to beat. Despite the extra pressure of being one of the favourites, the team did not disappoint, winning all 10 matches and defeating Durham Attack 25-21, 25-18 to win the U13 provincial title. The following weekend they competed in the U14 provincial championships winning the Tier One, Division 2 title making them the 17th best U14 team in the province.

They are a team with a bright future and they look forward to defending their title but also to continue their development by challenging the older teams.