

KAYLEE YOUNG | USC BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Hi everyone My name is Kaylee Young I'm a freshman beach volleyball player at USC we're actually going for the fourth national championship in a row this year Home Beach is actually we have a facility at USC Merle Norman Stadium We have three courts a nice um like seating facility and it's probably the best place to play ever because there's it's just so beautiful There's all these palm trees in the background playing Um not you can't beat playing at home just because of the support that USC brings out all the alumni So our season starts February 22nd and we go the finals is in the beginning of May So we have about 22 months and two weeks that we play So it's a really short season but it makes to be really fun because it just feels like you're going the whole time and the sports only been played for like 11 years So winning six out of the 11 is pretty cool And I'm really really happy to be a part of the program this year So the way it's played is it's kind of like tennis where you have five pairs So you have five partnerships that play for your team at once So you rank them from your best team which is your number one to your fives team and then your one's team plays versus for example UCLA A is one team and then whoever wins the best three out of the five wins the match usually at a high level it comes down to a super intense finisher because a duel could be tied 2 to 2 and then it's down to one pair to decide who wins And that's usually how the national championships are decided because of the level of play that it's at So our matches in Hawaii this year will be played on the beach Um and then all of our fall tournaments were played on an actual beach So we played in Manhattan Beach Huntington Beach um Santa Monica Beach and then we played a few in Hermosa Beach and we practice there also sometimes which is super cool to get the elements like the wind that you don't really have to think about at a home facility because we are in the middle of a city but the wind definitely adds a different element to the game So I would say it's exciting but also scary to play at the beach just because of the wind and all those different elements that are added I originally started playing indoor volleyball My dad was my first coach in third grade He played volleyball in college Um so I played indoor and then I decided you know I want to try beach just for fun Some of my friends were outside playing it and so I just kind of joined in for the fun And then I decided I like this a lot more than indoor I like being outside in the sun I like going to the beach to play So I decided to pursue it full time And then obviously USC is the best school ever So I wanted to go

there since like seventh grade And then I now I'm here playing at US C and it just it's like a dream come true So the beach volleyball community when I was going through my recruiting process was still pretty small There was not as many teams as there is now and US C has been and always will be the best And so I pushed myself to a standard where I wanted to go to the best school that I could for my sport And US C is that place and that's why I decided US C I would bug my coaches a lot I was the kind of person who would send them an email a week just explaining how much I wanted to go there I'd send them film and they took a chance on a little girl from Texas and now it's really awesome to be a part of it There's an NCAA rule That the coaches can't talk to you until June 15th after your sophomore year But I would say the recruiting process actually starts like a few years before that because you kind of have to kick start it with reaching out to the coaches yourself emailing them cutting up your film Um so I would spend about two hours of my weekends cutting up film and making videos to send to the coaches And then I would write a really personalized email to each coach um send it off and that's how the coaches kind of get to know you So on June 15th they can reach out and they already know exactly who you are So it's not a high school sport in Texas right now It's a club sport So you have to play through your own funds and all that But it's even growing so much where people are just starting with beach now and I would say when I was going through it you would only start with indoor volleyball and then you would switch to beach But now beach has gotten so big where a lot of girls just originally go with beach even from a young age like first or second grade which I think is really awesome If I would have stuck with indoor volleyball I could see myself playing at a smaller D one school just because it's a lot more competitive It's a lot bigger of a sport right now Um there's probably there's hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of amazing schools to go to for indoor volleyball every single day I would wake up really early in the morning when I started getting serious about beach I like I realized it's gonna take a lot for me to reach the goals that I want to reach So that would look like waking up super early in the morning and going to work out with my mom at a gym and then going to volleyball practice after school and then going to another workout after that And it just took a lot of commitment and drive to get here And that's a big reason also that my coaches were drawn to me It's because of the work ethic and I would say every single girl on our team right now has that work ethic because that's what it takes to get to a national championship program as a collegiate beach volleyball player we

practice six times a week we're in the gym lifting or conditioning five times a week and that has stayed consistent through off season And while right now we're getting into our season just because we take preparation super seriously and want to make sure that we're at the top of our game And I think that there are also ways that you can get better outside the volleyball court too whether that's watching film eating right sleeping right stretching every night I think all those factors are really important and that was really really hard to adjust to my first semester especially being a neuroscience major It was super rough Like the first two weeks learning how to balance and manage But the number one thing I do every week is I make a list of all the assignments I know I have to do and then I'll schedule them out in my calendar hour by hour What I do and I sit down and I just do it and I would say the biggest thing is just allotting your time throughout the week So it doesn't feel like a pile on at the weekends I played indoor volleyball for my high school in my senior year I actually got to play with my younger sister who is a full time indoor player She's really she's amazing She's 64 So that helps her a lot too Um but that was a really cool experience getting to represent my high school My mom actually went to the same high school that I went to as well So it's kind of like a family legacy My mom has four brothers who played football there She played basketball there Um so super cool to just kind of have that pride playing for something that I grew up with my whole life And then getting to play with my sister the my senior year was the cherry on top And even though I wasn't an indoor player for club it was super fun to get to play that not in a serious club setting So while I was in indoor season it was really busy I would wake up at like seven I would go work out before school and then I would go to school I had indoor volleyball practice after school and then I would go straight from indoor practice to beach practice which meant I was playing volleyball for like 4 to 5 hours straight every single day Plus trying to keep keep up in the weight room and with conditioning Um and you know and to play beach volleyball in Texas sometimes you have to drive a little bit to go to the best places So I would have to fit in like an hour drive to the facility I would go to every day So it added for a really long day I would leave the house at like seven in the morning and wouldn't get back until like 11 at night So it was definitely hard but worth it to get where I'm at right now Junior beach volleyball is more you pick your partner and you can choose whatever tournament you want And it's kind of just you know you're playing everyone and the junior beach volleyball is starting to adopt some tournaments that are like the college

format I actually played and won my senior year and we won the national championship So that was super fun experience I played with my Club Mad Sand Um I would say more juniors tournaments are trying to start adopting it but as of right now it's more you play with whatever party you want and then you just play to win the whole tournament My biggest advice is honestly first to start you could choose to start out watching it and just seeing how crazy fun it is I recommend watching a VP Pro beach volleyball Um It's the association of volleyball professionals and just the aura that that company has created with beach volleyball is going to make it grow so much and they actually do have a junior circuit So if your daughter wanted to go play on one of those tournaments they have several all across the country anywhere from New York to California And that's actually one of the ways I started getting into it is my first tournament ever was an A VP Juniors tournament and that honestly solidified my love for it just because of the way that they put their tournaments on they're super fun And I would definitely go that route first and honestly just to pick up a ball go to a court and just start playing and just you'll fall in love with it instantly One of my favorite players on Immuno is starting to bring more fun fashion choices to beach volleyball which I'm super excited about She'll wear like an athletic dress or a skirt to play which I think is really cool because it kind of deviates away from the standard bikini that everyone wears I was never a fan of wearing that So I would wear you know shorts and a matching sports bra and I would kind of have fun putting outfits together And that's another main reason I really like beach volleyball especially playing as a junior is there's no uniform so you can play in whatever you want whatever makes you feel good And honestly you can have fun with your fashion choices in it which I think is really cool Thank you so much for watching I'm Kay Le Young freshman beach volleyball player at us c just getting to share a little bit more about who I am Thank you so much