

## CIF releases '09 girls volleyball brackets

Valencia, West Ranch will host matches Tuesday; other local teams will play on the road

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Local girls volleyball teams now know who they'll be playing in the first round of the CIF postseason.

And on paper, several of the matchups appear favorable.

Fresh off winning its eighth consecutive Foothill League championship, Valencia (15-9) will host Villa Park (21-8) at 7 p.m. on Tuesday in the first round of the CIF-Southern Section Division I-A playoffs.

All five local teams that made the postseason will play at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

Villa Park received an at-large bid from the Century League, in which it finished third.

The Spartans are led by junior outside hitter Brittney Paino's 120 kills, while sophomore middle hitter McKenzie Calle had a team-high 47 aces during the regular season.

Senior middle hitter Lauren Swart has 30 blocks to lead Villa Park, and senior libero Jackie Luallen has 253 digs.

Sophomore setter MacKenzie Olsen has a team-high 402 assists.

Valencia reached the CIF-SS Division I-A quarterfinals last season before falling to Santa Barbara.

Foothill League runner-up West Ranch (21-9) is the only other local team hosting a playoff game.

The Wildcats will host Calvary Chapel of Santa Ana, which finished second in the Orange Coast League.

West Ranch swept Calvary Chapel in last year's postseason, but head coach Nate Sparks doesn't think this season's match will be so quick.

"I'm expecting them to be a much better team than they were last year," he said. "They were a younger team, so I'm sure they're going to be much better this year."

Senior outside hitter Taylor Manuel leads the Eagles (19-12) with 278 kills, and senior outside hitter Madeline Baird and junior outside hitter Devyn Jackson each have more than 180 kills.

Junior setter Julie Consani leads the team with 661 assists and freshman libero Hunter Jennings has 339 digs.

Hart (12-4) finished third in the Foothill League and will travel to face traditional power Laguna Beach (14-9), which won the Orange Coast League with an undefeated record.

Senior outside hitter Paulette Grand Pre leads the Breakers with 235 kills, while senior setter Alex Rieckhoff has 184 kills and junior outside hitter Chanel Stewart has 160.

Despite not having seen Laguna Beach play, Hart head coach Mary Krisan believes the Indians can force other players to beat them.

"It seems that they have three very strong hitters," she said. "With that, it appears that we can maybe shut them down and force them to set some of their weaker hitters. That might be an opportunity for us to score some points."

Meanwhile, Saugus (22-9) will hit the road to play Arroyo Grande after finishing fourth in the Foothill League and receiving an at-large bid.

The Eagles (22-2-1) went 12-0 to win the Pac-7 League, but Centurions head coach Zach Ambrose feels this was a fortunate draw for his team.

"They've played some of the same teams we have and there's been similar results," he said. "I'm excited about this draw as an at-large."

Senior middle hitter leads Arroyo Grande in kills, blocks and aces, while junior libero Madison Ventura has 396 digs and junior setter Maggi Jo Keffury has 609 assists.

Santa Clarita Christian (12-9) also qualified for the postseason as an at-large team after finishing third in the Heritage League this fall.

Last year, SCCS advanced to the CIF-SS Division V-AA semifinals, and this season, Santa Clarita Christian will travel to take on Shandon (14-2-3), which won the Coast Valley League.

"We're excited and we're rooting for a good game," said Santa Clarita Christian head coach Darcy Brown.