

USA Beach Volleyball...

Misty May-Treanor



This summer, Professional Beach Volleyball player and Long Beach resident Misty May-Treanor will compete in her fourth Olympics—her third with partner Kerri Walsh. Misty is a world-class athlete, holding beach volleyball records for the most all-time tournament and international wins, earning two Olympic gold medals, and named sportswoman of the year twice, in 2004 and 2006. Yet, when she gets back home from each world tour, she finds herself in the same conundrum as the rest of us—contemplating whether or not breakfast at Schooner or Later is worth the hour long wait. She usually caves.

Though she grew up in Santa Monica, Misty's ties to Long Beach date back to highlights of summers during her middle school years—when she attended the Long Beach State Volleyball Camp under Coach Brian Gimmillaro hosted in the old Gold Mine gym. Misty loved the camp so much she attended every session, for both setters and all-skills, and Gimmillaro didn't mind having her around. It may be just an Urban Legend (or I may be making this up right now), but after her first week of drills at that camp, Coach Gimmillaro pulled her aside and said, "Misty, one day we're going to build a big blue pyramid, and you're going to fill it with fans." Though no one can confirm that prophetic conversation, it is exactly what happened. From 1995-1999 Misty electrified the Long Beach volleyball community in the newly built Pyramid, selling out 5,000+ crowds, with the team in 1998 going an undefeated 36-0 and winning the NCAA Championship.

Off-court, after spending her first two years in the dorms, Misty and three friends rented a house near Millikan High School. That is when she started to fall in love with the neighborhoods and businesses of East Long Beach. Now, 15 years later, she and husband Matt Treanor (Catcher for Los Angeles Dodgers) live less than a mile away from

her college rental house, and couldn't be happier with the location. As Misty puts it, "East Long Beach is like a bubble—once you're in it you don't want to get out."

Misty waxes nostalgic about some classic community events, like the Belmont Shore Christmas parade where she runs into just about everyone who has been a part of her life for the last 20 years. She also raves about the summertime concerts in the park. "It's so nice, I don't know of anywhere else that you can see so many families rolling their kids in wagons to the park, and using what the city has to offer." She loves how she can drop her dog off at Wags-2-Whiskers, get a facial at Indulgence Day Spa, and grab a bit to eat at Sushi Kinoya, all on one walk from her house. She thinks Tracy's Bar and Grill on Bellflower is one of the best kept secrets in the 908' and she can't wait till she's done training for the Olympics so that she will be allowed to eat a couple donuts from Simone's Donut Shop on Stearns.

Misty can't express how thankful she is to the University, which is a huge part of her 2012 Olympic Journey. On days Misty is not training with Kerri Walsh on the sand, she can be found going over drills at the new Long Beach State Rec Center. She continues to thank the University through donations and the dedication of her time teaching local kids at the very camp where she fell in love with volleyball.

Misty figures this Olympic run to be her last but that makes it no less exciting. The Olympics are played on the world's biggest stage, inducing the highest intensity among players and providing the most entertainment for the fans. "Olympic fans seem to love beach volleyball because they are allowed to do whatever they want. It's outdoors so they can take off their shirts, dance around, and go crazy," Misty laughs. After this last run, she looks forward to focusing on family, and settling in the 908'. She has a list of local events that volleyball has made her too busy to attend—a game at Blair Field, the Boat Parade...

It's pretty much the exact opposite list from the rest of us Long Beachers: Gold Medals we plan to win once we're not so busy going to Boat Parades.