

# **VCU VOLLEYBALL**

## **ON THE GO**



### **Quick Facts**

**NCAA Tournament  
Appearance in 2005**

**3 of the last 5 CAA  
Tournament  
Championship  
Matches**

**CAA Regular  
Season Champions  
2009**

**Ranked 65<sup>th</sup>  
Nationally in 2009  
with 27 Wins**

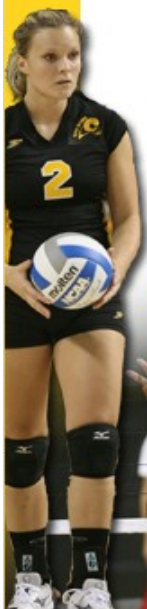
**AVCA Honorable  
Mention All-America**

**3 AVCA All-Region**

**25 All-CAA Honors**

**VaSID All-State  
Academic Team**

# **Building Pride!**



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT VCU VOLLEYBALL, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

[www.vcuathletics.com/vb.php](http://www.vcuathletics.com/vb.php)



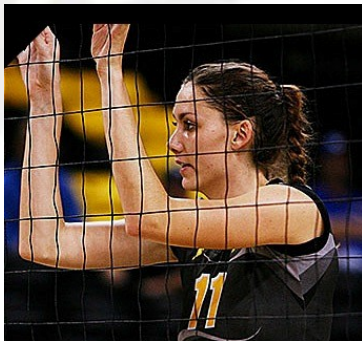
## 2009: Exceptional Year for the Rams!

In a year filled with high expectations, VCU didn't disappoint. The Rams had a remarkable season, setting records, while collecting multiple awards along the way. With a final record of 12-2 in conference and 27-9 overall, VCU claimed the best record in the CAA while winning their first regular season conference championship in school history and the right to host the CAA Championship Tournament for the first time.

During the 2009 season the Rams had ten-match winning streak. It's the Rams' longest undefeated stretch since they began the 2000 season 9-0.

The Rams' 27-9 overall record helped VCU earn the 65th best RPI in the nation. In addition, only four Division I colleges had a better overall record than the Rams.

During VCU's win over Hofstra on October 23, the Rams set a new record of attendance with a crowd of 1,341 at the Verizon Wireless Arena.



### Honors Collected

- **Ivana Rich** - 2009 *COBRA Magazine* All-National Third Team / 2009 CAA All-Tournament Team / 2009 All-CAA Second Team / 2009 Terrapin Invitational All-Tournament Team / 2009 Preseason All-CAA Team / 2008 First Team All-CAA
- **Michala Kvapilova** - 2009 AVCA Honorable Mention All-America / 2009 AVCA All-East Region Honorable Mention / 2009 CAA Rookie of the Year / 2009 All-CAA First Team / 2009 CAA All-Rookie Team / Four-time 2009 CAA Rookie of the Week
- **Lenka Melicharkova** - 2009 All-CAA Third Team
- **Mariel Frey** - 2009 CAA All-Tournament Team / 2009 CAA Offensive Player of the Week (Aug. 31, 2009)
- **Kelsie Clegg** - 2009 All-CAA Third Team
- **Marisa Low** - 2009 All-Rookie Team

*"This 2009 team has established a new level of expectation for the future of our program" (Finley)*

### Record Book!

**Ivana Rich** became the Rams' all-time blocks leader, shattering Jonnie Stone's 19-year-old mark of 350. Rich finished with 384 total blocks in 117 career matches. Rich's .284 career hitting percentage is tied for second best in program history, and she also broke the hitting percentage record (.332) for a single season in 2009.

Rich was invited to the USA

Women's Volleyball National Team Try-out at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs Feb. 19-21.

Rich may hold the record now, but if **Kelsie Clegg** has anything to say about it, her reign atop the VCU charts could be short-lived. Clegg finished the season with the

sixth-most blocks in school history with 275. In addition, Clegg collected 149 blocks during the 2009 season and broke the single-season block record set by Jonnie Stone's (147) in 1990.



## 5 Years under James Finley



Texas is a big state with a reputation for friendliness. Virginia Commonwealth University volleyball coach **James Finley** does nothing to dampen that reputation. A native Texan with a big smile and a knack for conversation, Finley firmly believes that relationships are the key to success. "If I had to use a word, that would be it," Finley said. "I've never really worried about winning or losing. If you build a good relationship with

your players and your staff and the people around you, you get that chemistry and you get people who want to run through a wall for you."

With a 27-9 mark this year, VCU Head Coach James Finley moved to 96-73 in five seasons with the Rams. His 96 victories rank second in school history, behind only Wendy Wadsworth, who won 169 matches from 1981-83 and 1985-88. Finley's .564 winning percentage is the highest in school history.

Finley's passion for his sport and building relationships extends beyond the court. He's helped organize a booster club for his team and worked with coaches in VCU's other sports to plan a "field day" of activities for the student-athletes to bond and build support for one another.

"James may be one of the most committed coaches I have ever been around," said VCU Director of Athletics Norwood T. Teague. "He lives and breathes VCU volleyball."



### NOTABLE HONORS from 2005-2009

- 1 AVCA Division I Honorable Mention All-America
- 1 Colonial Athletic Association Scholar Athlete of the Year
- 2 VaSID Academic All-State
- 3 AVCA All-East Region Honorable Mention
- 6 VaSID All-State Team Honorees
- 25 All-Colonial Athletic Association Honors

*"There will be teams out there that will be more athletic. We have the ability to win in those situations because our team believes in each other and trusts each other" (Finley)*

### NCAA Appearance & All-Americans

In 2005, Finley took over a VCU team that posted a 6-21 record the previous season. His first Rams team won the CAA championship and a spot in the NCAA Tournament. VCU had a 16-win improvement, second best in the country. The next season, VCU almost did it again. As the sixth seed, the Rams made it all the way to the CAA final. In 2008, the Rams recorded their best CAA regular season since joining the

league in 1995, when they finished second at 10-4. VCU was 19-13 overall last year.

In 2009 VCU captured its first CAA Regular season title, hosting the CAA Tournament for the first time in VCU's history, with a 27-9 overall record and 12-2 in CAA play.

Additionally, in his first five seasons, Finley's players garnered five First Team All-CAA citations, more than the previous 11 seasons combined.

**Ludmila Francescatto**, who transferred with Finley from Arizona Western in 2005, was named AVCA All-Region Honorable Mention in 2005 and 2006, the first Ram to gain that distinction.

**Michala Kvapilova**, a freshman recruited by Finley received 2009 AVCA All-East Region Honorable Mention citation, 2009 CAA Rookie of the Year, 2009 All-CAA First Team, and 2009 CAA All-Rookie Team honors.

# 2009 Final RPI Ranking

\* 2010 Scheduled Opponents

Rank	School	Conference
2	* Penn State	Big 10
3	* Florida State	ACC
19	* Colorado State	Mountain West
20	* Dayton	Atlantic 10
21	* Kentucky	SEC
28	* Ohio State	Big 10
40	* Long Beach State	Big West
50	* Pittsburgh	Big East

**65 VCU**

DEGREE

**CAA**

DEGREE



DEGREE



67	Clemson	ACC
71	Virginia Tech	ACC
75	Oregon State	Pac 10
79	Wisconsin	Big 10
81	Auburn	SEC
82	North Carolina	ACC
89	* Arizona State	Pac 10
101	Virginia	ACC
104	Georgia	SEC
111	* Kansas State	Big 12
127	Wake Forest	ACC
129	Connecticut	Big East
143	West Virginia	Big East
164	Alabama	SEC
177	Maryland	ACC
191	Boston College	ACC

## **VCU'S** **VOLLEYBALL MISSION STATEMENT**

***The goal of the VCU Volleyball program is to help student-athlete to achieve their individual academic and athletic goals while being part of a strong and growing volleyball program. The open communication and trust between players and coaches are key to the success of our team. Creating a diverse team with a common goal of being recognized nationally.***