

Torrey Pines senior faces sand in future, hardwood for now



Torrey Pines senior Delaynie Maple — a 5-foot-10 $\frac{1}{2}$ hitter — earned All-San Diego Section honors indoor last fall, but she prefers the two-person beach game.

As indoor volleyball play ends, Falcons' Delaynie Maple to hit beach for USC

By TERRY MONAHAN

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This was hardly the plan. Delaynie Maple intended to keep playing indoor girls volleyball so that one day she could play in college.

Then she went to the beach.

Suddenly, the plan changed.

The indoor volleyball player was transformed into a beach volleyball player.

Three times a week, she commuted to Wave Volleyball Club near the Del Mar racetrack to work on her skills in the sand.

The 5-foot-10 $\frac{1}{2}$ hitter was a sophomore at Temecula Great Oak High when the new plan finally came into focus.

Older brother Peyton was about to go off to Monmouth University in West Long Branch, N.J., to play baseball.

So, Maple decided it was time to embrace the beach.

Her beach dream took her closer to Wave, a facility owned by Torrey Pines High coach Brennan Dean, and she transferred to Torrey Pines for her final two seasons of indoor volleyball.

“I’d been around the same kids since kindergarten, so leaving Great Oak was tougher than I thought,” Maple said. “I’d never been the new kid at a new school before.

“I did not think I would show up at a volleyball school like Torrey Pines and be successful.

“I was way out of my comfort zone.”

A funny thing happened to the new girl.

The beach player still excelled indoors, earning All-Avocado West League honors for the league champions, who were 33-4 last year. She was also an All-San Diego Section pick as an indoor player. Maple helped the Falcons claim a second consecutive section Open Division crown, beating Cathedral Catholic 25-18, 29-27, 20-25, 25-22 in the championship match.

She’s committed to the USC beach team with Torrey Pines teammate Megan Kraft, also a senior, starting in the fall of 2020.

Maple and the 6-foot-1 Kraft will be rooming together next season.

“Beach is where my heart is,” Maple said. “Moving to Torrey Pines went even better than I thought it would.

“It was either going to be really awesome or really bad.”

But those first couple of days as a Falcon caused her to wonder — “What if I’m not good enough for this school?”

After a scrimmage against Santa Ana Mater Dei, Dean noticed his newcomer was lacking confidence and offered her some encouragement.

There was nothing wrong with Maple after that.

“He told me I’d figure it out here,” said Maple, who wants to be a sports psychologist after college. “Maya (Satchell) and I transferred in together, so we formed our own little support group last year.”

It turned out, Maple fit right in for both the Falcons’ indoor team and the beach team.

“I’m an independent person in life,” Maple said. “On the beach, it’s just you and one other person. For indoor, there are five other people on the court.

“Megan and I clicked the first time we played beach. We have become best friends now.”
On the sand, Maple plays the role of the quicker player who occasionally blocks at the net.
Kraft, quite the blocker, has a unique gift to lend.

“She has long arms and looks like she’s actually 6-4,” Maple said. “She teases me all the time about being the short one on our team.”

No one teases Maple or Kraft anymore about heading to the beach.

That’s where they both belong.

Monahan is a freelance writer.