

2025

AVCA Thirty Under 30 Club



Andrew Bliss
SMASH
Head Coach

Career Accomplishments to Date:

- Over last 5 years I have coached either top 16s, 17s or 18s at SMASH and have finished as either the top or one of the top teams in the region.
- Helped start SMASH Beach program.
- Wayland High School two state final appearances. Boston Globe division II 2024 coaching staff of the year. Helped coach the Boston Globe division II athlete of the year 2024.
- Simmons University in four years two conference finals appearances and two semi finals appearances. Multiple all conferences players and worked closely with 2023 player of the year. 2023 GNAC coaching staff of the year.

Coaching Roles:

- SMASH girls volleyball head coach 2018-present
- SMASH boys volleyball coach 2017-2020
- SMASH Beach head coach/director 2020-present
- Simmons University women's volleyball assistant coach 2021-2024
- Wayland High School boys volleyball assistant coach 2017-present

What made you decide to get into coaching volleyball?

After leaving school I was not sure what direction my life was headed. During that time my former club coach had nudged me into attempting coaching. In a difficult moment in my life this person was a powerfully positive influence for me. When I realized how fun and rewarding coaching could be I decided I would take it seriously in hopes of paying forward what my former coach had done for me. Be a positive influence in someone's life through sports.

What are your career goals in the sport?

I never know how to answer this. I fantasize about coaching the national team or professional volleyball in another country. I am planning on continuing in the college world but I would also be content coaching club the rest of my life. I guess what I really care about is getting better and creating better environments players want to be apart of. Thinking you are regressing or plateauing as a coach is an uncomfortable feeling. My goal is to avoid that and make sure the people involved with my teams feel fulfilled.



Which coaches have influenced you the most?

- Phil George my first volleyball coach who I've been coaching high school with for almost a decade. Greatest role model of what a leader should be and moral compass I have been around.
- Konstantin Dimov my former club coach who gave me my first opportunities and the biggest influence on me during my formative coaching years.
- Eric Neely who I developed a great coaching relationship with and taught me what hard work looks like.
- Pat Helmas. Showed a young me how to have fun while also being in charge.
- Scott Grandpre, Mariah Hladick, Joe Mazzulla many more.

What do you enjoy most about your coaching job?

Feeling like I'm doing some positive and impactful with my time. Being around young energetic people who are playing a sport they love is a great feeling and being able to help guide them along in their volleyball journey feels even better. I love the competing, winning, running practice, watching film, fifth sets all of that but I think seeing the players grow over time is what I enjoy the most.