

# **Animo Spirit Soars: DLSZ 13U Girls Volleyball Team Secures Redemption as ISSA Middle School Girls Division Champions with an Undefeated Streak!**

*By Axzielle Mari Lino Hernando (DLSZ 2030)*

Congratulations to the DLSZ 13U Girls Volleyball Team for winning the 2024 Inter-Scholastic Sports Association (ISSA) Middle School Girls Division Championship held last October 12, 2024 at the International School Manila.

The DLSZ 13U Girls Volleyball Team's journey to redemption is nothing short of inspiring after the Gwapo Sports 2024 Silver Minuluan Volleyball Invitation. After falling just short of the championship last year, the team returned this season with unshakable determination and the true essence of Animo spirit. With an undefeated streak and a championship game filled with unforgettable moments, we proved that perseverance and teamwork can lead to greatness.

## **A Season of Redemption**

The 2024 Inter-Scholastic Sports Association (ISSA) event kicked off on August 17, 2024, at the International School Manila. We, the De La Salle Santiago Zobel (DLSZ) 13U Girls Volleyball Team faced Assumption College (AC) in our first match, securing a confident 25-15 and 25-08 victory.

This early win set the tone for a spectacular season, as the team, we went on to defeat reigning champions Assumption Antipolo (AA) on August 24, 2024, and International School Manila (ISM) in back-to-back matches on August 31 and September 21, 2024.

Each game showcased the team's skill, strategy, and hunger for redemption after last year's heartbreak. We entered the championship with a perfect record and a burning desire to reclaim what was narrowly missed.

## **The Championship Moment**

Facing off against Assumption Antipolo once more in the championship match, the final play that sealed our victory was a masterclass in teamwork and creativity.

Ayen Cenizal, the team's Setter, delivered a stunning down-the-line spike to clinch the title. In an unexpected twist, Opposite Spiker Yohan Rivera set up the play with a flawless assist, proving the team's adaptability and tactical brilliance. Her unconventional spike wasn't just the final point in a thrilling championship—it was the exclamation mark on a season of redemption for us!

With scores of 25-10 and 25-14, DLSZ swept the match, becoming the ISSA Middle School Girls Division Champions without dropping a single set throughout the tournament.

Words of Wisdom from the Coach

The team’s success was guided by Coach Feliciano Felix G. Pantaleon, DLSZ 1986 and a former High School Boys' Volleyball standout. As our head coach, he inspired us not just with his strategies but also with his heartfelt encouragement.

“We’ve got this, ladies; just play your game, give your best, and let God handle the rest,” Coach Ff shared before the championship match. His words lit a fire in us, carrying them through every challenge we faced along the way.



LIST OF PLAYERS IN PHOTO (ISAA) First row (from left) Ayya Villanueva (2031), Liana Reinoso (2031), Lexi Ongpin (2030), Rocio Valdez (2031), Sofia Tuala (2030), Natalia Alaras (2030), Anree Ignacio (2031) Second row (from left) Coach Feliciano Pantaleon-Head Coach, Jte Galimba (2030), Zyan Sonza (2030), Yohan Rivera-Team Captain (2029), Ax Hernando-Team Co-Captain (2030), Chelley Ayangco (2031), Mika Mendoza (2030), Andi Ayessa Cenizal (2030)

The team consists of players aged 13 and under from both High School and Grade School. Here is the Middle School Division ISSA Line-up:

Feliciano Felix Gonzales Pantaleon	DLSZ 13U Girls Volleyball Head Coach
1 Andi Ayessa delos Santos Cenizal	DLSZ 2030 Setter
2 Rocio Pellicer Valdez	DLSZ 2031 Outside Spiker
4 Liana Teresa Santiago Reinoso	DLSZ 2031 Opposite Spiker
6 Natalia Padilla Alaras	DLSZ 2030 Opposite Spiker
7 Sienna Gabryelle Ortiz Sonza	DLSZ 2030 Outside Spiker
8 Yohan Danielle Oreta Rivera	DLSZ 2029 Opposite Spiker   Team Captain
9 Jte Ginete Galimba	DLSZ 2030 Libero
10 Anree Milli Gacutan Ignacio	DLSZ 2031 Outside Spiker
11 Alexis Victoria Gatchalian Ongpin	DLSZ 2030 Opposite Spiker
12 Axzielle Mari Lino Hernando	DLSZ 2030 Middle Blocker  Team Co-Captain
14 Maria Sofia Gabrielle Tuala	DLSZ 2030 Middle Blocker
16 Mary Ayya Bonafe Villanueva	DLSZ 2031 Libero
17 Jang Lee Arsenio Seo	DLSZ 2030 Middle Blocker
19 Ma. Angelica Carla Baltasar Mendoza	DLSZ 2030 Middle Blocker
20 Chelley Mehri Flores Ayangco	DLSZ 2031 Outside Spiker



LIST OF PLAYERS IN PHOTO (ISAA) First row (from left) Anree Ignacio (2031), Coach Feliciano Pantaleon, Ayya Villanueva (2031), Liana Reinoso (2031), Lexi Ongpin (2030), Chelley Ayangco (2031), Natalia Alaras (2030),

Second row (from left) Jte Galimba (2030), Zyan Sonza (2030), Yohan Rivera (2029), Ax Hernando (2030), Rocio Valdez (2031), Mika Mendoza (2030), Sofia Tuala (2030), Andi Ayessa Cenizal (2030)

*“Last year, we came so close, finishing in second place, but we never gave up. This year, all our hard work, perseverance, and belief in each other paid off as we claimed the spot as champions!”* said Team Captain Yohan Rivera.

**Looking Ahead**

From the heartbreak of last year’s loss to the triumph of this undefeated season, we, the DLSZ 13U Girls Volleyball Team have shown what the true Animo spirit is all about—perseverance, passion, and Lasallian pride.

We didn’t just aim for a comeback — we soared past it. Together, let’s continue to reach even greater heights!

Animo La Salle!