

NL 18-1, 18-2, & 18-Black travel to Italy

The Northern Lights 18-1, 18-2, and 18-Black teams will be traveling and competing in Italy from March 29- April 7. They will be spending the first few days sightseeing in Rome, Milan, and Venice. After that they will be competing in tournaments in Pordenone Italy (18-1), Falconara (18-2), and Verona (18-Black) with Junior teams from Italy and around the world. Tournament Link for Pordenone=<http://www.memorialcornacchia.com>

No links available for Falconara, Milan or Verona tournaments

Day 1

March 21 - Arrival to Rome

By: Halle Hughes and Whitney Rock

Day one in Rome, Italy. Since our flight was delayed, we arrived a little late in Rome. We took a bus from the airport to the hotel. The views were amazing. All the cars driven there are small and there are many mopeds and vespas.

Our hotel consisted of very narrow hallways and thin walls. After we checked in we went to the train station to eat. Most chose to get pizza and it was delicious. We then took a packed subway ride to the colosseum.

We took many pictures but they do not do the place justice. The forum was closed, but Curt told us about it before we headed back to the train station.

Later that evening we walked to a restaurant down the street from our hotel and had dinner. It was a four course meal consisting of bread, salad, 2 different types of pasta, and chicken and potatoes. We were stuffed! Then we walked back to the hotel after a long day and went to bed right away.

[Pictures for today](#)

[Hannah & Brittany at the Coliseum](#)

Day 2

Rome - Vatican

By: Jenna Weidner & Ellie Veldman

We woke up early this morning and ate breakfast at the hotel (lots of croissant), then took the bus to the Vatican. We walked through the museum and saw statues made of marble and beautiful gardens. Next, we visited the amazing Sistine Chapel painted by Michelangelo. Looking up for

so long made our necks hurt, but it was worth it. After that, we walked through more hallways filled with paintings, tapestries, and maps painted on the walls. While walking through the hallways with the tapestries, we came across a tapestry of Jesus and the eyes followed us wherever we went. Next we continued on to see Saint Peter's Cathedral and the main square. The square was filled with chairs roped off as they prepare for Easter mass this coming Sunday. One of most interesting sites inside was the tomb of all of the past Popes. On top of each tomb was a realistic and full sized sculpture of each Pope.

After that, we were set free for lunch and to explore around the Vatican. Most of us ended up at a pizza place where we chose our pizza and some gelato too. Then we split up more and my group (Jenna) went further away to explore. We visited an Italian book store and tried to read some of the books but were unsuccessful. Then walked further and found a fruit stand and bought pears and I had the best carrot of my life. It was so good! For Ellie's lunch, we went into souvenir shops but didn't find much. We took some time walking around and enjoying Italy. Some of us bought Italy hats.

Now, we are currently sitting in the gym playing some local teams. They are very good and it is fun to play internationally, but using a different ball is hard. Each team is playing two matches today. We will go to the same place as last night for dinner later. We are all having fun here and we are happy it is warm!

[Pictures for today](#)

[Some match footage of the teams playing Volleyro in RomePaige & Sydney talk about our 2nd day in Rome](#)

Day 3

Rome - Shopping day!

By: Haley Kauth (my favorite) and Emilia Widen

To start off let us tell you a little bit about last night. We played our first matches in Italy against girls from a club in Rome called Volleyro. In our first match Sheridan was digging line and their right side hitter nailed her in the face. Both nostrils were gushing blood and it got all over the floor and court. The workers here cleaned it up and left the floor a little slick and when Sheridan walked back into the trainer's room she slipped and fell. It was not her day. Oh and we ended up losing both games, the other teams lost as well.

After our games we all went back to the restaurant we ate at the night before, and again ate a ton of food. We had made a bet with Curt that if we medaled in the qualifier he would buy us gelato and he followed through on that last night. Then we went back to our hotel and went to bed.

We did not have to be at breakfast till 9, so we all enjoyed our extra hour of sleep. After breakfast we took the metro to the Spanish Stairs. When we got there, we discovered they were restoring the stairs today. Disappointed, we walked to the Trevi Fountain, which was turned off

and being cleaned. We still enjoyed taking pictures while it was off, and after 20 minutes they turned it back on and we took more pictures. After that, Curt took us to the Pantheon. We went inside the Pantheon, taking more pictures.

Curt set us loose in that area for the next two hours to shop and sightsee. Curt took some of us to this square that was filled with people selling paintings. While there, Jenae and Sydney Book found an artist who drew a portrait of their faces. They looked amazing. Some girls went shopping, buying clothes and souvenirs. We met up after lunch at the Trevi Fountain, where we saw a newly married couple taking pictures. We took the metro back to the hotel to change and get ready to play and caught a bus at 2:00 to our playing site. We are now watching the 18-1s, waiting to play our match.

[Pictures for today](#)

[Jenae getting a drawing made of herself](#)

[Sheridan & Mimi talk about today in Rome](#)

[Whitney & Halle give their version of the day in Rome](#)

[Lauren & Rachel on a motorcycle in Rome](#)

[Somehow someone got a video of Curt peppering with Ryley Rios](#)

Day 4

Rome - Pordenone 181

Today we got up at 745 and had breakfast at 830! We heard a bang in the hallway & ran out to find Mimi laying on her bags in the stairwell. After the twos left us (sad face), we headed off to the train station and took a 4 hour train ride to Venice.

The train ride could be considered as one of the best parts of the trip (not really, but it was super fun). We shared some great laughs and a couple of us finished a good chunk of homework!

Lugging our bags around the streets was quite the challenge but we managed. We had a mishap with the hotels but we ended up in a rather interesting place called "Michelangelo Hotel". We had about 30 minutes to get ready for the night in Venice. We are staying in a town right outside of Venice and we ate lunch at the Sweet Cafe. We also had time to do a little shopping and then we hopped on a bus to Venice.

We all split up into groups of 3s and a group of 4 and had to find our own way. When we met up in the San Marcos plaza, the whole team went to a nice restaurant near the plaza. We were to

supposed to meet at 9 in front of the train station, and we realized it was getting pretty late. We ended up leaving around 8:20.

A few people spotted a gelato place so most of the team got a scoop. Then it was getting closer to the meeting time so we had to sprint at least a mile to make it. We made it to the train station with 1 minute to spare and then in the distance at around 9:04 the coaches strolling leisurely up to the steps... But long story short it was a fun day getting lost in Venice and eating great Italian food.

Rome – Falconara 182

By: Paige Aspinwall ONLY

So last night we played a really good Rome team and we took the first set from them but lost the next 2! Then we had pizza with all the girls and got all their snapchat and instagrams and had nice conversations with all of them!

This morning we left at 8:45 to catch a train to Falconara, Italy! When the train would go through a tunnel, everyone's ears would pop and it was probably the worst thing that could happen (not to mention the train went through about 20 tunnels).

When we arrived to the Natural Village Club where we are staying, right away we all felt like celebrities. Everyone was starrng and taking pictures and we were all so confused but then we remembered that we were the Americans. We ate a good lunch and then headed off to the playing site.

We won our first game today in 2 and then right away we played our second game and we played a very short and scrappy Italian team and won in 3 with the third set being 15-13. Right after we were done, the team we just played came up to us in all smiles and wanted to take pictures with us and had a bunch of questions. We taught them some American dance moves and they taught us some Italian words!

When we arrived back to the Village we had dinner right away, and right after we went into the dancing area and without hesitation, we all went into the middle of the dance floor and danced till we dropped. Everyone was taking videos of us and we thought that we might as well put on a show for them. We went to the DJ and asked if he had any American songs and the only one he had was Girls Just Want to Have Fun by Cyndi Lauper. We ended up singing karaoke to it and told all the Italian volleyball players to come and dance and sing with us.

After dancing and singing for 20 minutes, we all decided to call it a night and go to bed and get sleep for tomorrow.

Rome – Verona 18 Black

By: Taylor Olstad

We woke up at 5:30am, to catch the train to Verona. Most of us slept on the train, after about 2 hours we arrived in Verona. Then we got to the train station and waited for our vans to pick us up.

The vans took us to our hotel and we got our rooms and checked in. 5 minutes later we left to go play. The place we played at was all wood with lots of windows. We lost our first match. After that we went to lunch and made friends with the team we lost to... We had pasta, salad, and chicken and fries (which was the most American food we had during the entire trip). We went back to play and won our second match in 2.

We went exploring around the villas close to the place we played. The winding roads took us higher and the views were incredible. Then we played our final match and won in 2. Then we went back to our hotel to shower and get ready for dinner. We went out to dinner at Taco Bell!!! (just kidding) the food was actually good. Then we went back to the hotel and went to bed.

[Pictures for todayJaelin & Sydnie in Verona](#)

Day 5 Venice

Pordenone 181

Nothing submitted

Falconara - 182

By: Chloe Dousette

Hello, it's Chloe

This morning we woke up, had breakfast, and went to the playing site. We won both of our morning matches easily which meant we won our pool. Our next match would be the quarter final match at 7.

When we returned to our bungalows, had a nice lunch, everyone took some nice naps, and Sydney had a sleeping issue.

Since we won our first two matches in the morning, Eric promised us that we would go to the mall before our 7 o'clock match, but unfortunately the bus was late so we weren't able to shop.

We got ready, went to the playing site, and played a very good Italian team. We lost a close first set, won the second set handily, and won the third 15-10. An attractive Italian men's team watched our match which helped us play a little better. We even took photos with them after the match. Tonight we had a great dinner and m are excited for our semi-final match tomorrow!

Verona - 18 Black

By: Sydnie Zachary and Natalia O'Hara

Today we got up we woke up and ate a really good breakfast which consisted of croissants, sausage, yogurt and granola, and blood orange juice.

After breakfast we got ready and drove to the arena. We played our first match and won then went to lunch at Bar the Brothers where we had: pasta, salad, and meat and potatoes.

After that we waited for Luca to make a count of the point percentages to see if we were in the semi-finals. He concluded that we had made it and we headed to a new arena. Once we got there we played heads-up with one of the Italian teams which was really funny because of the language barrier.

Halle and Taylor discovered that they didn't have toilets there, but rather a hole in the ground with a place to put your feet. We started the match and lost in two with a very close second game.

Editors note: They had to stop writing this summary because we went into Verona for the afternoon & evening to a big player party/buffet.

[Pictures for today- 18-2 Pictures for today- 18 Black](#)

[Alison & Alex with two Italian girls](#)

[Playing Charades with the Italians](#)

[18 Black in the Semi Finals in Verona](#)

Day 6

Pordenone – 181

Nothing submitted

Falconara – 182

Nothing submitted

Verona - 18 Black

By: Allison Taylor

We woke up at 8:15 to get up and eat breakfast to get ready for our third place match. At 9:30 we

left the hotel to go to the playing site which was a high school. Our match started at 10:30 and we won in two sets. As a team we played really well and it was a great way to end our tournament in Verona.

After our match we went to go get lunch. For lunch we had pasta with pesto for our first course and meat and potatoes for the second course. Then we went back to the hotel to quickly get ready to go to downtown Verona.

When we got to downtown Verona we shopped, walked around, and went to a castle. The castle was really pretty and we took a lot of pictures there. After our time in downtown Verona we went to the closing ceremonies. There we watched the championship match and then got recognized for getting third place.

When we got called up to the front all of the teams that we had befriended started cheering USA. I thought the experience was very cool.

After closing ceremonies we went out to eat at the place that we ate at the first night. Each of us got a pizza to eat and they were huge. Most of us traded slices with each other to experience the different flavors. After we ate we went back to the hotel and went to bed.

[Pictures for today- 18 Black](#)

[Alex & Katrina at the Verona Arena](#)

Day 7

Pordenone - 181

By: Brittany McLean & Lauren Bright

This morning we got up around 7:15 in order to get out of the door to for a 9:00 match. We took on a slightly smaller Italian team and won in an easy three sets.

Next we headed off a men's match between Austria and Hungary. We were all impressed by the speed of the game and strength. During this match we got to meet a pug and we were all so excited.

We then walked back to our hotel to only head out to lunch. Lunch was pasta, more pasta, and bread. The food is always that same.

After that we then headed out to play Germany. A very young but aggressive team. We lost in four but we traded shirts with them at the end of the match. The evening was then jam packed with activities such as dinner, the Germany vs. Russia semi final for men's match, showering very quickly, then heading off to the tournament party. We met so many other teams, danced, and had an overall great time.

We would like our families to know that we miss them, and would like to thank Curt and Lights for sending us on this fantastic trip.

Falconara - 182

By: Sydney Book & Olivia Spanton

So on this beautiful Easter morning we woke up at 7:30 am and had a delicious breakfast full of croissants and fresh fruit. After breakfast, we drove to the Church in Falconara to enjoy a Easter mass. As we walked out of the church we saw three beautiful chalk drawings of Mother Mary and Jesus, The Nativity, and Jesus in the tomb.

We then walked to a lookout area where we took a team picture. We all loaded the bus and started our hour and half trip to San Marino. Along the way we all slept with our headphones in. As soon as we started to feel the twists and turns in the road we knew we had arrived.

As we made our way up the mountain we all went to go get a quick snack which obviously was pizza and Coke. Then we all set off to explore and shop. Some people went to the top of the castle to see the amazing view and others continued to shop.

Then we all meet up at a gelato shop because Eric promised to buy as all gelato. Story time suddenly took place at the gelato restaurant which involved Mimi's purse and funny individual bathroom problems (that involved using paid self foreign serving restrooms).

Then we all took off to go to the bus and have a relaxing evening, well I guess relaxing for 18 year olds. Tomorrow morning we set off for Venice early in the morning!

Verona - 18 Black

By: Rylie Rios (14 Red)

The last few days have been filled with the 18-black team playing many good teams from many different countries. They played hard, and against very competitive teams. They were super good at getting out of system balls! They were all very nice to us off the court but on the court played great games against us. After watching them it makes me excited to hopefully play here someday too! I think it was nice for them to have a day off and see more of the city! Today we got up and attended Easter mass at the Sant'Anastasia church. It was built in 1400, and is located in the most ancient part of Verona. It was a local Easter service all in Italian, but we didn't realize it wasn't going to be in English until 5 seconds before the service.

After church we went exploring and shopping at lake Garda which was about an hour drive from the church. It was a lot of fun, and was super pretty! There were many little restaurants, gelato stands, artists, and shops! I helped pick out a painting from a local artist with my mom, also I got some cool hair bands! It was super nice there! The sun was shining it was about 60 degrees, and the water in the lake was super blue and clear. I could see the bottom of it at some points. Before we left everyone met up and Curt treated us all to gelato! Personally I think gelato is better than

ice cream! Also I was fascinated by how many dogs there were! Everywhere I looked there was a new dog, in restaurants, shops. I even saw one on a paddle board! They were all so cute!

After shopping we drove back to Verona and did even more shopping and exploring! I wanted to get something to remind me of the trip, so I got some jewelry, and some decorations for my room. The other girls got things like clothing purses and jewelry too! Some girls purchased pasta and spices to bring home. Later we got some dinner at Risorante Pizzeria. It used to be a church named S.Matteo many years ago. I still can't get past how old everything is and how it is still super beautiful! The way everything has been preserved over all this time! For example the Colosseum, the Sistine Chapel, the Trevi Fountain, and even the streets and all the buildings!

So far this trip and volleyball has been amazing, and unlike anything I've seen before! Right now we are in the van on my way to Venice. It is about an hour and a half away from Verona. I'm so excited to see what the rest of this trip has in store for us, and can't wait to tell all of my adventures to my friends and family especially my teammates because it is something worth working hard for and a special experience like no other.

[Pictures for today- 18 Black & 18-2](#)

Day 8

Pordenone for 18-1

We started off the day with a scrimmage against the girls German national team that we lost to yesterday. We played very well and beat them in 4. We then went to lunch and to the girls championship at 2. One of the Italian girls' teams won and then we watched Italy vs Russia mens' championship. It was a close game, went to 5, and Russia won. After that we received our participation awards and went to dinner. Jen bought us gelato during the walk back from the dining hall to the hotel. We did some team bonding in the lobby and now we are packing):

Ashley and Jenae

Venice for 18-2 & 18 Black

The 182 and 18 Black team spent their last day in Italy exploring Venice. Everyone did some shopping, had a Gondola ride, ate a great dinner, and had Gelato for one last time.

[Haley & Kenzie from the 18-2 team give us a summary of the day.](#)