



Profiles



“WE ARE A GREAT TEAM, AND I CAN HONESTLY SAY I FEAR NO ONE ONCE I STEP ON THAT COURT.”

National Collegiate Volleyball Federation 2015 Outstanding Libero of the Year Award recipient

He’s the player that passes the ball when the ball is out of bounds.

The libero can also replace (not substitute) any position in the back row an unlimited amount of times throughout the entire match or tournament

“On the court we are a great team, and I can honestly say I fear no one once I step on that court,” he said.

It’s that confidence that allows the libero to transition from various positions, a chameleon on the court.

Although the libero position may be less physically taxing than others, it requires more mental fortitude, like bravery and trust. It’s easy for the player to get himself into a hole he may find hard to get out of.

“Our job is to keep the ball up as best we can and dig volleyballs going at crazy speeds,” Garcia said of the libero position. Digging is the act of stopping the volleyball from hitting the team’s court after the opposing team has spiked or served it over the net.

Garcia was trained to be the libero for the Texas State Men’s Volleyball team by a former coach who had played for the men’s Japanese National team as a defensive specialist.

Before the coach’s help, Garcia said he used to close his eyes and pray that he could dig the ball. Now he plays the position confidently.

On the downside, Garcia has had one recurring problem in his career—spraining his right ankle at Conference Championships, a curse that began his freshman year on the team.

Maybe the curse will be broken this year and the Texas State Men’s Volleyball team will replace Texas A&M University as the conference’s champion, after spending years in third place.

A VOLLEYBALL LIBERO DOESN’T SERVE, BLOCK OR ATTEMPT TO BLOCK, AND IS REGULATED TO THE BACK ROW. SEEMS KIND

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# JONATHAN GARCIA

| By Jordan Gass-Poore | Photos Ashley Haguewood |

## One Man’s Volley: A Position Unlike Any Other

When it comes to volleyball, Texas State junior Jonathan Garcia is a horse of a different color. The university’s club volleyball team captain is easy to spot on the court – he’s the only one on the team in a white jersey. The special attire comes with the position. Garcia has embraced being a libero (li-bear-oh), a defensive specialist position added to the game in 1999.

A libero doesn’t serve, block or attempt to block, and is relegated to the back row. Seems kind of contradictory to the meaning of the position’s name – libero means free in Italian.

So, what does a libero do?