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Rundle sets up a charity spike

Former UCSB All American volleyball setter Brooke Rundle is putting up balls so hitters can spike them — from thousands of miles away. Steroids? No, her new team is collecting volleyball equipment from the likes of AVP pro Todd Rogers, UCSB women's coach Kathy Gregory, and SBCC's Ed Gover to deliver to underdeveloped parts of the world via the sports agency she works for, Bringit Promotions.

Bringit Promotions was founded by another Santa Barbaran, Tim Kelly. The agency represents international professional volleyball players. Along with this, the group has been organizing missions, such as last fall's Operation Nicaragua.

A relief effort of sorts, the trip had Kelly, Rundle and the group packing volleyball equipment in surfboard bags and then traveling to San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua, to distribute it and hold clinics. For Rundle, it was an eye-opening experience.

"The experience made me mindful of the magnitude of need that exists in this Third World country," Rundle said. "I quickly realized that the clinics were less about teaching technical skills and more about providing children with a healthy lifestyle alternative while building up their self-esteem. What I originally thought was going to be a surf trip with a little beach volleyball action became just the first of several social and community outreach projects in this country."

In addition the clinics, Bringit is building a preschool for the community, outfitting a youth baseball league, and rounding up donations for an orphanage in the area. Seeing this firsthand, Rundle was deeply affected — enough so to plan on moving to the country this summer. Perhaps it was one experience that sealed it for her.

"With no public beach volleyball courts in the country, we fastened a volleyball net between two bamboo poles," Rundle said. "We then tied each to the mast of a *Ponga* (a Nicaraguan fishing boat), drew lines in the sand and played for hours — big-court, side-out scoring, no antennas, old school style.

"(Through this experience), I think it was pretty amazing to see how people can make a big difference and a lasting impact on the children in this country through the game of volleyball."

For more information on donations to the program, visit their Web site at Bringitusa.com.