# D-III Dreams: Santa Clara Rage Join the People's Division

*Santa Clara was one of a handful of teams to opt to play D-III this year after USAU raised the enrollment limit. Get to know the newest team set to storm the Nationals stage, Rage!*

**MAY 1, 2026 BY ZACK DAVIS IN PROFILE**




Santa Clara Rage pose for a team picture. Photo: Shea Mulqueeney

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The **Santa Clara** University women's division team, known as Rage, has some very kind players representing them. One of their traditions is for rookies to receive a nickname from the captains and veterans, usually as a reference to some antics or hijinks related to said player. The three captains, Shea "Doc" Mulqueeney, Lili[1] "Bug" Delaney, and Nina "Froggy" Huaracayo, each introduced themselves with their nicknames. In fact, they use these nicknames so often, it's led to some confusion off the field.

"It's funny," said Huaracayo, "because sometimes I forget the people's original names on the team. If we run into each other on campus I'll yell their goofy name."

Oh, and the team name, Rage? They certainly don't seem very angry.

"Originally when frisbee started as a club sport at Santa Clara, they were a combined team, co-ed, and when they moved to just women's they were called 'S.C.R.U.W.' for Santa Clara Raging Ultimate Women," said Mulqueeney. Mulqueeney is one of the three team captains, so if anyone would know, it's her.

So where did the original name come from?

"No one really knows the origin."

Welcome to the people's division.




Santa Clara Rage captain Lili Delaney. Photo: Shea Mulqueeney

## Making the Move to D-III

Over the offseason, USAU **upped the maximum students enrollment limit for D-III from 7,500 to 10,000**. Santa Clara, with 9,600 students, just qualifies for the new designation.

"I don't think we were expecting it. We got the email, and we sent it to our coaches. We're like, 'what do you guys think about this?'" said Delaney. "That really started a lot of discussion for us about, is this what's good for the team? Do we want this long-term?"

Since it wasn't an automatic realignment, Rage had the choice. There were some hang ups. The team was worried that if they made the switch, they might not be able to go back to D-I if they didn't like D-III, or they might no longer be invited to tournaments with a lot of D-I teams if they switched.

After about two weeks of conversation, they decided to make the jump.

Ultimately, the main factors for their decision were two-fold. First, Rage are a team that's about to undergo a major shift. With nine seniors coming into the year and eleven rookies, the pastiche of players that make up the team will be entirely different next year. If there was ever a time for change for Rage, it's now.

Second, and clearly more important to the captains, is "the opportunity to play teams from across the country," said Mulqueeney. "It's something that Rage has never had before. We've only ever played in our region since our team was created."



Santa Clara Rage captain Shea Mulqueeny. Photo: Shea Mulqueeney

Of course this is burying the lede a little, since that opportunity would be a Nationals bid. While Rage has had a trip to the big dance in their crosshairs for a long time, they have never been able to achieve it, especially in a historically deep D-I Southwest region.

"Our school is on a quarter system, we're a smaller school. Being in D-I in our region, we play a lot of schools that start school a lot earlier than us, and have a lot more student population to pull from to join their team," Mulqueeney said.

"And so, putting it under that perspective, it was like, 'wow, we really are more fit to be in the D-III population,' where schools are starting around the same time and they have around the same number of people to pull from to join their team," she continued.

## Nationals on the Brain

Now though, Nationals is — for the first time — a lot more realistic for Rage, and that reality has changed the tone of practice. "We had a conversation with coaches that we wanted practices to be more intense and intentional," Huaracayo said.

It's not just a difference in their practices, but an entire mental shift for the team and players. In early team meetings, the team set a goal for themselves to be hungrier, bring more energy, and be more consistent in their game play. Huaracayo emphasized that intensity in her one-on-ones with the rookies about cutting, saying the key is to "just f****** do it, commit. Just commit."

The three captains "have a lot of confidence" in the rookies and see the potential in players like Mercy "Sticky" James, who competed at YCC U.S. Open last season with the championship team Seven Hills. James has been instrumental to helping the rest of the rookie class "with the spirit, and explaining technical stuff.



Santa Clara Rage captain Nina Huaracayo jumps for a high disc. Photo: Shea Mulqueeney

Alongside James, another impressive rookie to keep an eye on is Lucy "Octo" Dahl, a former soccer player and wrestler that has quickly and effectively slotted into the handler space. With such skilled and dedicated new players, the captains know that the future of Rage is in good hands.

Another major factor for Rage is their coaching. They have four coaches, who according to Mulqueeney, are "super high energy, super frisbee knowledgeable." They were also instrumental in allowing and supporting the players in making their own decision to switch to D-III. The coaches, Chelsea Rehasale, John Dugan, Emily Shepard, and Kayleigh Vu, each bring a little something extra to the team. Dugan specifically has helped the team keep up the energy, with Mulqueeney describing him as "literally a human on springs."

As for having fun and embracing the D-III life, the team has specifically been working on new chants and cheers to help keep the energy high. "This year it's definitely noticeable," noted Huaracayo. "I think our team just…feeds off of each other's energy, and that actually is something that we've improved on and noticed it actually makes a difference in our games."

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Though they're not the only team to join D-III this year because of the new threshold, nor even the only team in their region[2], Rage did what none of the other converts could, **claiming the Southwest's sole bid to Nationals** with a universe point win over Occidental. Rage are poised to make a splash on the national stage in their first year and have a great foundation for the future.

Keep an eye out for University of California Santa Clara, they may be all the Rage.




Santa Clara celebrates at Santa Clara Rage Prez Day 2026. Photo: Rodney Chen – UltiPhotos.com

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*1. Pronounced LeeLee* ↩

*2. shout out Cal-Poly Humboldt* ↩

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**ZACK DAVIS**



Former D-III player for Spring Hill College, poached on the breakside. Follow on Bluesky if you want. @zackthescribe.bsky.social

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