



Covering the Court



The Official Volleyball Newsletter of the Arizona Region of U.S.A. Volleyball

Fall 2021

Rare Desert Air in the Volleyball at the 2020 (?) Tokyo Olympics

The Tokyo Olympics have come and gone, a full year later than any of us could have predicted but the images, stories, tragedies and triumphs are still fresh in our minds.

In the volleyball arena, Arizona proudly supported some athletes and coaches who made differences in the medal count and represented our state with the utmost Olympic spirit.

From her early days on the sand courts of Victory Lanes, Sarah Sponcil would play older teams, better teams with friends, family and anyone that she could get to come and play that night. Her love for the game was unbridled and her physical attributes followed suit. After a celebrated career at Loyola Marymount and UCLA collegiately, she set her sights on Professional Beach Volleyball.

Sarah came into 2020 well behind the second place US team of Kerri Walsh-Jennings and Brooke Sweat but with her partner Kelly Claes and Sarah hitting their stride, they won back to back FIVB events and vaulted past Kerri and Brooke and into the Olympics representing the United States.

They topped teams from Latvia, Kenya and Brazil to get to the round of 16 where their Olympic dream was stopped by the team from Canada. Television broadcasts cut back to the Sponcil house with Sarah's proud family and friends supporting her Olympic debut. We hope this will be the first of many trips to the Olympics for Sarah and we congratulate her on an impressive career thus far.

Cave Creek resident Mike Wall was an assistant coach for the Men's National Team and his work with that program does not go unnoticed. Also current Phoenix resident and Grand Canyon University Assistant Women's coach Jeff Lui was the USA Women's Performance Analyst that won their first gold medal for the program. Congratulations to Mike and Jeff.

One of the most reported stories over the month was that of Lora Webster. Lora was born and raised in Arizona and even won a High School state title with Cactus

Shadows High School in 2004 despite playing with a prosthetic leg from a cancer diagnosis and amputation while just 11 years old.

Lora was recruited by a fledgling USA Volleyball Sitting program and she shined in the 2004 Paralympics as the upstart Americans took the bronze medal in their first games!



Lora has been a mainstay with the program ever since. The team took silver medals in 2008 and 2012 and then broke out in 2016 with their first Paralympic gold medal and a win over the world dominant Chinese team.

While pregnant with her third child in London in 2012, she competed in Tokyo well into her second trimester with her soon to be fourth child. After overcoming a sweep at the hands of the Chinese in pool play, the USA team bounced back and beat Russia and Brazil to get back to the final, their fourth straight Paralympics gold medal match with China. The American's completed the back to back golds with a 4 game win.

Also on the team was Tucson born and raised Whitney Dosty who played at the University of Arizona but has had ankle injuries since and was eligible to play for the USA Sitting team in her first Paralympics.

Arizona would like to say thank you and commend the men and women from our State and Region for their excellence in our sport and living their lives with the Olympic ideals they represent. Congratulations to you all!

Bad Paperwork = Late Registrations For Your Teams!

Going into the busy registration season of our Region, we are going to ask for your cooperation and help.

Every year, we get incomplete team's paperwork, missing birth certificates, faxed forms and birth certificates that has no team affiliation, team registrations missing forms and on and on and on. Please be sure that if you are submitting paperwork after your paperwork has been turned in that you indicate the club and the team the member belongs to. This is only for "after the fact" submissions. Please do not submit your "club" paperwork via fax or email. It is up to you to mail or drop it off to the region office. We are not able to print your copies.

This year we are requesting that you submit your SEEDING FORM ASAP after Team Selection. This will help to make the process of seeding and team accountability much more efficient. So.....PLEASE DO NOT WAIT TIL DECEMBER FOR THIS ONE!

We are no longer going to process partial team paperwork. If all the required forms are not in the file and current memberships have not been verified by you, don't send it to the Region office. We will email you to come pick it up (we will not incur the cost of mailing it back to you) and it will remain unregistered until the team paperwork is complete.

This is a simple process that requires the Clubs and Club Director's follow up. Please do not ask your parents to submit forms to our office. All forms must come from the club directly.

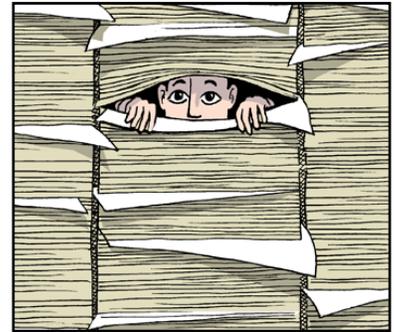
Due in December are:

- Team Contracts - including payment for the first half of the contract fee
- Payment Summary Form – documenting what you are paying for
- Team Fees - \$25 per team
- Team Registration Form – please assemble each team's packet in this way:

way:

- Team Registration Form on top – to be filled out completely including birthdate and jersey number. If you don't know the jersey number a random number will be assigned and you will need to edit your rosters later. DO NOT mark in boxes to the left of the member name.
- In the order you listed the players on the form please attach the following:
 - ✦ Safe Sport/Concussion Education Form – copied back to back on 1 sheet of paper
 - ✦ Birth Certificate – if necessary (all new USAV members)
 - ✦ COVID Waiver – required for everyone on your rosters including staff

Age Waiver Requests – It is your responsibility to determine if an age waiver is needed and is included with this paperwork!



PLEASE DO NOT TURN IN THE MEDICAL RELEASE FORMS. THOSE ARE TO BE HELD BY THE COACHES FOR PRACTICES, TOURNAMENTS AND CHECK IN.

Please help us get through this season by making sure your paperwork is complete. Again, if not complete the Region will ask you to come pick it up and resubmit it when it IS complete. If you wait too long, your team may not be eligible for their first tournament(s).

Thank you for your help and cooperation.

Lisa Naughton

**Registrar
Arizona Region**

AZ Region Top 10 Finishes at USAV Jr National Championships for 2021

The Arizona Region would like to give a shout out to those clubs and teams that competed in the USA Volleyball National Championships. Here are the 2021 top 10 finishes for each division:

Girl's 18's Jr National Championships in Columbus, OH April 23 - 25

18 Open- Arizona Storm 18 Thunder - 5th place

Girl's Junior National Championships in Las Vegas, NV June 26 - July 5

12 National Arizona Storm 12 Thunder - 5th place

13 Open Arizona Storm 13 Thunder - 5th place

AZ Sky 13G - 7th place

14 National Aspire 14 UA Premier - 9th place

14 Open Arizona Storm 14 Thunder - 1st place

AZ Sky 14G - 9th place

15 American AZ Revolution 15 Premier - 3rd place

15 National Az Epic 15 Elite Mike L.- 9th place

15 Patriot Aspire 15 UA Premier -2nd place

Arizona Storm 15 Thunder -3rd Place

Club Cactus 15 Mizuno -9th place

Club One Az 15 Platinum -9th place

16 American AZ EVJ 16N1 -5th place

16 National AZ Revolution 16 Premier -1st place

16 Open Aspire 16 UA Premiere -5th place

16 Patriot AZ Sky 16G - 3rd place

Club One AZ 16 Platinum - 5th place



16 USA

17 American

17 National

17 Patriot

17 USA

Livewire 16 Adidas - 3rd place

AZ EVJ 17N1 Tempe - 3rd place

Az Revolution 17 Premier - 5th place

AZ Elite 17 Black - 5th place

Club Cactus 17 Mizuno - 5th place

AZ Sky 17G - 9th place

Boy's Junior National Championships in Kansas City, MO June 30 - July 7

14 Club AZ Fear 14JS - 1st place

15 Club Aspire 15 Black Panther - 7th place

15 Open AZ Fear 15 TS - 3rd place

16 Club Victory 16-1 - 1st place

16 USA AZ Fear 16 SL - 3rd place

17 USA AZ Fear 17 KS - 1st place



2021 Is In The Books

By Secretary Becky Hudson

2021 season is in the books. The Arizona Region of USA Volleyball Annual Report can be found on our website – www.azregionvolleyball.org under the Handbook.

COVID 19 held onto its presence in the 2021 season but we overcame it and fully completed our entire Adults, Boys and Girls tournament schedules without being shut down. That is a huge accomplishment considering the highest case numbers of COVID happened in January, 2021. Thank you to everyone for helping to accomplish this by wearing masks, maintaining distance from others in the gym and outside, enduring the reduced spectator restrictions and doing your part by staying home when sick or not feeling well. Review the Play Volleyball Protocols on our website for the protocols for the 2022 season.

The continued presence of COVID 19 in the state of Arizona reduced the number of boys' and girls' teams that registered and played with the Region. Many areas of the state were greatly affected by COVID and were not able to participate locally or statewide. Many schools were shut for practices and for tournament use. Many officials chose not to work club tournaments for various reasons but the net effect was that we were short officials even with the reduced number of teams.

- The boys' clubs registered 63 teams in 16 clubs with 774 players participating.
- The girls' registered 479 teams in 89 clubs with 6229 players participating.
- The Adults registered 22 teams for the spring, equaling the number of teams in 2019 and 2020. A fall women's season was also held with 6 teams participating over the course of the fall.
- The overall membership of the Arizona Region was 8980 – down 17% overall for the season.
- The Copper State Challenge was held in February – 46 teams participated.
- Due to the presence of COVID-19 many events were postponed and pushed into the spring affecting all of volleyball across the country. In the spring, collegiate women's, men's and sand tournaments as well as National Qualifiers all on the same weekends competed for officials and teams. It was a difficult season to maneuver through.

New Items of interest for 2022 season. The New for 2022 document is posted on the Region website.

This is the 2nd year of SportsEngine Member Management System. The 2 most common issues we had with the SE MMS during the first year were:

- The parent must purchase the membership for the minor player under the PARENT'S SportsEngine Account. The parent is the only one that can sign the waivers for the minor child and therefore, must have the Household account in SportsEngine.
- The email address for a participant in the club's directory MUST MATCH the email address in the individual player's or coach's SE Account. If they are different email addresses, the player or coach will never get associated with the club in the system.

This year there is one more item that can will cause hiccups in the system – a 17s eligible player whose birthday falls in July or August must purchase an 18s membership and complete SafeSport training. Once the 18s membership is purchased, the parent of these players should contact the AZ Region office for us to "gift" the 17 and under membership to the account so that the player can be put on a 17s roster. The reason for this is that the age definitions were moved back to July 1 but the membership is still good until Aug 31. So technically the 17's player who turns 18 in July or August needs the 18s membership.

Approved by the Arizona Region Board of Directors

Players that leave a debt behind at a club and then move to another club

It is an issue that keeps happening, players that don't complete the payments owed to a club and then join another club for the next season.

The Good Standing Guidelines for players was updated in our By-Laws and Policy Manual. If a debt is owed to a club by a player, the club has 1 year to take the parent to Small Claims Court and bring the result to the AZ Region. Once presented with the judgement, the AZ Region will put the player's membership on Region Hold until the player makes restitution to the club, a financial arrangement has been made or a period of 2 years has passed from the time the Region Hold was put in place. The player will not be able to play with any team until that is resolved.

A Few Items to Review before the start of the season. You can find these policies in the AZ Region Policy Manual on our website Handbook.

- Private Lesson restrictions during the Open House period.
- Pack it in, Pack it out policy
- No Food or Drink in the Gym – 13-point penalty
- Player Release Policy



DON'T BLINK!

By AZ Volleyball Mom Jen Barber

It's the most exciting time of the year. High school volleyball season will soon to roll into club tryouts.

I really wish I knew "then" what I know now.

After 12 years in this sport, my daughter is a senior in high school and this will be her last club season. Just as we've gotten the hang of knowing the do's and don'ts of volleyball tryouts and tournaments, it's all coming to a close.

Check our website often this fall as I'll write some helpful articles about how to navigate AZ Region Membership registration and what to look for when "shopping" for a club.

It's also helpful to understand the different "levels" of teams. Will your athlete be trying out for a "Club", "Competitive" or "Open" team? What's the difference? What should you expect for practices, pricing, and travel tourneys?

First and foremost... Don't stress! I'll help make sense of it all. Follow our #AZRegion social media pages for updates and feel free to message us with any questions. We'll do our best to get them answered for you. While we won't recommend one club over another, we can help you stay on top of important upcoming events. We're also here to help you with any registration questions you might have.

Between now and November, though, check out clubs near you. It's never too early to start preparing. The AZ Region has a Club Directory where you can see which clubs are located in your area. You can browse our website to see how their teams have finished in past AZ Region championships, too.

Please do share our articles with your friends. Lots of kids don't know about club volleyball until they are older. It's such a fun sport and has brought so much joy to our family.

Our family is grateful for the AZ Region of USA Volleyball, our daughter's coaches, and the families we've met over the years. Lots of fun memories and a great kickstart for the life she'll start on her own next year.

Don't blink! Before you know it, you'll be washing that last jersey, (in a special gentle cycle filled with cold water early in the morning, of course!), wishing you could turn back time.

Ahhh! What I wouldn't do for one more hair bow, team bonding party...

****Follow #AZRegion in Social Media****

On the Web: www.azregionvolleyball.org

Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/usavaz> and <http://twitter.com/AzRegionBeach>

Instagram: @azregionusavolleyball

www.instagram.com/azregionusavolleyball

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/AZRegionVolleyball

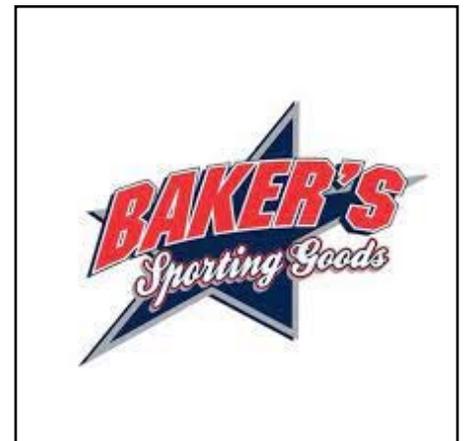
www.facebook.com/AZRegionBeach

www.facebook.com/ArizonaRegionAdultVolleyball

Cheers!

Jen Barber

Owner News2JB Creative Services, LLC



SafeSport– Our Focus in 2022: Emotional Health

By Cindy Kirk

In 2022 we will be focusing on better ways to include everybody in the volleyball community and to help others in their emotional health.



hazing, and harassment. In 2022 we will educate our members about Emotional Conduct using confidence and strength.

Emotional misconduct involves a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has

There are six areas in the SafeSport handbook that allow our players, parents, officials, coaches, and club directors to have a happy and healthy community in club volleyball.

the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to a participant. These behaviors may include verbal acts, physical acts or acts that deny attention or support.

1. **Bullying,**
2. **Hazing,**
3. **Harassment**
4. **Emotional Misconduct**

It also includes any conduct which is intimidating, humiliating, offensive or physically harmful. The emotional health of each person in the volleyball community is important. We will strive together to help players, parents, coaches club directors and officials to maintain good emotional health.



As you begin the 2022 season, know that you will join volleyball communities that may show many signs of emotional well-being. No one needs to jump through hoops to belong to a group. Being a part of this community is a joy to experience and to share. It's not a right that will be granted. It should be a privilege experienced by all.

Yours in Sport,

5. **Physical Misconduct**
6. **Sexual Misconduct.**

The past three years we have talked about better ways to show kindness as opposed to bullying ,

Cindy Kirk

SafeSport Director
Arizona Region of USA Volleyball

Adult Plans Forthcoming as Schedules and NQ's are Released

The 2022 Adult is scheduled to start in January.

The Region is looking to have A/AA and B/BB Men and Women. We would also like to explore options for a coed league, possible during the week.

Anyone interested in either the tournaments or the league please contact Ron Pelham at azhp@azregionvolleyball.org.

All Athletes can renew or register for new membership through SportsEngine.

Are you Really Done With This Great Sport?

Every year, hundreds of Arizona's club and high school volleyball players graduate high school or college and effectively end their playing careers. But the great thing about a sport for the ages is that all ages can be part of the sport!

Have you thought about being a Region official? Sure, there are times they take "the business" from the crowd but it's a great way to make some good extra money on weekends, it has a definite path toward officiating at higher levels, including High School, College and maybe even Professional or International. It is a training away and for players who know the game well and have dealt with officials their entire careers, you are well trained before you don the white and navy in the ref stand. Keep in mind also at Nationals and the higher levels, scoring is it's own separate occupation as is line judging.

How about coaching? Are you willing to put some time in to learn how to teach the game, perhaps put aside the way you might have been coached, listen to what the science says about training and join a club with again, a path toward higher levels if that is what you want.

Perhaps you are wanting to start a club in your area and need some strategic advice and a checklist of those things you will undoubtedly miss. Perhaps your area is underserved for sports and you have found a group of boys and/or girls that want to explore the sport more.

All of these start with an e mail to our Region office and put into the hands of the right folks. Remember there is girls, boys and sitting volleyball on the indoor side and of course beach volleyball at both the Olympic and Paralympic levels.

There is always a need for passionate enthusiasts who aren't quite ready to let the game go. Join us and keep the sport of ages in your bloodstream for years to come!



AZ Region to Host National Beach Tour Qualifiers in '21-'22

The Arizona Region will once again partner up with the National Beach Tour and USA Volleyball to offer up qualifying events for the National Championships to be held in the summer of 2022.

The Region will host the Desert Freeze tournament on Tuesday, December 28th, 2021 at Victory Lanes Sports Park in north Phoenix. All age groups will play that day in either an a.m. or p.m. pool.

The Desert Open tournament will be played on consecutive weekends beginning Sunday, April 24th, 2022 and the next Sunday, May 1st, 2022.

The times and dates for age groups will be determined once the Region schedule is finalized

and registration for both events will be posted on the National Beach Tour website on October 15th.



National Team Development Program Begins

Young volleyball athletes who want to take the next step on their path to the podium can now be part of the new USA Volleyball National Team Development Program (NTDP).

NTDP replaces the USA Volleyball High Performance program. Since the 1990s, USAV High Performance has identified, evaluated, trained and developed young athletes to build a sustainable pipeline of future Olympians and Paralympians. Volleyball has flourished into the most popular high school team sport for girls and the fastest-growing high school sport for boys in the U.S.

The NTDP will increase the opportunities for athletes to be seen and evaluated and to develop within the USAV National Team system.

“As the popularity of volleyball continues to grow in the United States, USAV needs to grow with it,” USAV Chief of Sports Dr. Peter Vint said. “Throughout the past year, we have challenged the way we have done things and have worked toward a better and more robust system of identifying and developing athletes.”

The NTDP will be a fluid system with an athlete-centered focus that emphasizes the health, well-being and overall development of each individual player. Indoor, beach and sitting volleyball players will have increased opportunities to play with and against the best athletes from across the country and to learn from some of the best minds in the game.

“Aligning our National Team Development Program with the philosophies, methodologies and culture of our national teams is important to sustain competitive excellence in our sport,” U.S. Women’s National Team Assistant Coach / NTDP Senior Manager Erin Virtue said. “I am proud of our NTDP team for the research, time and passion it has put in throughout this difficult year. We have more work to do and we are excited to roll out these new initiatives in 2021.”

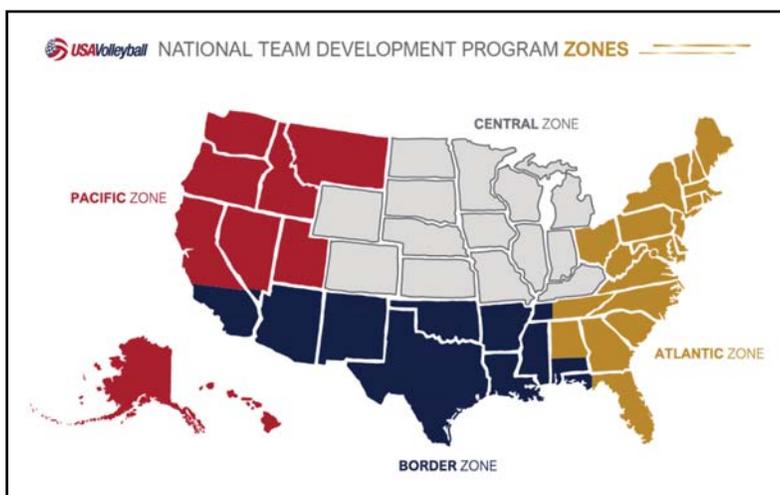
Age-group categories will begin with girls under-15 and boys under-16 with the oldest age groups for both genders being under-21. Athletes U15 and older may participate in the NTDP Training Series held quarterly at locations across the country. A new series of local events called NTDP Accelerators will offer athletes the chance to train against top competition in their area.

Younger athletes may participate in USAVplay. These single-session and summer-camp programs allow any athlete to participate in a development-focused training session.

There will not be tryouts for the NTDP. Athletes will be selected to NTDP training and competition via a nationwide scouting network. Scouts from around the country will be selected to identify athletes at qualifiers, bid events and high school/club tournaments across the United States.

One of the key principles in athlete development and the National Team Development Program is having the best athletes train with and against the best. The NTDP National Training Series will support that concept with zonal and national programs four times each year. Zonal programs will occur in the fall and spring, with national programs in the summer and winter.

The USA Volleyball National Team Development Program (NTDP) has enlisted 90 of the top volleyball coaches and experts in the United States to be part of its 2021 Scouting Network.



The NTDP Scouting Network serves as the NTDP talent identification process for age group national teams as well as the NTDP training series. This process replaces the former tryout selection process that was part of the High Performance Program.

The Scouting Network includes coaches and experts from across the United States, covering many of the USAV regions. Due to the NCAA dead period, scouts will remain remote through the end of May, but will soon be attending many events and training sessions around the country.

Among the coaches scouting on the indoor side is NCAA Championship winner John Speraw, current coach of the U.S. Men's National Team, who won two titles with UC Irvine and has taken UCLA to the finals.



"Talent identification is not an exact science. It takes years of experience, knowledge of the game, and understanding of the growth and maturation process," Speraw said. "I am excited to collaborate with the NTDP as a member of the Scouting Network and help bring together the very best young athletes in the country to train with and against one another."

Scouting will be a continuous and fluid effort of the network. The Scouting Network will identify athletes at various events and through practices, video and more.

Athletes can come from anywhere and be members of a variety of organizations. Scouts will not be limited to certain events and will be using four zones to create efficiency within the Scouting Network (see map below)

Program selection for summer NTDP will begin in early May. To assist scouts, indoor athletes should update their University Athlete profiles to include, at minimum: name, club, position, jersey number, height and club coach contact information. Scouts will be identifying athletes to place on rosters for USA Volleyball's U18-U21 National Training Teams and NTDP Training Series.

The National Team Development Program Accelerators will provide opportunities for clubs and regional high performance programs to nominate promising players to receive an invitation to local best vs. best training sessions. These sessions will be organized by USA Volleyball and run in a manner similar to competitive sessions within the NTDP Training Series. Accelerators give opportunities for "next level" athletes to play with and be challenged against the best athletes in a more localized setting.

After an initial roll-out in 2021, Accelerators will be held monthly in ways that do not interfere with athletes' club or school programs.

The age definitions of athletes have been defined with reference to growth and maturational data and study that drives USA Volleyball age-eligibility and selection processes.

In addition, coaching education will be provided through the NTDP Academy. The modules will be up for sale soon and include body, craft, heart, mind and team. These modules are mainly video and use National Team Players, Coaches and Staff in their instruction.

More details will be made available and interested parties can refer to the USA Volleyball website. Questions can be emailed to ntdpinfo@usav.org.



Let's Remember What We Missed And Embrace It

The upcoming USAV season promises to be a new beginning. It is our chance to get back to normal. As our thoughts begin to realize that normal is no longer what we will live out.

We may not bring out a spread of sandwiches to our food camps. We may not think twice when we see a teammate make the choice to wear a mask. It will no longer be odd for us to see people streaming live feeds because they are not feeling well. We are looking forward to sitting in a gym like we used to. Thank goodness our communities have stood the test of time.

We can look back and think why are we doing what we are doing each tournament weekend with our young ladies and young men who just want to compete on a volleyball court. I believe the value of club volleyball is bringing out the best version of each player, parent, coach, club director, official and all those people working tournaments. The action is building and the roar of a crowd is stimulating. What emotions will we experience this year.

Help us remember the extreme privilege we have when we can gather together Help us remember the extreme privilege to watch our young players grow as individuals and as a collective group of players. It is so easy to forget the struggle and get back to yelling at officials, or to complain about things that don't really matter. Being a fan is not always logical. Being fanatical is about being crazy in love with the passion of competition.

Help us remember in our excitement to get back at it, to grow as a volleyball community and pick up trash when it's spilling over from the dumpster. To congratulate our opponent when they play well. To enjoy the pure joy of a team who accomplished something pretty phenomenal even if it's our opponent. We will show up and shout out for the dignity of each person in our presence because everybody matters.

Cindy Kirk

Junior Club Coordinator

Aloha From The Ethics And Compliance Committee

First we want to wish everyone a great upcoming season for both the boys and girls teams. In spite of the pandemic, we volleyball fanatics can still keep the faith and continue to love our favorite sport. Here are just a few reminders:

1. The Arizona Region continues to have no jurisdiction in financial contract disputes between clubs and parents. Our legal council is firm in our non-involvement in breach of contract disputes. We cannot intercede in club fee refunds involving player releases.
2. We respectfully request that anyone filing a phone-in or on-line report or complaint to the US. Center For SafeSport, please contact the Arizona Region as well, so that we are aware of possible investigations or disciplinary actions by SafeSport or USAV. We are experiencing a number of after-the-fact SafeSport actions that we have no knowledge of. Since we have received cases that are remanded back to the Region, we are often lacking many of the vital facts and details needed. This, in turn, delays timely action on our part. Should you file any type of report that involves serious violations to SafeSport, we ask that you contact the Region asap after your initial report.

Should you have any questions reference these reminders, feel free to contact our Region SafeSport Director, Cindy Kirk, or me at your convenience.

Have a great season!

JR Salima

Ethics and Compliance Officer



AZ High Performance Takes To Florida

By Kyla Chavez

In July, several Regions organized the USA All-Star Championships which took place in Orlando, Florida. Ten regions were represented at this tournament with forty-four teams total. The Arizona Region took 5 teams total, with 57 athletes from clubs all around the valley.

The **Girls Future Select team (born in 2008 or Later)** was coached by David Chavez and DT Nguyen. These girls finished behind Team Florida GFS Red in 2nd place overall with an impressive record of 5-3. Breanna Walsh (#2 Libero) and Vega Tunnell (#3 OH) were selected to be on the All-Tournament team for their standout performances. This is the first time in Az Region history that the Future Select team has medaled. The **Girls National Select (born in 2006 or 2007)** was coached by Deitre Collins-Parker and Bryan Meyer. We were excited to have Deitre Collins-Parker on our staff as she competed in the 1988 Olympics on the Women's Indoor team. This team tied for 5th place overall with Team Florida GNS, holding an overall record of 3-3.

Girls International Select (born in 2006 or 2007) was led by Coach Teresa Spann and Rachel Kater. These girls went undefeated all weekend, 7-0, while only dropping 2 sets. Needless to say, this team went down in Arizona High Performance history as being the first team ever to bring home the gold. To top it off, they had 4 athletes represented on the All-Tournament team - Kaia Pixler (#8 Setter), Raegan Richardson (#6 MH/OPP), Mikayla Shepston (#3 OH), and Teraya Sigler (#2 OH/OPP). Not only was Sigler selected for the All-Tournament team, but she was also recognized as the overall Most Valuable Player.

Girls International Youth (born in 2004 or 2005) was coached by Charita Stubbs and David Thistle. Charita Stubbs is the Associate Head Coach at the University of Arizona and has been on staff with the Arizona High Performance program for years, so we were excited to have her back this year. This team finished 4th overall after a tough loss to Nike SRVA Girls National Youth in 5 sets. They had a winning record of 5-3 overall.

The **Boys International Youth (born in 2002, 2003 or 2004)** was led by Coach Taylor Stallman and Noah Cotterman. The boys had an impressive 5-0 record going into the last day and then battled in two close 5 set matches, placing them 4th overall with a record of 5-2.

All these athletes competed at a high level, got the best training and had a memorable experience. On their time off, the teams got to enjoy Disney Springs, the beach, and experience the Orlando culture. Huge shout out to the team chaperones for helping us make this happen and for keeping our athletes safe and on schedule, and to our AZHP Correspondents Kyla Chavez and Alyssa Avitia for updating all the social media and taking photos. None of this would have been possible if it were not for High Performance Director, Ron Pelham and AZ Region Office Staff member, Lisa Naughton. We are so proud of these athletes for not only representing the AZ Region well on the court, but also off the court!

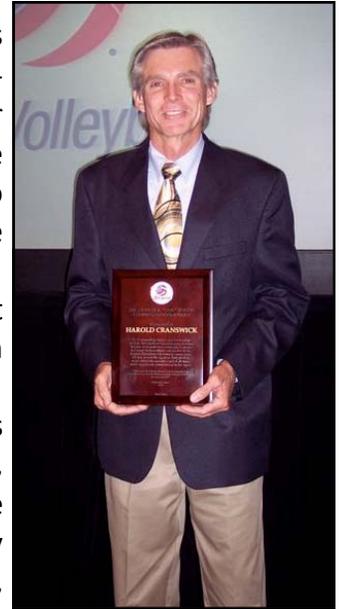


From the Commish– Save The Date!!!

Has this ever happened to you? Your favorite cousin contacts you and asks you to participate in their wedding. You are excited at the thought and the conversation ends. At some point, you realize that you were not provided with a date for the wedding. Based on past conversations, you get ready for what you anticipate the date to be. However, your cousin has an entirely different date in mind. So what's likely to happen? The result could be confusion, hurt feelings and maybe even anger if you don't talk and get on the same page.

That folks, is what happens when a Club Director and parents sign a contract but a specific end date is not part of the contract. Confusion can reign and both parties can end up angry because of the actions of the other party.

The Region is here to provide a season of competitive volleyball that runs as smoothly as possible. In general (without a pandemic), that happens. However, when the Arizona Region ends with our Regional Tournaments, the Region Office begins to hear complaints from parents, coaches and club directors and it is usually because their contract lacks a date. In order to avoid confusion, hurt feelings, missed opportunities and anger, the Region would like to offer a friendly suggestion to club directors and parents alike.



Club Directors, Coaches, and Parents: PLEASE, PLEASE read your contract carefully and make sure the club contract includes a specific end date for the player to be legally committed to the club.

Club Directors: Do you want your players committed to your club through Junior Nationals? If yes, say so in the contract. You can always “release” any player earlier if you desire.

Coaches: Know what is in the contract and be aware of your Coaches Code of Conduct. When in doubt about a player's status, ask your Club Director if the player is in your club. If they are with another club, talk to your Club Director and the player's Club Director to make sure you know their status. If they are under contract through Junior Nationals, you cannot recruit them or add them to your roster without a “release.”

Parents: Please read the contract BEFORE you sign it. Find out when the player is no longer officially considered part of the club. If that end date is with the completion of the Arizona Regional Tournament, your child can then move on and play for another club without a “release.” If the end date is the end of Junior Nationals, your child is expected to remain with the club unless you request and are granted a “release.”

If the Region is made aware of the end dates on a contract, it is much easier to resolve any issue that arises concerning illegal recruiting or players participating with another club after Regionals. So – Save the Date.

A huge thanks to JR Salima, the Arizona Region Ethics and Compliance Officer, for wrestling with issues like this and for bringing this to our attention. Hopefully, this article will help avoid a lot of confusion and hurt feelings in the future.

From the court,

Harold W. Cranswick

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Third grade students at Valley View Leadership Academy recently enjoyed a volleyball P.E. class in conjunction with Arizona Region's Outreach. If your school, club, team or organization would like some volleyball included in your curriculum, contact Outreach@azregionvolleyball.org and let us know how we can help.

