

AZ REGION OF USA VOLLEYBALL



NEWS

In This Edition: We're celebrating Arizona Region club teams earning well-deserved recognition on the national stage—proof that hard work and dedication are paying off! Hear about the latest updates at the Region and how we're working to make this club season smoother, stronger, and more successful for everyone.

"COVERING THE COURT"

FALL
'25




AZ REGION HONORS




The Arizona Region of USA Volleyball takes center stage at the USA Volleyball Hall of Fame Induction & Awards Banquet...

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Arizona Region of USA Volleyball Celebrates Historic Night of Honors

The Arizona Region took center stage on May 21, 2025 at the USA Volleyball Hall of Fame Induction and Awards Banquet at the Hilton Denver City Center, as USA Volleyball honored two of its most influential contributors with national recognition.

Teraya Sigler, widely regarded as the most decorated high school volleyball athlete in Arizona, was named the 2025 Junior Female Athlete of the Year and inducted into the USA Volleyball Hall of Fame, solidifying her legacy as a transformative force in youth volleyball.

The evening also featured the presentation of the George J. Fisher Leader in Volleyball Award to Arizona Region Commissioner **Harold Cranswick**. The award, one of USA Volleyball's highest honors, was presented by longtime colleague Jon Lee.

"I'm humbled and honored to receive this award," said Cranswick. "But I see it as a symbol of the Arizona Region's commitment to our Mission and the dedicated efforts of the Arizona Region staff."

These recognitions mark a significant milestone for the Arizona Region, underscoring its long-standing tradition of excellence, leadership, and commitment to athlete development.

"From the Commish" | Good News Around the Region

Do you know what's going on in the Arizona Region of USA Volleyball? Most members of the Arizona Region (and the parents of junior members) only know about the things that impact them on a personal level but there's a great deal more that most don't know about. For example, did you know:

National Champs – For one whole month there was a billboard in Phoenix sharing the news that Arizona Storm Elite 18s won the National Championship.

Retirement – Huge news! Our long time Board Secretary, Office Manager and setter for the NJCAA Champion Mesa Community College Volleyball team, Becky Hudson, retired at the beginning of summer. Please wish her well as she enjoys a well-deserved retirement.



Harold Cranswick
Arizona Region Commissioner

Continued

"From the Commish" | Good News Around the Region

Region Office Changes – With Becky's retirement, Mr. Andrew McCall was hired as the Bookkeeper for the Region. Please welcome Andrew.

Officials' Liaison – Ms. Stefany Pew was hired to provide additional customer service for the Officials' Division. Stefany has already demonstrated an ability to respond to inquiries and to complete tasks in a fast and efficient manner. Officials should consider the Officials' Liaison to be the point of first contact when it comes to any inquiry dealing with officials.

Surveys – The Board of Directors conducted four important surveys over the last few months for the express purpose of gathering feedback from Junior Girls' Club Directors about Junior Girls' Forum topics; from Officials about the way they would prefer to have the Officials Division structured; from Club Directors about the way they would prefer to have the Junior Division structured and from everyone to determine the topics to be discussed at the Arizona Region Retreat. Thanks to everyone who participated.

Arizona Region Alternative Adult Competition – Following the New England Region model, the Arizona Region will be testing out an Alternative Adult form of competition over the next two years. The new, Alternative Adult approach will have four basic changes: (1) player and tournaments will be rated A, B, and C so teams are always playing against teams of similar skills levels; (2) rosters will not be frozen so players can form whatever team they like for each tournament; (3) the size of each tournament will be limited so tournament days are shorter; and (4) initially the teams will officiate their own matches to help keep entry fees low.

Volunteers – As the Arizona Region continues to grow and new initiatives are explored, there is increased pressure on the Region staff so the Region will be warmly welcoming volunteers in the future. The Region will extend an invitation when the time comes and the staff will gladly work with volunteers.

National News – USA Volleyball has a new CEO in John Speraw. John was selected out of a large pool of qualified candidates and he brings new energy and new ideas to the organization. John brought in new people and restructured the National Office to enable his vision to become a reality.



Continue...

Boys Volleyball – With the arrival of John Speraw, USA Volleyball has already demonstrated a renewed interest in making decisions to change their approach to boys' volleyball to make it more exciting and more competitive.

Boys in Phoenix – If you are not aware of it, there will be two very large and important Boys' Tournaments played in Phoenix in 2026. Over the MLK weekend, the Southwest Boys' Classic will be held in the Phoenix Convention Center AND the Junior Boys National Championships will also be held in Phoenix. This is a tremendous opportunity for boy's teams to play in big tournaments without the usual travel costs.

USAV Outreach – As the former coach of the USA Volleyball Men's team, John Speraw has inside information as to the needs of the team but he now has another love as well. John has two young daughters and sees the value of USA Volleyball putting some time and attention into the Grassroots efforts to provide quality instruction for the very youngest of players. He has several people working on a plan to share with coaches of very young players.

National Qualifiers – It's no secret. USA Volleyball is expanding the number of National Qualifiers for girls. Because of the increased interest in the NQs, the National Office determined that Junior Girls are underserved so you can expect to see additional NQs over the next few years.

These changes and opportunities exemplify our continuing commitment to be good to and for our Region Membership and beyond. We hope you not only appreciate the efforts being made but are in a position to take advantage of them where applicable.

See you on the court,
Harold W. Cranswick
Commissioner
Arizona Region of USA Volleyball

USA Volleyball Launches New Girls Qualifier in 2026

USA Volleyball has added the Girls West Coast Qualifier to its national calendar, debuting April 2–4, 2026 at the Anaheim Convention Center. The event, the 22nd girls junior national qualifier, will feature 15s–17s bid divisions with the chance to earn spots at the 2026 Girls Junior National Championship in Indianapolis.



For a list of all 2025-26 GJNC and GJNC 18s qualifiers, visit:

<https://usavolleyball.org/compete/girls-indoor>



www.azregionvolleyball.org



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2025 Arizona Region High Performance Delegation for the USA Volleyball Championships | Madison, Wisconsin



Each year, the **Arizona Region of USA Volleyball** holds elite tryouts to build six powerhouse teams—stacked with the top boys and girls athletes—to compete at the USA All-Star Championships, the highest level of volleyball across all 40 USA Volleyball regions.

Teams from around the globe. One epic showdown.

#AZHP 2025 RECAP

Submitted by Ronald Pelham | High Performance Director

I want to start by saying **Thank You** to our incredible staff, coaches, athletes, chaperones, and parents for their dedication and support.

The Arizona Region stood tall at the 2025 All-Star Championships in Madison, Wisconsin! We had an outstanding performance from everyone in the program.

All six of our teams made it to the Gold Bracket, showcasing the talent and competitiveness of Arizona's volleyball athletes. The All-Star format's 3-of-5 match structure pushed our teams to their limits, but they rose to the challenge.

We finished second overall out of 21 Regions and a USA Volleyball contingency, just two points shy of the top spot. This achievement is a testament to our athletes' hard work and determination.

We had several athletes named to the **All-Tournament Teams**. Congratulations to these outstanding athletes:

Girls U15

- Makinlee Landis
- Rylee Asanovich
- Kenzie Schwab
- Kami Penrose (MVP)

Girls U17

- Lucy Schmidt
- McKenna Kehoe

Boys U15

- Jaquintin Jordan
- Paxon Boynton

Boys U19

- Logan Gray
- Grey Carter

**We're proud of our athletes' achievements and look forward to next year's
All-Star Championships in Columbus, Ohio!**



AZHP
2025



ARIZONA REGION
HIGH PERFORMANCE BOYS U19

Head Coach Trent Bruns
Assistant Coach Andrew McCall



AZHP
2025



ARIZONA REGION
HIGH PERFORMANCE GIRLS U17

Head Coach Simone Asque-Favia
Assistant Coach Matea Villegas



AZHP
2025



ARIZONA REGION
HIGH PERFORMANCE BOYS U17

Head Coach Wellington Afusia
Assistant Coach Andrew Adair



AZHP
2025



ARIZONA REGION
HIGH PERFORMANCE GIRLS U15

Head Coach Preslie Anderson
Head Coach Evan Larson



AZHP
2025



ARIZONA REGION
HIGH PERFORMANCE BOYS U15

Head Coach Joaquin Santa Cruz
Assistant Coach Kaitlyn Taylor



AZHP
2025



ARIZONA REGION
HIGH PERFORMANCE GIRLS U13

Head Coach Orlando Carrillo
Assistant Coach Ashlynn Medina



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www.azregionvolleyball.org/highperformance

NEWS FROM THE STAND

Congratulations, Sevastian Malcom!

Please join us in congratulating Sevastian Malcom, who earned his Junior National patch at GJNC 2025! This achievement reflects his commitment, skill, and professionalism as an official. The AZ Region is proud to have you representing us — great job, Sevastian!



Interested in Becoming an Official?

Are you a **retired coach**, a **former player**, or a **volleyball parent** who's spent countless weekends in the gym? Why not put your experience to good use and become an **official**? It's a fun way to stay connected to the game, support young athletes, and earn a little extra along the way.

Officiating is a great way to give back to the sport, stay connected to the volleyball community, and **earn some extra income**. Best part? You get to **pick your own schedule** by signing up for the weekends you're available!

We're accepting new officials through January 10th, so now's the perfect time to jump in. To learn more or get started, contact Stefany Pew at stefany@azregionvolleyball.org.

We'd love to see you on the court! #RefVolleyball

-Kailee Jodarski Rowe



A NEW RULE YOU NEED TO KNOW

Rule 9.2.3.2 states officials will be “**allowing multiple contacts on a team's second hit if a teammate makes the next touch.**” In other words, a second hit, or usually a set on your side of the net can be “doubled” however any contact that is “set” over the net must be clean and free of rotation as always.



ON THE BIG STAGE!

Job Well Done! **Ronald Pelham** reffed the No. 1 Nebraska vs. No. 7 Kentucky showdown on August 31st! The game was broadcast on ABC!



ALOHA AZ REGION MEMBERS!

While embarking on another season, we find ourselves in a familiar place as Region old-timers, as well as uneasy but hopeful newcomers. It is necessary to recognize pervasive trends that continues to plague our Region.

As quoted often by Dr. Phil, "The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior". If this is true, one can only suspect that errant, profane and often aggressive misconduct is impatiently seething somewhere on the bench or in the bleachers. Coaches screaming across the court at refs and junior officials, spectators and parents yelling and harassing junior line judges, and spectators standing behind ref stands cursing at every call are just a few of these trends. Other prevalent and aggressive misbehaviors include threatening coaches, refs, other spectators along with challenging physical confrontations in the parking lots.

The Region is hopeful that our amazing youth will enjoy a safe environment and not be impacted by the indiscretions of a few. We further call upon our club directors, coaches and officials to be ever vigilant in recognizing misconduct and reporting it to the Region. This will in turn safeguard our Region members and protect our young athletes.

As a reminder, the Region will have a QR code posted at all venues that you can scan with your mobile device for an incident report form spanning three potential categories. Additionally, a fourth incident category, SafeSport, will be added to the online form. We ask that any complaint submitted to SafeSport be logged on our online complaint system as well. This will expedite the complaint process and ensure coordination of effort in preventing oversights. The Region has found itself in the dark on many SafeSport complaints, often many weeks after it was initially lodged. We encourage all to use this complaint system so that the complaint can be addressed in a timely manner and help maintain proper conduct during our Region tournament season.

Thank you for your support-
JR Salima
Ethics Compliance Officer

400s TOURNAMENT SERIES

400s, designed by Gold Medal Squared, is intended to change how we play volleyball at the youth level. 400 is referencing a smaller court, approximately 400 sq/ft, in combination with lower nets so that the kids can experience one of the most exciting skills in volleyball.. Spiking!

**Register for 1 or if you register for all 3,
you'll save \$20!**

ignitevbclub.com/400s-tournament-series



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&
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YOUTH 400'S:

- ELEMENTARY 6TH GRADE & YOUNGER
- SMALLER COURTS (400 SQ/ FT)
- 4V4
- SHORTER GAMES WITH INCREASED REPS

COMING SOON 9/13, 9/27, AND 10/4 FROM 1-3 PM



CLUB DIRECTORS

*Girls 2025-26 club season is underway—don't miss the 2025 Fall General Assembly on Sunday, **September 21st** at the Phoenix Airport Hilton!*

RSVP Required



MEMBERSHIP & NEW GIRLS CLUB

SEASON REMINDERS

As we kick off a new season, we have a few exciting updates regarding registration...

All forms that were collected previously as a hard copy are now completed online during the registration process. This includes all the **USAV Waivers** as well as the **Concussion Acknowledgement, Safe Sport and yes.....Birth Certificates!** All junior registrants will need to upload the Birth Certificate in Sports Engine to complete the process and become eligible. This does include those who have previously turned it into the Region Office.

Medical Releases will still need to be carried by all coaches. These will be asked for at Tournament Check-in so be sure your coaches have them.

Paperwork that will be due to the Region Office:

- **Club Director Agreement**
- **Seeding Form** (Online) – due prior to the rest of the paperwork so our office can prepare for the number of courts needed. (Online)
- **Team Registration Forms** – including names and birthdates for all players. Coaches should also appear on this form, but birthdates are not required.
- **Team Contracts**
- **Payment Summary Form** (needs to accompany any and all payments to the region office)

Another important thing to remember is that players will still need to be linked to your club after tryouts. Be sure you are collecting the email address that they used during Sports Engine registration so you can send them the club invitation.

As always, please reach out to me with any questions,

Lisa Naughton

Registrar | AZ Region of USA Volleyball

lisa@azregionvolleyball.org | 480-306-8094



The safety of its participants is of paramount importance to USA Volleyball. USA Volleyball has a ZERO TOLERANCE for abuse and misconduct. This includes not only on-court safety, but also off-court safety in any part of USA Volleyball's programs. USA Volleyball is committed to creating safe and fun environments for youth. This includes, but is not limited to, providing training, educational materials and resources for our regions, clubs, coaches and parents.

usavolleyball.org/safesport

Arizona Region Expands Focus on Growing the Adult Game

The Arizona Region, under the leadership of Commissioner Harold Cranswick, is setting its sights on a segment of volleyball often overlooked: adult players.

Over the next two seasons, Cranswick is committed to growing opportunities for adults of all levels. His long-term vision includes building a comprehensive database of players, venues, and tournaments to strengthen and connect the adult volleyball community across Arizona. Drawing on insights from other Regions with thriving adult programs, he is bringing fresh ideas and momentum to help the game flourish.

While club coaches remain a cornerstone of adult participation, Cranswick sees tremendous potential beyond these competitive ranks. From beginners eager to learn, to players simply wanting to enjoy the game with friends and family, the goal is inclusivity—creating space for everyone who wants to play.

In the months ahead, members will see adult tournaments, clinics for new players, and even joint events combining adult and junior competition featured on the Region website and social media channels.

The Region is also asking for input: if you're looking for a team, interested in a clinic, or have ideas on how to better support the adult volleyball community, reach out at erichbke@msn.com. Your feedback will help shape the next phase of growth.

2025–26 Season Brings New USA Volleyball Rules

USA Volleyball has announced several important rule updates for the 2025–26 season:

- **Screening:** Players may not raise their hands above their head on serve until the ball crosses the net.
- **Doubles:** Multiple contacts are now permitted on the second hit—provided a teammate makes the next touch.
- **Substitutions:** Teams are allowed 15 substitutions per set.
- **Liberos:** Coaches may designate 0, 1, or 2 Liberos each set.

These updates are designed to keep the game fair, fast-paced, and inclusive for all athletes and coaches.

AZ REGION REPRESENTS NATIONALLY

Staff Report

The Arizona Region of USA Volleyball was well represented at the various USA Volleyball Junior National Championships played throughout the summer! Several Arizona teams showed the country the heat is not just reserved for home!

In a historic campaign, Arizona Storm 18 Thunder became the first team in USA Volleyball history to claim **three** consecutive National Championships. The Thunder, playing in Salt Lake City in late April, finished the golden trifecta by winning the 18 Open Championship for 2025 to go along with winning the 17 Open title in 2024 and the 16 Open division in 2023. ***This team finishes as the most decorated team in USA Volleyball history.*** Congratulations on this amazing accomplishment!

Other significant finishes in Salt Lake City saw the AZ Sky 18 Gold squad take the gold in the 18 National division. The AZ Sky 17 Gold mirrored their older team by taking the gold in the 17 National division.

In the 18 USA division, Club One 18 Platinum took third place. The 18 Freedom division saw the Mana Wahine 18's take a fifth place. In the 17 Patriot tilt, Zona VBC 17-Red out of Tucson also earned a 5th place finish out of 125 teams. The AZ Sky 17 Blue team took a bronze medal in the 17 Freedom division to close out the Salt Lake City event.

For the boy's, Nationals were held in Minneapolis, Mn. July 3-5th. In the 14's Club division, MVC 14 Black took a third place and in the 15's club, the Matrix 15-1 and the MVC 15 Black took 6th and 7th respectively.

The 16 and under USA Volleyball National Championships were held in Dallas, Tx. June 25 through July 3rd. In the 16 Open division, the AZ Storm 16 Thunder took the silver medal. The 16 Patriot saw sister team AZ Storm 16 Lightning take the bronze.

The 16 Freedom saw AZ EVJ 16 Elite take fifth place while in the 15 Freedom division, AZ EVJ 15 Elite also took a fifth. The 15 National tilt was where Aspire 15 Alpha also earned a fifth place finish as did Livewire 15 Prime in the 15 USA division.

In the 14 Open, AZ Storm 14 Thunder took fifth place as did the Aspire 14 Premiere in the 14 Patriot and the Club One 14 Platinum squad in the 14 American division. The Omni 14 N! took a fifth in the 14 USA division, as well.

In the Starlings National Championships held in Irvine, Ca. in mid-June, two Arizona teams took away Championships: The Shonto 18's from Northern Arizona took the 18's division while the Maricopa 14 Navy squad won the 14 Open Championships.

Congratulations to all of these athletes and coaches who represent our Region at the highest levels.



www.azregionvolleyball.org



AN EXPERIENCE INDUSTRY

Within days, Club Directors, Parents, Coaches and Athletes will begin the arduous journey of the 2025-26 Club Volleyball season.

Competition, tournaments, practices and for a lot of families, travel will become part of your every week through the next 7-10 months. Emotions will run the gamut, nerves will be frayed, triumphs and tragedies, peaks and valleys, evolving as a player, or not.

What gets lost in this competitive carnival driven by the scoreboard and playing time is the experiences our athletes have. Are they enjoyed or purposefully forgotten?

While there is the 1% of our Region athletes that will earn an NCAA Division I volleyball scholarship, and another 3-4% that will garner Division II or III, NAIA or a Junior College berth, the chances of a scholarship in any arena is 1 in 20 athletes.

Dedication, a passion for the game and a desire for wanting and working hard to get better every day can help offset these odds. Genetic lotteries showcasing height, speed or elite athleticism are cashed every recruiting cycle. Sometimes through sheer perseverance an athlete might work their way onto a college roster as well.

But the numbers are not in your favor which makes the experience of Junior Club Volleyball all the more important.

Ask a former player their record for their 16's season: chances are you will get a shrug and a guess. But ask them who was on their team and the stories will begin to spill out like a broken margarita pitcher.

We remember our teammates, the coaches, the experiences. We might remember the big matches or a match where we played at an elite level, but often one match runs into the next, another tournament bleeds into another and before long, a 7-10-year playing career is remembered by a flapping deck of tournament badges affixed to your club's backpack. As Club Directors, Parents and especially Coaches, we must remember that we are in an Experience Industry. What will our athletes remember from this season, or seasons past? What can we do, from each unique Adult perspective, to enhance those experiences?

Continue...



The Arizona Region of USA Volleyball is one of 40 Regions within USA Volleyball! You can find us at:



www.azregionvolleyball.org

When we travel, are we stuck in a hotel or can we, as a team, go exploring? To a museum, a mall, a landmark? Can our social media be a daily diary of how our season experiences can influence us into adulthood?

Or, are screaming coaches, disillusioned parents or disappointed club directors going to be what your athletes remember: a barrage of negative emotions, anger and disappointment? (For the record, this type of experience will lead to a 1-2-year career instead)

As the Adults influencing the experiences of our athletes, take a second and ask yourself on day two of the latest qualifier, "Is my daughter/athlete having a good time?" And if not, what can you do to change it?

Volleyball is truly a lifetime sport. Adults that love the sport continue to play into their 70's and 80's. But those athletes saddled with a bad or negative experience have no desire to climb back into the ring of fire, and it's off to the pickleball courts or perhaps a life without sport all together.

Stop and ask yourself the question. Wins and losses are fleeting and often out of our control, but experiences are forever.

Protecting Young Athletes on Social Media: #AZVolleyballMom's Best Practices

Submitted by Jen Barber | AZ Region Social Media Coordinator | #AZVolleyballMom

Over the years, I've seen firsthand how digital communication can bring a team together – but also how quickly it can put kids at risk. While clubs are required to follow the **Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP)**, I believe it's critical to go above and beyond the minimum. These are the practices I recommend to protect minors and model the right habits on social media.

- **Keep accounts secure.** Limit access to only trusted staff, update passwords regularly, and remove former administrators right away.
- **Never communicate with minors alone.** Always include an adult in digital conversations.
- **Model respect.** Don't post anything you wouldn't want someone else posting of you. Avoid inappropriate photos, alcohol, drugs, or content that has nothing to do with volleyball.
- **Safeguard privacy.** Develop clear rules for how and when minors appear in photos or videos, and always err on the side of caution.

Continued

Finally, remember that every post sets the tone for your community. I encourage clubs to highlight the positives: thank the parents, coaches, referees, and volunteers who make the sport possible, and share stories that show why kids love being part of volleyball.

Following **MAAPP** is a baseline – but these extra steps can help ensure athletes are safe, respected, and proud of the culture we build together online.

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thank you!



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We  our sponsors!



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