



Covering the Court

The Official Volleyball Newsletter of the Arizona Region of USA Volleyball

Spring 2021



Thank You!



USAV HP Championships Coming to Phx in 2021

By Ron Pelham

The USA Volleyball High Performance Championships will be held July 21st -July 25th in downtown Phoenix at the Convention Center.

Boys and girls may tryout for the AZHP teams May 21-23, 2021 at the AZ Region Facility.

Tryout/Clinic fees

1 day \$125

2 day \$175

3 day \$225

Those athletes participating in the Red Rock Rave will be given an opportunity to tryout at a later date with prior approval. Those not attending the Red Rock Rave must attend one of the dates above.

All team Training will be July 13-17, 2021 at the AZ Region Facility in Chandler.

AZHP is looking to fill the following teams to attend the High Performance Championships—



Boys International Youth— Born 2002 and after

Boy National Youth— Born 2004 and after

Boys National Select- Born 2005 and after

Girls International Junior—Born 2001 and after

Girls International Youth— Born 2004 and after

Girls International Select— Born 2006 and after

Girls Future Select— Born 2008 and after

Registration for the AZHP Tryout/Clinic will be on our website at the following link:

<https://www.azregionvolleyball.org/page/show/3583103-high-performance>



Adult Nationals Headed Back To Louisville

Registration is now open through AES. for USAV Open Nationals.

Online registration deadline in AES for all divisions is Thursday, April 22, 7 pm ET

Last day to receive entry refund: Thursday, May 6, 11:59 pm ET

Open Nationals will be held in Louisville Kentucky May 28 -June 2nd.

The Open division cost per team is \$1,350. All other divisions are \$900 per team.

The AA, BB, Men's 45, Women's 40, Men's 55, and Women's 50 will be played May 28th-30th.



Hotels can be booked with the following link:

A, B, Men's 40, Women's 45, Men's 50, Women's 55, Men's 60, and Women's 65 will be played May 31st -June 2nd

Online roster edits deadline is Thursday, April 29, 11:50 pm ET

<https://www.volleyballhotels.teamtravelsource.com/usav-open-national>

Get Your Questions Answered

Want to know how to find tournament schedules?
Wondering what the referee hand signals mean?
Looking for the latest about pandemic policies?
We've got you covered.

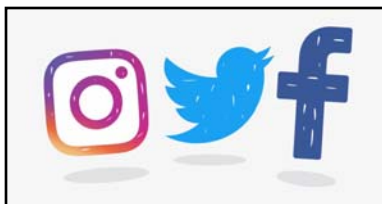
The Arizona Region of USA Volleyball has a variety of articles on the main page of our website with helpful tips throughout the season.

Also be sure to follow us in social media. We're on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These are places where you'll see our most important communications as they happen.

We're always checking our messages and we want you to know we read each and every comment and

by Jen Barber - #AZVolleyballMom

message. Thank you for your support of the #AZRegion and best wishes to each and every team as they head into the Region Championships!



On the Web:

www.azregionvolleyball.org

Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/usavaz>

<https://twitter.com/AzRegionBeach>

Instagram: @azregionusavolleyball

<https://www.instagram.com/azregionusavolleyball>

FaceBook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AZRegionVolleyball>

<https://www.facebook.com/AZRegionBeach>

<https://www.facebook.com/ArizonaRegionAdultVolleyball>

David Rubio Volleyball Camp

June 1-3: Mini Camp | 9:00 - 3:00 pm (University of Arizona) \$180

June 15-17: Mini Camp 2 | 8:00am - 12:00 pm (Sporting Chance) \$150

June 22-24: Mini Camp 3 | 8:00am - 12:00 pm (Sporting Chance) \$150

***Open to athletes entering 8th grade and younger**

June 1-3: Serve/Pass (University of Arizona) \$110

4:00pm - 6:00pm | Cost: \$110

July 9-10: Intermediate/Adv Camp (4 sessions)

Session I 9:00am - 12:00pm | Session II 2:00pm - 4:30pm | Cost \$200.00

July 11-13 Position Camp (9 Sessions | A La Carte)

See website for schedule | Cost: \$40/session | \$300 for all sessions

July 13-15: Elite Camp (5 Sessions)

See website for schedule | Cost: \$275.00

July 16-18: Team Camp (6 Sessions | \$145/Player)

2 Sessions/Day | Minimum 8 players/team | See website for more details

***Open to athletes of ALL ages**

www.davidrubiovolleyballcamp.com

Any questions can be directed to Amanda Rubio:

(520) 818-8668

davidrubiovolleyballcamp@gmail.com

Unique Boy's Season Ends With Gold

The Arizona Region's 2021 Boy's season became the litmus test for the rest of the Region on how tournaments were to be run, the number of spectators and how fragile the line between playing and quarantining is. In December, the season culminated in the Regional Championships and we saw some exceptional volleyball and a resilient group of young men who helped pave the way for the rest of our season. Thank you Gentlemen and congratulations!



The AZ Fear 18 JB defeated the Aspire 18 Thor for the gold medal in the 18's division. APV 18 black took third place.

In the 17's division, the Aspire 17 Iron Man defeated the AZ Fear 17 KS for the top spot with Aspire 17 Falcon finishing in third place.





The 16's tilt saw the AZ Fear 16 SL top the Victory 16's for the crown. Third place went to the Aspire 16 Spiderman squad.

The AZ Fear 15 TS topped their brethren, the AZ Fear 15 CU in the final with the Aspire 15 Black Panthers taking the bronze medal.



The Victory 14 Black team toppled the AZ Fear 14 JS in the final of the 14's division with the Aspire 14 Groot team taking third.

“Treating Others With Dignity...”

By Jr. Div. Coordinator Cindy Kirk

If we have learned anything from the pandemic I think it is that we don't have to agree with each other but we need to work with each other to survive.

“Uniters do not expect uniformity of opinion, but do seek unity in treating others with dignity—which gives justice a chance to flourish.” The Call to Unite Tim Shriver & Tom Rosshirt.

There have been many decisions made over the course of a year. Those decisions were not easy ones. The volleyball players, parents, officials, facilities, health department and club directors were all those individuals who gave input to those decisions. At the end of the day those decisions were made to help keep everybody safe. Some policies were uncomfortable and very restrictive and each concern was heard by the region staff and employees.

As we are starting to open up it is so important to stay flexible because each facility is in a different city with

different expectations on that facility. The way we react with expectations measures the dignity that we give others around us.

When others ask us to wear a mask, the way we discuss the issue speaks to the dignity that we are giving to the person we disagree with. No one expects others to agree with everything that people believe one hundred percent, but if we really care about others around us we will listen and allow others to have a voice and an opinion. We will come out of this pandemic, but we forever will be different from this process.

What we do from this point on will measure how we have learned from this event. We will have a new normal and I hope that normal includes treating the people around us with care because we owe it to the volleyball community.



2021 NAU VOLLEYBALL CAMPS

All-Skills Camp
JULY 10-12

Advanced Camp
JULY 16-18

MORE INFO AND TEAM CAMP OPTIONS:

Visit: www.nauvbcamp.com

Email: northernarizonavb@gmail.com

SafeSport: Hang On a Little Longer

By Cindy Kirk

It seems that the SafeSport office has been very busy over the last month. There has been a variety of reasons that I have been called or have visited club practices. The underlying reason is that individuals have been forgetting that we exist in a community.

We have been socially isolated and now that we are venturing out beyond the comfort of our Zoom call we have forgotten that people matter. When someone trips and hits us, it may not have been on purpose. But to



ignore saying sorry after we hit that person, we allow that one event to escalate to an all-out brawl in a store.

I have to wear a mask in the drive through at Jack-In-The-Box. If I don't like it, I go to McDonald's. I don't berate the Jack-In-The-Box employee with my opinion, I just

simply put on a mask, get my order, and go home. I do that because I want my food and I also care about the person in the window.

Let's remember volleyball is enjoyable and it is worth the restrictions because we love it, and we care about the people around us. Let's hang on just a little longer because we care about the volleyball community.

Let's Get Ahead to Not Get Behind

By Lisa Naughton— Registrar

It's hard to believe we are on the downward slope for the 2021 Season. It has been challenging to say the least, beginning with the new Member Management System. I would like to thank everyone for your patience during this transition. It has not always been easy, logical or practical. Our patience and flexibility were tested when it came to completing simple tasks like printing a roster or providing the email address you used when you registered.

It will be my hope to take advantage of the time in Fall to better prepare club directors and administrators for next year by offering small group training for those of you who never quite got the hang of it this past season. I will also use the summer to prepare some simple bullet point instruction sheets that people can refer to instead of "viewing" a short tutorial. These will be directed towards adult members, parents and clubs alike.

During the offseason, I would like each of you to take the time to look into your Household account. Be sure if you are registering a Junior, that the

account is set up in the name of the parent. There is no charge for this.

Once the Household account is set up, profiles can then be created for each of the junior members you are registering. Each member will then be linked to the email the parent used when setting up the account. This will be necessary because in the case of juniors, parents need to sign waivers.

Lastly, we were told when we began this journey with Sports Engine that members will be able to pre-register for the upcoming season beginning July 1st. By doing this you would avoid any lapse in membership. We will keep you posted if this does become an option.

Thanks again for your patience this past season.

Stay Healthy and Safe!



Pandemic Reflections and a Word of Thanks

By Harold Cranswick

Is it possible that this ugly pandemic might give us reasons to say “thanks?” Well, yes - in a way. As Commissioner, I would like to suggest that the members of the Arizona Region and their families might want to consider taking a moment to do just that.

It was one year ago that everything changed. The pandemic was real and the United States was going to have to find a way to deal with it. Different countries took different approaches but one year ago it became obvious that life as we knew it, would not continue for the immediate future. It seemed like almost all activity was impacted in one way or another and volleyball in the Arizona Region was no exception.

Over the past year, many people associated with the Arizona Region have been impacted by COVID-19. Sure, everyone who wanted to continue to play volleyball was affected. All players and their families were dealt a blow by the shut down of all volleyball activities, others were impacted by the restrictions imposed on society, some of our clubs were forced to close their doors, many facilities were no longer available and many players across the country were no longer provided with opportunities to demonstrate their skills to potential coaches who might offer scholarships.

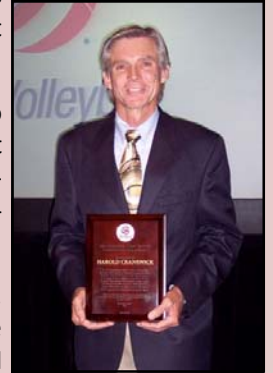
However, there were many other stories that took place that shook us to our very core. The Region learned about the tragic way the virus impacted our members and their families on the reservations in northern Arizona. Our office was also informed about members who were hospitalized for extended periods of time due to the virus and some even lost their lives. Losing a chance to play, coach or officiate volleyball matches is one thing but lying in a bed hooked up to a breathing machine (or knowing someone in that position) tends to put life in perspective.

Unlike many Regions in USA Volleyball, the Arizona Region was fortunate because we were able to find ways to bounce back after the summer with a Boys’ season, a Girls’ season and an Adult season. We will even host the High Performance Championships in Phoenix this summer so, from my perspective, there are plenty of reasons to say “thanks.” From a Region perspective, I think it is important to say thank you to a number of people for their efforts over the course of the last year. Please consider saying “thanks” in some way to the following people:

Becky Hudson – Becky’s efforts as the Region Office Manager over the years are the primary reason the Region was not devastated financially like so many other Regions. Becky has done an exceptional job when it comes to the finances of the Region. She has made sure that the Board is always aware of the revenues and expenses the Region is facing. Her watchful eye has helped the Region keep costs as low as possible, to gradually build up a small emergency reserve fund (that helped us throughout pandemic) and to enable to Region to always pay our debts. The net result is that the Arizona Region was able to offer volleyball when other entities were either unable to do so or only able to offer them at much higher prices. Equally important, Becky has made it a point to stay current on the protocols, rules and regulations in relation to COVID-19 and shared that knowledge with our Social Media Director so the membership could stay current. Even though the pandemic landscape constantly changes, she has done a remarkable job staying in contact with facility owners, Region staff and officials as well as club directors to make sure the Region can continue to function. She deserves your “thanks.”

Lisa Naughton – Lisa is the Arizona Region Registrar and she has been a stabilizing force throughout the pandemic. Lisa has been in her office throughout the pandemic answering the phone and responding to questions, concerns and complaints. As if the pandemic wasn’t enough, Lisa was forced to deal with the daily frustration of a new Member Management System through Sports Engine. Unfortunately, USA Volleyball made the decision to go with this new system before it was fully functioning and Lisa has been at the forefront attempting to learn everything she needs to do her job and to answer all of the questions that club directors, coaches, and parents ask her on a daily basis. Sports Engine is still making changes and Lisa’s job is no easier today than it was one year ago. As if that isn’t enough, Lisa has put her own health and the health of her family on the line almost every weekend working as a Site Director. The next time you see her, please tell her “thanks.”

Eric Hodgson - Another unsung hero in the Arizona Region Office, Eric is the Outreach Director for the Region. Eric took it upon himself to create Webinars this past year so coaches and club directors could continue to learn and grow when traditional clinics were no longer available. Over the years, he has traveled all over the state to bring volleyball clinics, camps, and information to anyone who wants it. He has contacts everywhere and when the pandemic hit the state, he was already reaching out to our friends and members on the reservation up north to provide assistance. On his own, Eric helped organize efforts to bring food, water and needed supplies to people who desperately needed it. Without notoriety or funding, Eric has continued to stay in touch and to promote volleyball for the disabled community as well as working to set up alternative clinics and/or leagues for low income and underprivileged areas in the state. No doubt he will shrug it off but go ahead and tell Eric “Thanks” next time you see him.



Lance Johnson – As the Tournament Scheduler, IT expert, and Site Director, Lance has spent untold hours during the pandemic to develop a Region program that allows coaches, club directors, parents and spectators to keep track of how their teams are doing during the tournament weekend. Lance's efforts have saved the Region (and clubs) significant money that would have been spent to provide the same service from an outside provider. And, as the Site Director for our events at Court One, Lance has done an amazing job working with those in attendance to ensure that rules, policies, and protocols are followed so Court One can keep its doors open for both practice and tournaments. Lance deserves a word of "thanks," too.

Jen Barber – Jen is a fairly recent addition to the Arizona Region Staff but she has been instrumental in making sure all relevant news is made available to our members on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. As the Social Media Director, Jen is always ready to post messages of recent changes, messages of thanks, and messages of general interest to the membership. With people looking for information from a variety of sources in recent years, the Region Staff could not keep pace until we hired Jen. Her skills in Social Media have helped the Region keep our membership up to date on any and all information in the Region that impacts them. If you're on Social Media, please send a word of "thanks" to Jen for her efforts.

Earl Capps – Despite having an intense full-time job, Earl has done an incredible job as the Officials Division Coordinator during the pandemic. For a variety of reasons, many officials were not available to work tournaments. Somehow, Earl managed to find and schedule officials for as many sites as possible. Through Earl's leadership, some new innovative ideas are being discussed to recruit new officials and to find new ways to make life better for our current officials. Few people realize how much work goes into the position so Earl rarely gets the thanks he deserves. He's too modest to take credit but, nevertheless, please say "thanks" to Earl next time you see him.

Ron Pelham – Ron has the title of Adult Division Coordinator and High Performance Director but the work he does for the Region extends far beyond those titles. From his home in Tucson, Ron has reached out to the community colleges and adults to find out what kinds of volleyball opportunities they would like the Region to offer during the pandemic. Ron remained flexible and very willing to do whatever it took to create a potential fall league for community colleges as well as alternative tournaments for adults. Along with Bill Lang, Ron was instrumental in putting together the Copper State Challenge on President's Day weekend. Ron never hesitates to volunteer to help out in the office even though it means driving up from Tucson to do so. Throughout the pandemic, Ron has continued to stay in touch with a variety of people at the National Office with respect to the HP Program, the Officials Division and for all things related to Beach. Ron is another one of our Region people who has been at most tournaments working in a variety of capacities to make sure players have a safe and competitive volleyball experience. He deserves it so please offer a word of "thanks" to Ron next time you see him.

Cindy Kirk – In addition to having her hands full as a full-time teacher, club coach and the Region SafeSport Director, Cindy stepped up and ran for the Junior Division Coordinator position right before the pandemic hit. Somehow Cindy has managed to find time to communicate with the club directors and to call meetings of the Junior Boys Committee, the Junior Girls Committee and the Seeding Committee so the Junior Division can operate with as much current information as possible. Cindy has provided excellent leadership for the Junior Division and has brought that same servant leadership attitude to the Board. Her calm demeanor and organizational skills have enabled the junior seasons to go on with very little disruption. If you see her, please stop her, say "thanks" and tell her how much you appreciate her involvement.

Private facility owners – Many of our members have never met the people who own the two private facilities we use every week but the owners deserve to be acknowledged for their efforts and their willingness to work with the Region to keep their facilities open and provide safe and welcoming environments. Even though the pandemic protocols prevented the Region from allowing the same number of spectators we normally have at tournaments, it is important for everyone to know how hard the owners worked to make sure their facilities were in compliance with the protocols issued by federal, state, and local governments. During the past year, the owners have graciously kept the lines of communication open and worked cooperatively with the Region to provide consistently reliable places for our members to play. Whether you know them by name and/or face, I would encourage you to say "thanks" to them and to their employees or representatives. Without these folks, in all likelihood, there would not have been a 2020-2021 Arizona Region volleyball season.

Even after writing this, I can't believe the effort that all of these individuals (and many more) have made to make sure that our members have been able to play volleyball through a very difficult time in our nation's and Region's history. And while we continue to offer help and positive thoughts for those who are still dealing with the physical, mental and financial effects of the pandemic, I would like to encourage you to offer a word of "Thanks" to the people in the Region who have provided some semblance of normalcy during an unusual, ever changing and, often, tragic time.

Navigating Our New Normal ...

By Becky Hudson, Secretary

Many people would have bet against the Arizona Region reaching the end of the Spring season of 2021 intact. Rising COVID numbers in Arizona and shut downs across the country were the topics of discussion in January when the Girls' season was just getting off the ground. April 2021 and the numbers are down, restrictions are being lifted statewide and the season end is in sight.

The Arizona Region Board of Directors made a decision early on that we wanted to provide an opportunity for the players to get back on the court as safely as possible. It was as much a mental health issue for us as it was a virus issue BUT we still had to take into account there was a virus trying its best to keep us from playing.

The COVID waiver and release of liability form was created, reduced spectators and mask protocols were put in place, wristbands and team referee packets were purchased and BallerTV (Sporfie and Profile Sports, too) was brought in to allow those that could not physically come to tournaments the ability to watch their sons and daughters play. It was not ideal but it allowed the athletes the ability to play again. It was what we could do in the middle of a pandemic.

Schools are opening up. Vaccination roll outs began and are continuing. State and local governmental oversight is being rolled back. Email messages from parents are arriving in increasing numbers every day for us to take off the masks and open the doors. We would love to—but we can't just yet.

We want to thank all the parents, coaches, officials and players for their cooperation as we move through the process of restrictions within the opportunity to play to back to whatever our new normal will be. It was not easy for anyone.

With the mask and occupancy restrictions by the state allowed to expire and the city oversight being rolled back some level of relaxation can begin. The Arizona Region is in constant contact with our facility owners and other tournament site hosts regarding all of the protocols for moving forward. The businesses are now the ones that need to control the situations in their own facilities. Many areas are opening up faster than others. Many businesses and schools are more comfortable with the roll back than others. Since we operate in multiple counties, facility types and schools we had to come to a working arrangement that we can all live with. Spring breaks ended just as these restrictions were allowed to expire. Not enough time has elapsed to know if that will affect the spread of the virus in our state.

With that said and as qualifiers are just getting underway and our season end just 5 weeks away, the AZ Region policy that will remain in effect through the end of the season will continue to be restricted spectators – 3 spectators per team in the building at any one time so social distancing can be accomplished. Wristbands must be worn by all adults in the building – coaches and spectators alike. The wristbands may be switched out by parents to allow different spectators for each match. Masks covering the nose and mouth will be required by everyone – coaches, players, spectators, staff and officials. As the climate heats up and the numbers continue to fall, the mask requirement of players on the court may loosen up, BUT there are no promises being made with that – it will depend on the cooperation of everyone to end this virus. These same restrictions will be the requirements at National Qualifiers and Junior Nationals as our teams begin to travel to other states to compete.

Our end goal is to get through the rest of the season intact with as few teams as possible sitting out due to COVID invading their team. Next season we hope to be back to our normal.

Stay Healthy!



VBScorekeeper Developed for Tournament Ease

By Lance Johnson

Welcome to www.VBScorekeeper.com, a simple site that allows club directors, coaches, players, parents, and spectators to view team schedules and results for the individual AZ Region tournaments.

Due to COVID restrictions, there was a desire for everyone to be able to see results online as near to real time as possible. Costs and scheduling challenges led us to quickly create our own system.

While we are not yet displaying the information in an eye-pleasing format, most everything that you would want is available. Results with scores are shown as soon as we are able to enter them into the system. Teams are automatically advanced to their next matches and working assignments. Pool results and tie-breakers are automatically determined and displayed. There is no need to wait until they are manually published on the region website.

After choosing the tournament (ordered by newest to oldest) in the top dropdown, there are seven basic functions: Club View, Team View, Pool View, Seeds, Places, Pool Schedule, and Pool Results. All of these functions are separate and you can execute them by using the specific dropdown or button.

The Club View is most useful to club directors. With this dropdown, you can pick any club participating in the tournament. VBScorekeeper will then display all known matches, schedules, and results for each team in the chosen club.

The Team View is a quick method to view all known matches, schedules, results, and working schedules for an individual team. This is especially useful for multiple-day tournaments such as the AZ National Club Qualifiers (NCQs). VBScorekeeper displays the results of all that team's matches from each pool and bracket in which they participated.

The Pool View is probably the most useful for teams and spectators on tournament day. This view shows all matches in that specific pool. If the teams in a match are not yet determined, VBScorekeeper shows where they will come from; usually the winner or loser from a previous match in the same pool. After all the matches, VBScorekeeper displays the results of the pool as it is completed.

The first button below the three View dropdowns, Show Seeds, shows the starting seed positions for each division playing in the tournament. If the tournament has multiple phases (such as the AZ NCQs), it will display a seed list for each phase as the previous

phase completes.

The second button, Show Places, shows the final positions as the tournament completes. This is especially useful during the early-season seeding tournaments and AZ NCQs where teams are snake seeded into pools. It can be very difficult to follow where teams end up the seeding order after finishing pool play.

The third button, Pool Schedule, show the basic schedule of the tournament. This is almost the exact same thing shown on the AZ Region site schedule. It will show you all the pools, the teams in the pool, their chosen site, and the wave (AM/PM) or time that the pools start.

The final button, Pool Results, populates as the pools complete. As with Pool Schedule, this is almost the exact same thing shown on the AZ Region site results. However, these are available as soon as we are able to enter the match and pool results versus having to manually update the AZ Region site.

While rewarding, development of VBScorekeeper has been challenging due constant updating as the season progressed. You can equate it to having to rebuild the wings of a plane while flying it. Most of the work is behind the scenes with the software that schedules and updates the matches. For example, VBScorekeeper has to allow scheduling to various locations and times, it has to group teams and move them from one tournament to the next, it has to update pools instantly with a different format when a team does not show up to play, it must be able to correct mistaken results that were previously entered, etc.

Human error is always a potential problem. Either the scores are recorded incorrectly on score sheets, the bracket sheets, or in VBScorekeeper. If you ever find that we made a mistake, please contact us to let us know. We will correct it. If you have any suggestions or functionality that you would like added to VBScorekeeper, please contact us and let us know.

We hope that you find VBScorekeeper useful as we continually work to make it better on both the front and back ends.

To contact us, please email info@xcelsiortechnology.com



A Region Spotlight On JR Salima

By Harold Cranswick– Commissioner

Some people have seen him. Others have talked to him but haven't met him. Still others knew he headed up their Division for several years but didn't really get to know him. And yet, even though he is not well known, he has been a crucial member of the Arizona Region for many years.

Let me introduce you to Mr. Salima. JR (as he affectionately known) joined the Arizona Region and worked as an official for many years earning his National Referee rating in the process. When the Officials' Division Coordinator, Mr. Peter Meyer, decided it was time to retire, JR stepped up and took on the task of trying to fill Peter's shoes as the Officials' Division Coordinator. As the Region grew, JR knew it would be impossible for one person to run the Division like Peter used to do. JR took little time to analyze the Officials' Division and reorganized the Division to enable more officials to learn about the complexities of the Division and to participate in the decision-making. The new structure enabled the Region to recruit, train and assign more officials to deal with the ever-increasing size of the Region. To his credit, JR masterfully employed the idea of delegating duties to other officials. JR retired from the position a couple of years ago but the structure that he implemented is still in use today.

As much as the members of the Region have appreciated JR's work as the Officials' Division Coordinator, that role may not have been his greatest contribution to the Region. Anyone who has been involved with or associated with the Region for more than one tournament knows that there are always comments and/or complaints that are sent to the Region Office. The comments and complaints cover everything from mild, constructive criticism to angry, nasty comments to serious legal allegations. For many years, the Region relied on the willingness of a single member to step up and take on the task of dealing with these complaints. For a variety of reasons, some complaints were handled very well and others weren't. There were times when the Region would hear through the grapevine that "it doesn't pay to complain to the Region because it doesn't do anything."



As a result of comments like that, the Region knew that, with continued growth, things were not going to get better without serious action. It was at that point, that JR heard the call and stepped up again. Between his years of service in the Mesa Police Department and his work with his church, JR was the ideal candidate and, fortunately, he was willing to take on the role of Ethics and Compliance Officer (ECO). Since taking the job, JR has responded to and investigated (when appropriate) every complaint that has been sent to the Region. Some of the complaints have been resolved just by having JR speak with the complainant. In other cases, particularly those that involve serious allegations, JR has spent untold hours conducting investigations to make sure the complaint or allegation is handled in an objective and professional manner that allows all parties to be heard. As part of his job as ECO, JR works closely with our SafeSport Director, Cindy Kirk, to make sure the Region and our members comply with all aspects of SafeSport as well as all applicable laws and that any violations are dealt with according to policy.

Even though last year's season was cut short and this year has seen fewer teams, JR has still been kept busy as the Ethics and Compliance Officer. Few people will know what JR goes through to handle the variety of cases that come his way but, in every case, he is objective, thorough and fair. Life has been a bit challenging for JR in recent years and yet, through it all, he remains committed and loyal to the Region and does a masterful job as our ECO. In addition, JR is always ready and willing to provide the Region with guidance when it comes to developing protocols that ensure the safety of our players, officials, staff and spectators. The Region is very, very fortunate to have him in this position. Whether you know JR from his time as an official or you met him as the Ethics and Compliance Officer or you happened to see him walking through a gym with his new companion, Iggy Lou, please approach the two of them and let JR know how much you appreciate the good work he has done and continues to do for the Arizona Region.

The Arizona Region thanks you, JR.

Harold W. Cranswick

Commissioner

Arizona Region of USA Volleyball

Would *YOU* Like to be an Official?

The Arizona Region of USA Volleyball is on the look out for new officials for the upcoming 2021-22 season. Would you be interested?

Most of the Club season, matches are on the weekends but getting started with the AZ Region and their training can lead to advancement and perhaps other opportunities in High School and Collegiate Men's and Women's indoor volleyball and can lead into officiating Beach volleyball and Sitting volleyball.

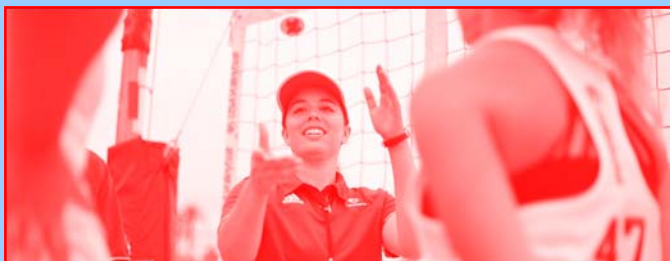
There is a program unique to the Arizona Region called the Jr Officials Development Program (otherwise known as JODP) which begins training young people, some that are current players, starting at age 16 and up. It's a great way to earn some extra money being around a sport you love.

Each level of officiating requires some online

testing and in person evaluations and testing as well.

If you are interested in becoming a JODP Official, go to our Region website and click on:
<https://www.azregionvolleyball.org/page/show/3583564-junior-official-development-program>

If you are interested in becoming an official and are 18 or older, you can follow the step by step instructions located on our page entitled , "Becoming and Official." That link is:



<https://www.azregionvolleyball.org/page/show/3583548-becoming-an-official>

With questions or interest, contact our Official's Division Coordinator Earl Capps -
officials@azregionvolleyball.org or visit the webpage
<https://www.azregionvolleyball.org/page/show/3583548-becoming-an-official>

Region Championships Ahead– Not Your Ordinary Tournaments

The Arizona Region will begin its Region Championships tournaments starting April 18th with the Open 18's, April 24th for the 15-18's Club and Championship divisions, May 1st for all 12's and the Open 15-17's teams and May 8th for all 13-14's teams.

Region Championships tournaments are a little different in that they are a pool play in the morning and then bracket play in the afternoon. Chances are your team will have to move sites during the day.

Because of this special format, teams are encouraged not to set up camps. For those teams that move, we ask that if the teams need to eat, they proceed directly to their next site first and check in and then eat food they have brought for the day. Teams that are late to a site hold up an already very long day.

Medals will be awarded to the top three finishers in each age division and overall level of play.

As of this writing, the COVID restrictions will be in place. Please check your site to see if they have any changes in these restrictions. It IS possible you may go to a site in the morning and the afternoon site may have different COVID restrictions. We urge that athletes, coaches and parents continue to follow these safety protocols for the remainder of their Region Championships day. We have 4 weeks of Region Championships. We don't want to cause site issues for the age groups that play in the later weeks. Thank you for your cooperation as we get ALL THE WAY through this season.



AZ Region Junior Beach Program Starts Year 20!

The Arizona Region's Junior Beach Program heads into year 20 with tournaments beginning the week of May 4th.

Tournaments will be held most Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays by age group(s). They will begin promptly at 6 pm. Sundays were added 5 years ago to keep up with the growth of the program.

Players will be awarded points on their finish and how many teams were in their age division. These points are calculated by PLAYER, not team, so players can play with multiple partners throughout the season if they so wish.

The program is "call your own" where players will call and score keep their own matches. Parents and coaches are not allowed on the sand and are asked to not interfere with play. A tournament director is on site to handle any disputes that may arise.

The cost of the program has been the same for 20 years. It is a \$20 program fee paid once upon registration and then each tournament is \$10 per player. Players MUST be registered with USA Volleyball to participate and if not, will need to purchase a summer membership to play at a cost of \$15.

Medals are awarded for first and second place at each tournament. Boy's are encouraged to come out and bring friends. This season the Region will continue it's Mother's Day and Father's Day tournaments and have added, by popular demand, two Coed tournaments.

The registration and schedule are on the Region's website. Registration will need to be done through your SportsEngine account.

For any other questions, contact Eric at outreach@azregionvolleyball.org.

We'll see you on the sand!

Desert Open BNQ for USA National Beach Tour in May

The Arizona Region will host the Arizona Beach National Qualifier for the USA National Beach Tour, the Desert Open, in May for boys and girls 12's to 18's.

Arizona's BNQ dates are Sunday, May 2nd for the 12's and 16's age groups and May 16th for the 14U and 18U boys and girls. The tournament will be held at Victory Lanes Sports Complex in North Phoenix.



For times or to register for the BNQ or for more information on the tour itself and the other BNQ's around the country, go to their website at www.nationalbeachtour.com.

Arizona Beach High Performance Info Coming Soon

AZHP Beach will be announcing their tryout/clinic dates and locations in the coming weeks. Check the Region website for that information or contact AZHP@azregionvolleyball.org.

The Region will use the point system and seeding after tryouts.

The HP Beach Championships will be held in Ft. Lauderdale in July.

The 2021 Tournament Age Groups will be:

U15 – Born in 2007 or 2008

Girls Only

U17 – Born in 2005 or 2006

U19 – Born in 2003 or 2004



20 Years Ago This Summer, the Region Hit the Beach!

It was the year the Arizona Diamondbacks shocked the world and upset the Yankees for their only World Series Championship.

It was sadly the year terrorists flew planes into buildings and put fear in our National consciousness.

And it would be another 6 years before society would forever be altered by an invention called the iPhone.

Yet, in what was at the time a remote trek into the desert, the Arizona Region partnered up with Victory Lanes Sports Park in north Phoenix in the summer of 2001. It was partially owned by 1983 Indy 500 winner Tom Sneva, thus the name. As partners, the program set out the idea of letting kids come out and play, with no officials, coaches or parents necessary, and learn through trial and error how to play this difficult sport.



Betsi Metter-Flint

The interest in sand play grew locally because of these programs and moved the sport into the schools.”

Betsi Metter, now Betsi Flint, started playing in the program at age 11. It was an hour plus drive from Ahwatukee to the park, but she fell in love with the sport.

Betsi and her partner Anna Gott became one of the staples of the program and Anna’s father Kent would drive them, take pictures of the kids playing

and got many more boys playing along with his son Andrew. Mr. Gott passed away recently but he is fondly remembered for his contribution to the program.

Betsi had a stellar indoor collegiate career, transitioned to the beach and has won several AVP and FIVB tournaments.

“Arizona Region beach volleyball really helped me grow into the player I am today.

Starting from my very worst, as a beginner and losing a lot, to developing me into the player that won often because of weekly tournaments in multiple age divisions I was able to play in. I was able to learn the skill of how to win and I’m so grateful I had the opportunity at a young age to learn this amazing sport.”

Betsi has crossed paths with another of the program’s alum, Sarah Sponcil who is currently third in a two team race for a spot in the Tokyo Olympics. Sarah started playing with her older sister and developed a passion and competitiveness that serves her well as a professional player today.

“Without this program I would have never been introduced to beach volleyball. It gave me the opportunity to go out every Tuesday and Thursday with my friends in the summers and learn this beautiful game. It’s absolutely incredible to see how far and how fast the game of beach volleyball has grown in Arizona since then and I’m stoked to see where it goes in the next 20 years!”

Several of Arizona’s most vaunted volleyball talent, both boys and girls played in the program. For some it was a respite from the rigors of indoor and with no coaches or parents, a chance to just play with friends. Some have been in the USA gym, some in their college programs, but all enjoyed their time on the white sand at Victory Lanes.



Sarah Sponcil (Far left)

AZ Region of USA Volleyball

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