



2020 AVP Champions Cup Series

Event #3 – The Porsche Cup presented by Acer

Long Beach, California • July 31 – Aug. 2, 2020

ABOUT THE TOURNAMENT – The AVP’s streak of 35 consecutive seasons holding competitions was put into serious jeopardy with the COVID-19 pandemic. Originally the AVP had eight events scheduled, with all the locations in 2019 again serving as hosts, but the AVP had to make the tough decision to cancel all of those events. However there will be a 36th straight year of competition as the Champions Cup Series was created to provide an opportunity to allow athletes to play although no fans are allowed at this event. All three events in the Series will be held in the same facility in Long Beach, California, with the qualifier taking place on three courts and the main draw on two courts.

- The final weekend of the series is The Porsche Cup Presented by Acer. A total of \$200,000 in prize money will be paid out to the two genders, and unlike almost all previous AVP events, all teams in the qualifier are guaranteed some prize money. In addition, the teams will be competing for a share of an additional \$50,000 bonus pool per gender, which will be paid out to the top three teams in the entire series. That means that in just these three tournaments, a total of \$700,000 of prize money is available to the athletes.

- The main draw will be an eight-team, double elimination format, marking just the fifth such time this format has been used since the start of the 2010 season (also used in Atlantic City in 2013, in Honolulu in 2018, and the past two weekends in Long Beach). The qualifier tournament is a single elimination event held on Friday, July 31, with 12 teams competing for the final two spots in the main draw. With six teams automatically seeded into the main draw, that means the total number of teams entered is 18 in each gender as the field was capped due to space limitations (13 men’s teams and 11 women’s teams were turned away). The qualifier will consist of 10 matches for both genders, while the main draw features 13 matches for each gender. The main draw begins on Saturday, August 1 and concludes on Sunday, August 2. The championship matches will be around 12:45 pm PT and 2:00 pm PT.

- NBC Sports will broadcast a championship match on a tape-delayed basis on Sunday, August 2nd at 10:30 pm PT. Dain Blanton (play by play), Kevin Wong (color commentary) and Misty May-Treanor (color commentary) will handle the announcing duties. Live streaming via Amazon Prime takes place Saturday and Sunday on both of the main draw courts. Kevin Barnett, Camryn Irwin and Dain Blanton will combine to handle the announcing duties for Amazon Prime.

CHAMPIONS CUP SERIES – The Champions Cup Series is a three-event series featuring tournaments in consecutive weekends all being played in the same location in Long Beach, California. The same 18 teams, barring any injuries, will compete in all three events. Entry was determined by the normal point system used by the AVP. For these three tournaments, though, no additional AVP seeding points will be awarded and the victories will not count towards an athlete’s all-time victory count. On top of the \$200,000 in prize money given out at each of the three tournaments, there will be \$100,000 in bonus money for the top three finishers in the series. The top team in each gender will win the Champions Cup and a \$25,000 bonus, while the second place team is awarded the Silver Cup and \$15,000, and the team in third place garners the Bronze Cup and \$10,000.

- To determine the top three teams, the seed index method will be used (one point for first place, two points for second place, three points for third place, five points for fifth place, etc...). The team with the lowest average will win the Champions Cup. To break ties, the following will be used:

Two-way tie-breakers: 1) Head-to-head results throughout the series, including Qualifier matches, 2) Head-to-head set ratio, 3) Head-to-head point ratio, 4) The higher result between the teams at the final event, 5) The team with a higher finishing position at either the first or second event, 6) Overall series set ratio, and 7) Overall series point ratio.

Three-way tie-breaker: 1) The higher result in the final event.

- The last time before 2020 that the AVP had three tournaments in the same season with just eight teams in the main draw was in 1995, when the men had four indoor events in February which all featured eight teams. For outdoor events you need to go back to 1994, when the women had 12 such events. For the men, the last time they had three outdoor events with eight-team draws was in 1991.

- Here are the three tournaments and the dates which comprise the Champions Cup Series, all of which will offer \$200,000 in prize money:

The Monster Hydro Cup – July 17-19 – Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena and Alix Klineman / April Ross won the two titles

The Wilson Cup – July 24-26 – Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena and Alix Klineman / April Ross won the two titles

The Porsche Cup – July 31-August 2

CHAMPIONS CUP BONUS POOL – The \$100,000 in bonus money for the top three teams in both genders of the Champions Cup Series is at this point limited to the six men’s and six women’s teams who are automatically seeded into the main draw for the third and final week of the series, The Porsche Cup. The reason behind that is that all of the teams which are in the qualifiers could win this weekend but still wouldn’t finish in the top three spots, which are the ones that will earn the payouts.

LONG BEACH HISTORY – The AVP has held five men’s tournaments and three women’s competitions in Long Beach prior to the 2020 season. The men played here in 1984 (the first season of competition for the AVP), 1985, 2007, 2008 and 2010. The nine different players who have won here (Phil Dalhausser and Todd Rogers won in both 2007 and 2010) have impressive credentials, as six of them are in the top eight in all-time AVP wins, with the other three ranking 11th, 19th and 22nd. Seven of the nine are Olympians, combining to win two golds and one silver in their 13 Olympic appearances. Todd Rogers won for the second time here along with Phil Dalhausser in 2010, with that victory being his 52nd and final AVP title in his career.

- On the women’s side, the WPVA held five tournaments here between 1989 and 1996, while the BVA had one event in 2000. The first three AVP women’s competitions have all been won by Misty May-Treanor, twice with Kerri Walsh Jennings and once with Nicole Branagh. That 2010 victory marked the last AVP win for May-Treanor, her 66th all-time to rank her second behind only Walsh Jennings (77). Now five different women have won here, and four can be found in the top six on the all-time AVP wins list. Four of the five of them was an Olympian, with May-Treanor winning three gold medals in her four Olympics while Walsh Jennings has collected three gold medals and one bronze in her four beach Olympics and April Ross earned a silver and a bronze in her two appearances.

- Additionally, the FIVB has held four dual-gender competitions in Long Beach from 2013-2016. Dalhausser won two golds and two silvers in those four events, and the 2014 win for Rosenthal was the last FIVB title he has won. April Ross and Kerri Walsh Jennings won two golds and one silver. Here is a look at the AVP and FIVB tournaments in Long Beach:

MEN – AVP events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
1984	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	John Hanley / Jon Stevenson	Andy Fishburn / Jay Hanseth
1985	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	Ricci Luyties / Steve Obradovich	Scott Ayakatubby / Brent Frohoff	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos
2007	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	Mike Lambert / Stein Metzger	[3rd] John Hyden / Brad Keenan
2008	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	Dax Holdren / Bill Strickland	[3rd] Nick Lucena / Sean Scott
2010	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	John Hyden / Sean Scott	Bill Strickland / Aaron Wachtfogel	[3rd] Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal
2020	Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena	Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb	Chase Budinger / Chaim Schalk	[3rd] Tri Bourne / Trevor Crabb
2020	Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena	Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb	Theo Brunner / Casey Patterson	[3rd] Tri Bourne / Trevor Crabb

MEN – FIVB events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
2013	Phil Dalhausser / Sean Rosenthal	Adrian Gavira / Pablo Herrera	Daniele Lupo / Paolo Nicolai	Jake Gibb / Casey Patterson
2014	Phil Dalhausser / Sean Rosenthal	Grzegorz Fijalek / Mariusz Prudel	Theo Brunner / Todd Rogers	Alexander Walkenhorst/Stefan Windscheif
2015	Alison Cerutti / Bruno Oscar Schmidt	Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena	Adrian Gavira / Pablo Herrera	Alexander Brouwer / Robert Meeuwssen
2016	Evandro Goncalves / Pedro Solberg	Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena	Alexsandr Samoilovs/Janis Smedins	Marrco Caminati / Alex Ranghieri

WOMEN – AVP events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd
2007	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh Jennings	Rachel Scott / Tyra Turner	Nicole Branagh / Elaine Youngs	Jennifer Kessy / April Ross
2008	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh Jennings	Jennifer Kessy / April Ross	Nicole Branagh / Elaine Youngs	Angie Akers / Holly McPeak
2010	Nicole Branagh / Misty May-Treanor	Annett Davis / Jenny Johnson Jordan	Rachel Scott / Elaine Youngs	Angie Akers / Tyra Turner
2020	Alix Klineman / April Ross	Sara Hughes / Brandie Wilkerson	Melissa Humana-Paredes / Sarah Pavan	Kelly Claes / Sarah Sponcil
2020	Alix Klineman / April Ross	Melissa Humana-Paredes / Sarah Pavan	Sara Hughes / Brandie Wilkerson	Emily Day / Lauren Fendrick

WOMEN – FIVB events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
2013	Talita Antunes / Taiana Lima	Carolina Salgado / Maria Clara Salgado	Katrin Holtwick / Ilka Semmler	Emily Day / Summer Ross
2014	April Ross / Kerri Walsh Jennings	Agatha Bednarczuk / Barbara Seixas	Natalia Dubovcova/Dominika Nestarcova	Elsa Baquerizo / Liliana Fernandez
2015	Talita Antunes / Larissa Franca	April Ross / Kerri Walsh Jennings	Laura Ludwig / Kira Walkenhorst	Louise Bawden / Taliqua Clancy
2016	April Ross / Kerri Walsh Jennings	Elsa Baquerizo / Liliana Fernandez	Chantal Labourer / Julia Sude	Katrin Holtwick / Ilka Semmler

SINGLE DIGIT SCORING – In the finals of The Wilson Cup last weekend, Phil Dalhausser and Nick Lucena won the first set 21-9 against Taylor Crabb and Jake Gibb. That marked the fewest points a men’s team has scored in a first or second set of an AVP championship match since the 2016 season finale in Chicago. In that match, Dalhausser and Lucena held Tri Bourne and John Hyden to just seven points in the second set, winning 21-13, 21-7.

NEW MAYOR OF LONG BEACH – Dr. Robert Garcia is the official the mayor of Long Beach, but Phil Dalhausser is surely the mayor of Long Beach pro beach volleyball. Including last weekend, he has played nine pro beach events in Long Beach, winning six times and finishing second the other three times. He has won four of the five AVP tournaments he has played here, and two of the four FIVB events. On the FIVB Tour, he has a 26-3 match record, and a 55-15 set record. On the AVP Tour, he has a 23-1 match record, with the only loss coming to #3 seeded Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal in the finals in 2008. He has a 46-7 set record, and has never lost a set to a team seeded sixth or lower in Long Beach.

ONE-TWO PUNCH – In both of the first two men's championship matches of 2020, the teams have been seeded first and second. According to the seeding, that is of course how the title match *should* end up. But it is actually fairly rare on the men's side. The last time before this year that the top two seeds met in the finals was actually all the way back in May 2017 in Austin, when top-seeded Phil Dalhausser and Nick Lucena defeated second-seeded Trevor Crabb and Sean Rosenthal. Following that event, there were 22 consecutive AVP tournaments that featured a title match other than the top two seeds playing. That was the longest streak since also going 22 straight events without the top two teams meeting from June 2000 through August 2002, and those two streaks are the longest in AVP history since seeds have been known (1997).

A-TEAM IS A-MAZING – Alix Klineman and April Ross have been quite impressive as a partnership. The duo has played in 14 AVP tournaments, winning nine times, finishing second three times, and placing third twice. They have won eight of the last 10 times they have played on the AVP Tour, and in that span have posted a 47-2 match record, with both losses coming against Melissa Humana-Paredes / Sarah Pavan in championship matches. In their AVP history, the tandem has a 51-2 record when winning the first set, including winning the last 40 straight matches when claiming the first set (were 20-0 last season).

LONG BEACH SAND BITS – Of the 36 men's players competing this weekend, there is one teenager competing, 18-year old Miles Partain and just eight players in their 20s while 17 are in their 30s. Meanwhile 10 players are 40 or older, with the two oldest being John Hyden at 47 and Ricardo Santos at 45. There are four players who stand 6'0" (Eric Beranek, Taylor Crabb, Skylar del Sol and Chase Frishman) while at the other end of the spectrum are 7'1" Ryan Doherty, 6'9" Andy Benesh and 6'9" Phil Dalhausser. Three players went to Long Beach State (Taylor Crabb, David Lee and Trevor Crabb after transferring from Puget Sound). Jake Gibb is playing in his 311th pro beach tournament, followed by Sean Rosenthal (283rd), Phil Dalhausser (271st), Nick Lucena (268th) and Ricardo Santos (258th), while there are three players who have competed in less than 20 pro beach events (Andy Benesh 14 previous events, David Lee 15 and Miles Partain 18). There are 21 players competing in Long Beach who have won at least one AVP title entering this weekend, led by Phil Dalhausser (59), Jake Gibb (34), Nick Lucena (16), Casey Patterson (15), John Hyden (13) and Sean Rosenthal (12). Out of 18 partnerships, six are competing together for the very first time, including fifth-seeded Jeremy Casebeer / John Hyden. The most prolific partnerships are Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena 99 events before Long Beach event #3, Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb 48, Billy Allen / Stafford Slick 34 and Maddison McKibbin / Riley McKibbin 29). There are three men's teams here which have previously won an AVP event (Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena 14, Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb 8 and Billy Allen / Stafford Slick 1).

• The 36 women playing this weekend all range in age from 23 to 38. There are three players who are 23 (Crissy Jones, Corinne Quiggle and Sarah Sponcil) while two players are 38 (Lauren Fendrick and April Ross). Katie Spieler is the shortest at 5'5" while Kendra VanZwieten measures 5'6". At the other end of the spectrum are Alix Klineman and Sarah Pavan (6'5") and 6'4" Kathryn Hogan. None of the players here attended Long Beach State. The least experienced pro beach players are Crissy Jones (10 pro events), Susannah Muno (11), Kathryn Hogan (13) and Carly Wopat (14), while the most experienced is April Ross (256th tournament) followed by Lauren Fendrick (228th) and Emily Day (168th). April Ross has tallied 38 AVP victories, far and away the most of any player here, followed by Emily Day (9) and Alix Klineman (9). A total of 15 women here have previously won an AVP tournament. The women feature three tandems (out of 18 total) who played alongside each other for the first time in event #1 (Amanda Dowdy / Susannah Muno, Kathryn Hogan / Molly Turner and Brittany Tiegs / Carly Wopat) and five having played together 20 or more times before Long Beach event #3 (Melissa Humana-Paredes / Sarah Pavan 42, Kelley Kolinske / Emily Stockman 36, Alix Klineman / April Ross 33, Kim DiCello / Kendra VanZwieten 29 and Kelly Claes / Sarah Sponcil 24). There are five teams competing here which have won an AVP title as partners previously, Alix Klineman / April Ross (9), Melissa Humana-Paredes / Sarah Pavan (2), Karissa Cook / Jace Pardon (1), Kim DiCello / Kendra VanZwieten (1) and Kelley Larsen / Emily Stockman (1).

TRYING FOR TEN – Both Emily Day and Alix Klineman are striving to become the 10th player to record 10 career AVP victories. The top two on the list, Kerri Walsh Jennings (77) and Misty May-Treanor (66) have comfortable leads over the rest of the field. Ranking third all-time, but with the most among active AVP players, is April Ross (38), who pulled ahead of Elaine Youngs (34) with her victory in New York City last year. The other women in the double-digit win club include Holly McPeak (28), Nicole Branagh (17), Jennifer Kessy (15), Linda Hanley (15) and Cammy Ciarelli (13).

RELATIVELY SPEAKING – There is a valid reason for some of the players competing in Long Beach to not practice social distancing, as a number of them are related to other players. The McKibbin brothers, Maddison and Riley, are teammates, while the Crabb brothers, Taylor and Trevor, are on opposing teams. The women's tandem of Lane Carico and Karolina Marciniak is unique in that both athletes are married to players competing on the men's side in Long Beach (Carico is married to Chaim Schalk while Marciniak is married to Piotr Marciniak). Another married couple who are both competing here are Billy Kolinske and Kelley (Larsen) Kolinske, who got engaged on stadium court in Chicago in August 2019 and were married in March of this year.

WIN EARLY AND OFTEN – In AVP championship matches, it's best to win early. On the men's side, the team winning the first set has won the match in 24 of the last 27 title matches (88.9% win rate in that span). That figure is a bit above the rate the entire Tour saw (for men) last year, as teams that won the first set went on to win the match 82.8% of the time. In the first two Long Beach events this year, teams that won the first set posted a match record of 22-4 (84.5%). On the women's side, the team claiming the first set has a 37-6 record in the last 43 finals (86.0%), but four of those losses have come since Seattle in 2018 (in the last 16 championship matches). In 2019 women's teams won 81.9% of the matches after winning the first set, while in the first two Long Beach events the women's teams that won the first set won 23 of 26 matches (88.5%). The men were more likely to go to a third set (38.3% of all matches in 2019 went three sets), while for the women 33.5% of all 2019 matches required the tiebreaker. However in the first two AVP Championship Cup Series events, only 19.2% (five of 26 matches) of the men's matches went to a third set while the women saw eight of 26 (30.8%) matches going to a third set to decide the match.

WOMEN WINNERS WIN – To win an AVP championship on the women's side, it is best to enter the finals with an undefeated record. In the last 21 AVP title matches, the team winner was a team that came from the winner's bracket. The two exceptions were in San Francisco 2018 (when Emily Day and Betsi Flint overcame a second round loss to earn the title) and in Austin 2019, when Karissa Cook and Jace Pardon also rebounded from a second round loss to win their first AVP title.

- For the men, it is much more balanced as of late. In the last 14 AVP events, eight times the winner has been undefeated but six times the champion has come through the contender's bracket.

FABULOUS 40's – In the 2019 season opening tournament in Huntington Beach, Jake Gibb joined Karch Kiraly and John Hyden as the only players to ever win an AVP title at the age of 43 or older. He then added another title in the following event in Austin, then closed the year with a pair of wins in Chicago and Honolulu. In Manhattan Beach Reid Priddy won his first title ever, and doing so at the age of 41 years, 10 months and 17 days meant he became the sixth different player to win after turning 40 (in addition to John Hyden, Karch Kiraly, Mike Whitmarsh, Jake Gibb and Ed Ratledge). In the first event of 2020, Phil Dalhausser and Nick Lucena claimed the title, with both of them just having turned 40 during the offseason, bringing the total to eight different players who have won in their 40s. Also what was notable about that victory was that it was the first time in AVP history that two players who were 40 or older both won, and then in the second event they duplicated that feat. From the Cincinnati event in September 2015 through the season ender in 2019, there have been 35 AVP events and 19 of the men's titles have been won by a player age 40 or older (compared to the 16 which haven't). A winning player has been in his 20s just 12 times. In those 35 championship matches, at least one player has been over the age of 40 a total of 25 times.

- Here is the list of men's players who have won after turning 40:

- Karch Kiraly – 6 times -- first was in Santa Barbara 2002 – last was Huntington Beach 2005 (44 years, 9 months, 10 days old)

- Mike Whitmarsh – 2 times – first was in Belmar 2002 – last was in Tempe 2003 (40 y, 11 m, 9 d)

- John Hyden – 5 times – first was in Milwaukee 2014 – last was in Hermosa Beach 2018 (45 y, 9 m, 22 d)

- Jake Gibb – 11 times – first was in Huntington Beach 2016 – last was in Honolulu 2019 (43 y, 7 m, 16 d)

- Ed Ratledge – 1 time – first was in San Francisco 2018 (41 y, 6m, 22 d)

- Reid Priddy – 1 time – first was in Manhattan Beach 2019 (41 y, 10 m, 17 d)

- Phil Dalhausser – 2 times – first was in Long Beach #1 2020 -- last was in Long Beach #2 2020 (40 y, 6 m, 0 d)

- Nick Lucena – 2 times – first was in Long Beach #1 2020 -- last was in Long Beach #2 2020 (40 y, 10 m, 4 d)

- Two women have won an AVP championship after turning 40:

- Linda Hanley – 1 time – first was in Muskegon 2001 (41 y, 1 m, 7 d)

- Dianne DeNecochea – 1 time – first was in Brooklyn 2009 (41 y, 7 m, 18 d)

NO CANDLES NEEDED – During the three weeks of the Champions Cup Series, just one player among the 72 athletes (men and women combined) will be having a birthday. On July 21, Eric Beranek turned 24 but no one else will be getting any older.