



2022 AVP PRO BEACH VOLLEYBALL TOUR

Season Event #4 • Tour Series Event #2

Denver, Colorado • July 1 – 3, 2022

ABOUT THE TOURNAMENT – The AVP is taking the Tour to a new level, playing at 5,280 feet (exactly a mile high) in Denver, Colorado, the first time since 2008 (in Boulder) that an AVP event has been held at this high an altitude. Denver is the fourth tournament of 2022 and the second Tour Series event on the 2022 AVP Pro Beach Volleyball Tour calendar. While this tournament offers players a chance at both prize money and points, it also serves as a qualifier for a Pro Series event in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. from July 29-31. Total prize money for this tournament will be \$50,000, with equal payouts for men and women, and the season payout totals \$1,975,000 for the AVP, which is in its 39th season.

- The main draw will be a 24-team, double elimination format. The top 15 teams from each gender are granted entry directly into the main draw from having sufficient points (from the best four domestic or international results in a window defined by the six most recent consecutive Pro Series and Gold Series events offered) plus one team from each gender was granted wildcards; Ryan Smith / Nathan Yang and Katie Pyles / Lena Sokolowski. The remaining eight teams in each gender can earn a spot via the qualifier tournament, a single elimination event on Friday, July 1. A total of 48 men's teams (capped) and 37 women's teams will be in the qualifier. The main draw begins on Saturday, July 2 and concludes on Sunday, July 3, and will be played on 10 courts at The Island, an indoor / outdoor beach volleyball complex. General admission is free on Friday, and \$5 on Saturday and Sunday (with half of that going to Volley4Charity). The championship matches will be around 3:30 pm and 4:30 pm MT. Live streaming of stadium court takes place Saturday and Sunday on the AVP's YouTube channel (@avpbeach). David Shaw will handle the announcing duties.

DENVER'S DYNAMIC DUOS – For the third straight event, the top-seeded men's team is a team that is playing together for the very first time on the AVP. Last event in Muskegon Andy Benesh was a late replacement for Eric Beranek, and was the top seed along with Avery Drost. In Denver Benesh will take the court for the first time domestically with Miles Evans, as the pair won a silver medal in Thailand in April. Benesh won the 2022 season opener in Austin while playing alongside Phil Dalhausser for the first time ever. Denver marks his fourth different partner in his four AVP events this season. Miles Evans had his career best in Hermosa Beach 2019 with Ryan Doherty, as the pair reached the championship match. Last tournament in Muskegon Benesh eliminated Evans in the fifth place match.

- For the women, the top seeded team of Larissa and Lili Maestrini in Denver is not only the team that was seeded first in Muskegon, but also won after dropping just one set en route to the title. They are competing together for the seventh time, all of those have been on the AVP Tour. The duo placed seventh in the first two events of 2022 but made history with their Muskegon victory as Larissa became the first woman to win domestically after turning 40. The players, who are married to each other, have quickly ascended in the rankings, as they were seeded 10th in the qualifier in their AVP debut last August in Atlanta, and now occupy the top spot for the second straight tournament.

HOMETOWN HEROES –

- There are 29 men's players who list Colorado as their current residence:

Nathan Adams (Englewood), Finn Basey (Lyons), Greg Basey (Lyons), Lars Basey (Lyons), Alejandro Buitrago (Northglenn), Ian Carlson (Parker), Sean Carlson (Parker), Dominic Di Sano (Arvada), Daniel Duran (Denver), Hayden Frear (Colorado Springs), Isaac Garcia (Thornton), Jordan Gladstone (Wheat Ridge), Michael Groselle (Aurora), Karsten Guth (Conifer), Brandon Haley (Denver), Jeffrey Houghton (Denver), Brad Johnson (Lakewood), Tanner Lauringson (Littleton), Colin McAtee (Denver), Mason Melville (Thornton), Kenny Nelson (Frederick), Rahul Patel (Parker), Michael Rhoads (Longmont), Lucas Sands (Steamboat Springs), David Smith (Lakewood), Ryan Smith (Parker), Bryce Walsh (Northglenn), Johnny Weber (Arvada), Nathan Yang (Lakewood)

- No men's players who currently live in a different state list their hometown in Colorado (no one from Colorado leaves).

- Of the colleges known, there is one men's player who attended a college in Colorado:

Lars Basey (Northern Colorado), Nathan Yang (Colorado)

- There are 19 women's players who list Colorado as their current residence:

Morgan Anderson (Louisville), KJ Buckingham (Denver), Cailea Caiozzi (Broomfield), Kirstin Cho (Arvada), Genny Cruz (Morrison), Mallory Deneen (Denver), Renata Lechien (Denver), Kinley Lindhardt (Firestone), Pamela McCann (Brighton), Mailie Medina (Westminster), Amaya Messier (Aurora), Kai Norman (Littleton), Katie O'Brien (Louisville), Katie Pyles (Highlands Ranch), Casey Ritt (Denver), Christina Shao (Boulder), Lena Sokolowski (Brighton), Katie Vatterrodt (Denver), Michael Wittren (Highlands Ranch)

- There is one women's player who currently lives in a different state but lists her hometown in Colorado:

Jessica Jendryk (Colorado Springs)

- Of the colleges known, there is one women's player who attended a college in Colorado: Mailie Medina (Regis)

SCHEDULE SNAPSHOT – The 2022 AVP schedule looks vastly different than years past in several regards. This season's slate has 16 tour stops, the most the AVP has had since 2009 (also 16 that year), and more than the past 3 years combined. While there have been several years with more men's events, the 16 women's tournaments has been surpassed just twice (18 in both 2007 and 2008). The 12 different states that the Tour is visiting is the most since the 2008 season (also 12 different states). Two tournaments will be held in November, which marks a first for the AVP Tour, as previously October was the latest that an event has ever been held up to this point. Three locations are slated to have night sessions (New Orleans, Atlanta, and Phoenix). The combined total of \$1,975,000 in prize money also features the most the Tour has distributed since 2009. This season the AVP has stopped using freeze scoring on match points.

- The Tour is divided into four different classifications. One level is the Tour Series, which comprises seven different events in seven different states from June to November. These events will all have on-site qualifiers the day before the main draw begins. The Pro Series has five events from May through September, including the Tour's first two tournament of the year. Unlike in years past, these tournaments will not have an on-site qualifier. Instead, the first two events will use AVPNext tournaments to round out the field, while the last three will rely on specific Tour Series tournaments to determine the final teams. Once again the Gold Series, with three events, will be held towards the end of the season, as the three this year will be in August and September. Each of the three will have a different manner of qualifying. Atlanta will use a Tour Series event, Manhattan Beach will have an on-site qualifier the day before, and Chicago will use an AVPNext tournament. The last type of event is the AVP championships, which will be held in Phoenix in September. Entry for the six-team draws will be based on the best two out of the three results in Gold Series events.

2022 AVP Pro Beach Volleyball Tour Schedule

Event Dates	Location	Tournament Format	Prize \$ - TV
May 6 - 8	Austin, Texas	16-team double elimination	\$125,000 – FS1 and Bally's RSN <i>Andy Benesh gets first career win (with Phil Dalhausser); Taryn Kloth and Kristen Nuss collect 2nd career win</i>
May 27 - 29	New Orleans, Louisiana	16-team double elimination	\$125,000 – FS1 and Bally's RSN <i>Phil Dalhausser / Casey Patterson win in their first event together; Kelly Cheng / Betsi Flint win in hostile territory</i>
June 10 - 12	Muskegon, Michigan	24-team double elimination	\$50,000 <i>Dave Palm / Roberto Rodriguez win; Larissa Maestrini first 40-year old woman to win on AVP (with Lili Maestrini)</i>
July 1 - 3	Denver, Colorado	24-team double elimination	\$50,000 <i>Only previous AVP event in Denver was in 1987; this will be first time in Colorado since 2008</i>
July 6 - 8	Oshkosh, Wisconsin	24-team double elimination	\$50,000 <i>All previous AVP tournaments in Wisconsin have been in Milwaukee; this is first new AVP city since 2013</i>
July 8 - 10	Hermosa Beach, California	16-team double elimination	\$125,000 – FS1 and Bally's RSN <i>Just the fourth time since 2011 that the AVP is playing in Hermosa Beach</i>
July 22 - 24	Atlantic City, New Jersey	24-team double elimination	\$50,000 <i>AVP last played in Atlantic City in 2014; New Jersey is fifth in terms of total AVP tournaments hosted</i>
July 29 - 31	Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	16-team double elimination	\$125,000 – FS1 and Bally's RSN <i>Three of the first six AVP tournaments ever were held in the state of Florida</i>
Aug 5 - 7	Atlanta, Georgia	16-team double elimination	\$300,000 – FS1 and Bally's RSN <i>First Gold Series event of 2022; one of three 2022 locations to have night sessions</i>
Aug 18 - 21	Manhattan Beach, California	32-team double elimination	\$300,000–FS1, Bally's, Tennis Ch. <i>Biggest event on the schedule in terms of both main draw and qualifier sizes; Gold Series event #2</i>
Aug 26 - 28	Virginia Beach, Virginia	24-team double elimination	\$50,000 <i>Just the second time since 2002 that the AVP has a tournament in Virginia (along with 2010 in Virginia Beach)</i>
Sep 2 - 4	Chicago, Illinois	16-team double elimination	\$300,000–FS1, Bally's, Tennis Ch. <i>Chicago trails only Manhattan Beach on list of most frequented stops in AVP history; Gold Series event #3</i>
Sep 16 - 18	Atlantic City, New Jersey	16-team double elimination	\$125,000–FS1, Bally's, Tennis Ch. <i>Only city on the 2022 schedule to host two events; first time in AVP history a city outside of California hosts twice</i>
Sep 23 - 24	Phoenix, Arizona	6-team double elimination	\$100,000 – FS1 and Bally's RSN <i>Only invitational on schedule; AVP last played in Arizona in 2009; inaugural AVP event in 1984 was in Arizona</i>
Nov 11 - 13	Huntington Beach, California	24-team double elimination	\$50,000 <i>Huntington Beach is fourth most frequented stop in AVP history; third California stop on 2022 Tour</i>
Nov 18 - 20	Clearwater, Florida	24-team double elimination	\$50,000 <i>Latest date an AVP tournament has ever been held; Florida held second most AVP events behind California</i>

DENVER HISTORY – This marks just the second time ever that the AVP has played in Denver, with the first being a men’s-only event in 1987. While Denver has not been a frequent site, Colorado has a deep history with the AVP. The Tour’s first season was in 1984, and for each of the first 13 years the AVP had an event in the state of Colorado, joining Arizona, California, Florida and Illinois as the only states with that claim. Nearby Boulder has been the usual site when the AVP holds tournaments in Colorado, with a total of 15 men’s and three women’s, while Vail was the site in 1997 for a men’s only. Vail is the highest elevation the AVP Tour has ever played (8,150 feet above sea level), followed by Lake Tahoe (about 6,250), Boulder (5,328) and Denver (5,280).

- In the 1987 Denver event, Sinjin Smith and Randy Stoklos defeated Mike Dodd and Tim Hovland for the title. That gave Sinjin 82 career wins and Stoklos 58 (57 of them alongside Sinjin). Sinjin and Stoklos won five times in Colorado, the most of any team, but Karch Kiraly added six victories to his total from AVP events in Colorado. In all, there have been 17 men’s events in Colorado (15 in Boulder, one each in Denver and Vail). Of the 17 winning teams, just one (John Hanley / Jon Stevenson in 1985) did not have at least one player who played volleyball in the Olympics (either beach or indoors).

- The women have played just three times previously in Colorado on the AVP Tour, all in Boulder. In 2005 Rachel (Wacholder) Scott, who played collegiately at the University of Colorado in Boulder, won the women’s event on the same day that her boyfriend (and now husband and Director of USA Volleyball) won as well. In 2006 and 2008, Misty May-Treanor and Kerri Walsh won both times. Of the six different players to appear in a championship match, five have been beach Olympians. A look at the only previous AVP tournament in Denver:

MEN – AVP event

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1987	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	Pat Powers / Dan Vrebalovich	Scott Ayakutubby / Brent Frohoff

DENVER SAND BITS – There are 128 men’s players competing this weekend, and of the ages known, four are teenagers (18-year olds Greg Basey and Lucas Sands and 19-year olds Adam Hartmann and Caleb Kwekel). Eleven players are at least 40 years old, with 50-year old David Smith and 46-year olds Adam Roberts and John Moran being the oldest. Of the heights known, the shortest are 5’9” David Vander Meer and 5’9” Tal Shavit, while at the other end of the spectrum are three 6’9” players (Andy Benesh, Phil Dalhausser and Brandon Haley) and six players who measure 6’8”. Nine players have played in at least 100 events, Phil Dalhausser and Adam Roberts (both over 200), Ed Ratledge, Billy Allen, David Smith, John Moran, Avery Drost, Jon Mesko and Roberto Rodriguez, while 26 players are making their pro beach volleyball debut. There are six players here have previously won an AVP title (Phil Dalhausser with 61 AVP titles, Roberto Rodriguez (won in Muskegon 2022 and with Ed Ratledge in San Francisco 2018), Ed Ratledge (won with Roberto Rodriguez in San Francisco 2018), Dave Palm (won in Muskegon 2022 with Roberto Rodriguez), Andy Benesh (who won in the 2022 season opener in Austin with Phil Dalhausser) and Jeremy Casebeer (won in Seattle 2019 with Chaim Schalk). Out of 64 partnerships, 42 are competing together for the very first time and the most experienced tandems are playing together for just the 10th time (Cody Caldwell / Adam Roberts and twin brothers Ben and Matt Shassol).

- There are 106 women playing this weekend, and of the ages known there are two teenagers and they happen to be teammates (14-year old Sarah Wood and 18-year old Ashleigh Adams). On the flip side there are three women who are at least 40 years old (Wendy Lockhart 54, Lindsey Fuller 40, Larissa Maestrini 40). Larissa competed in her first Olympics (Beijing 2008) when Sarah Wood was just three and half months old. Katie Lindstrom (5’4”), Lisa Reed (5’5”) and Katie Spieler (5’5”) are the shortest competitors among the heights known, while at the other end of the spectrum are five players who measure 6’4” (Kylie Deberg, Falyon Fonoimoana, Lindsey Fuller, Jennifer Keddy and Lena Sokolowski). There are 30 women’s players who are making their pro beach volleyball debuts, while the five most experienced players have all played 90 or more times (Larissa Maestrini, Kim DiCello, Kendra VanZwieten, Liliane Maestrini and Karolina Marciniak). Three of those five players who have the most prior tournament experience were born outside of the United States. Larissa Maestrini is the all-time FIVB wins leader with 62 titles and has won twice on the AVP Tour (won in Glendale, Arizona in 2009 with Juliana Felisberta and last event in Muskegon with Lili Maestrini). The other female players who have previously won an AVP title include Kim DiCello and Kendra VanZwieten (who won together in New Orleans 2016) and Lili Maestrini (who won last event in Muskegon with Larissa Maestrini). Of the 53 women’s tandems, 36 are playing alongside each other for the first time and three have played together at least 10 times previously (Kim DiCello and Kendra VanZwieten, who are playing in their 16th AVP tournament as partners and 35th including FIVB and NORCECA events, twins Audrey and Nicole Nourse, 17th event, and Jessica Gaffney and Molly Turner, 11th event).

OLYMPIANS AT ALTITUDE – Prior to this year’s Denver event, there have been a total of 23 AVP tournaments (19 men, four women) that have been played at least a mile high (5,280 feet above sea level). This year’s Denver event marks the first time since 2008 that the AVP has played at this altitude. The only time in all of those in which a winning team did not include at least one Olympian (beach or indoors) was the John Hanley / Jon Stevenson win in Boulder in 1985. The Olympians playing in Denver include Phil Dalhausser (gold in 2008, ninth in 2012, fifth in 2016, ninth in 2020), David Lee (gold in 2008 indoors, fifth in 2012 indoors, bronze in 2016 indoors), Paul Lotman (fifth in 2012 indoors) and Larissa Maestrini (fifth in 2008, bronze in 2012, fourth in 2016).

THE STATE OF THE STATES – Of the 128 male players, 50 currently live in California, and 28 in Colorado. A total of 18 different states are represented (Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin). Of the 64 men's teams, 40 of them live in the same state as their partner, including 18 in California and 11 in Colorado. That means that 24 teams live in different states, including seven main draw teams as well as six of the top eight qualifier seeds, so a total of 13 of the top 24 teams list different resident states.

• The 106 female players also come from 20 different states, with California (42), Colorado (19) and Florida (15) leading the pack. Also represented are Georgia, Hawai'i, Iowa, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Texas. Between the men and women, a total of 27 states are represented here. There are 53 women's teams and 44 of them live in the same state, considerably more (percentage-wise) than the men. However like the men, a lot of the teams from different states are high up in the rankings. There are seven main draw teams and six of the top nine qualifier teams that call different states their homes (a total of 13 of the top 25 teams).

SUN AND ICE – The AVP Tour is known for playing in the sun and the sand, but this weekend they are bringing the tour to a city that is currently known best for its success on the ice. This year Denver has laid claim to being the best hockey city in the USA. On March 28 Denver East High School won the Division II National Championship. Then on April 9 the University of Denver captured the NCAA Division I National Championship, the ninth in school history (tied for the most ever along with Michigan). On June 26 the Colorado Avalanche won the third Stanley Cup in team history. This is just the second time ever, and first in over 50 years, that the same city had the NCAA champion and Stanley Cup winner in the same year.

THREEPEAT? – Phil Dalhausser has won twice this season on the AVP Tour, winning while playing with a partner for the first time in both of those events. And for the third time this year he will play alongside a new partner, John Sutton. The Denver title may be a bit more of a challenge to get though. Sutton has played in seven AVP qualifiers, and has won just three sets (one of which was due to his opponents being late and forfeiting the first set). While Sutton is 0-7 in AVP matches in his career (all qualifiers), Dalhausser has a 23-5 match record over the past three seasons on the AVP Tour. The duo is seeded eighth, which is the lowest for Dalhausser on the AVP Tour since Austin 2005 (seeded 10th), which happened to be his first career victory.

2022 QUALIFIER LIST – Here's a look at the teams who have qualified this season (placing in qualifier or qualification tournament seed) and how they finished in the main draw:

AUSTIN - Men (qualifier in Panama City, Fla.)

Caleb Kwekel / Marty Lorenz (2nd in QT) – 13th

Mark Burik / Dave Palm (3rd in QT) – 13th

Burik replaced by Roberto Rodriguez in MD

Raffe Paulis / Jeff Samuels (5th in QT) – 13th

Lev Priima / Silila Tucker (5th in QT) – 13th

AUSTIN - Women (qualifier in Panama City, Fla.)

Carly Kan / Kaitlyn Leary (2nd in QT) – 13th

Jessica Gaffney / Molly Turner (3rd in QT) – 9th

Toni Rodriguez / Savvy Simo (3rd in QT) – 7th

Aurora Davis / Teegan Van Gunst (5th in QT) – 9th

Carly Skjodt / Geena Urango (5th in QT) – 9th

Skjodt / Urango replaced a MD team

NEW ORLEANS - Men (qualifier in San Antonio, Texas)

Noah Dyer / Chase Frishman (2nd in QT) – 7th

Skylar del Sol / Andrew Dentler (3rd in QT) – 5th

Lev Priima / Silila Tucker (3rd in QT) – 13th

Dave Palm / Roberto Rodriguez (5th in QT) – 13th

Cody Caldwell / Adam Roberts (5th in QT) – 13th

Caldwell / Roberts replaced a MD team

NEW ORLEANS - Women (qualifier in San Antonio)

Jessica Gaffney / Molly Turner (1st in QT) – 9th

Toni Rodriguez / Savvy Simo (3rd in QT) – 5th

Brook Bauer / Katie Horton (3rd in QT) – 9th

Mackenzie Ponnet / Chelsea Rice (5th in QT) – 9th

Macy Jerger / Abby Van Winkle (5th in QT) – 13th

Megan Gebhard / Kahlee York (5th in QT) – 13th

Last 2 teams replaced MD teams

MUSKEGON - Men (on-site qualifier)

Kyle Friend / Brandon Joyner (#1 QT seed) – 13th

Christian Honer / David Vander Meer (#3) – 17th

TJ Jurko / Dylan Zacca (#4) – 9th

Nolan Albrecht / Tomas Goldsmith (#6) – 17th

Devon Bruki / John Schwengel (#7) – 17th

Bradley Connors / Brett Greiner (#8) – 13th

Mark Bucknam / Jake Fleming (#12) – 17th

Frank Field / Tyler Penberthy (#15) – 17th

Jurko / Zacca 2 MD losses were to #1, #3 seeds

MUSKEGON - Women (on-site qualifier)

Ashley McGinn / Sarah Wood (#1 QT seed) – 13th

Makenzie Griffin / Eunyce Vercosa (#2) – 17th

Tambre Nobles / Melissa Powell (#3) – 17th

Jenna Johnson / Raelyn White (#5) – 13th

Kaeli Crews / Lexie Hamilton (#7) – 17th

Denise De Vine / Anna Dunbar (#9) – 17th

Kylie Bryan / Jessica Jendryk (#11) – 17th

Kylie Deberg / Kahlee York (#13) – 17th

14-year old Wood youngest to ever qualify

AUSTIN ANALYSIS – The first day of the AVP season opener in Austin was a bit of a surprise, as despite the numerous new pairings all 24 matches between the two genders were all won by the teams with the better seedings. There was quite the divergence in the two genders' winning teams though. On the women's side, Taryn Kloth and 5'6" Kristen Nuss won (who last year became the shortest women's player to win an AVP event since 5'6" Barbra Fontana won an AVP event in August 2001 in Manhattan Beach). On the men's side, the first domestic team ever to play in which both players were at least 6'9" tall paired up for the first time and won the title (Andy Benesh and Phil Dalhausser).

- Especially with the start to the tournament which saw no upsets on Friday, and with #1 seeds winning five of the prior six AVP events, it seemed quite likely that top-seeded Melissaa Humana-Paredes and Sarah Pavan were on course to winning in Austin. The pair lost just one set in reaching the title match, and would face Kloth and Nuss, who were playing their third match of the day in the Texas heat, which saw the heat index over 100 degrees. The youngsters took an 18-13 lead before the Canadian pair closed the gap to 20-18, but Kloth and Nuss prevailed 21-18. In the second set Kloth and Nuss scored five straight points early and cruised to a 21-13 win for their second career victory.

- The top four men's seeds advanced to the semifinals for the first time since Austin 2017 (since then the AVP had 29 tournaments without that happening). Benesh and Dalhausser lost just two sets en route to winning the title, the first ever for Benesh. Dalhausser won an AVP season opener for the ninth time in his career (most ever by any player) and got his 60th career AVP title. And his success in Texas continued, as he has won seven of the nine times he has played an AVP event in Texas, with a 42-4 match record (winning 38 of the last 39). Chase Budinger and Troy Field, also a team playing together for the first time, had swept all four opponents leading up to the championship match. In the first set of the title match, Budinger and Field held a 19-17 lead, but Benesh had one block and Dalhausser had a pair of blocks in closing out the set on a 4-0 run.

#6 Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss def. #1 Melissa Humana-Paredes / Sarah Pavan 21-18, 21-13 (:42)

#1 Andy Benesh / Phil Dalhausser def. #4 Chase Budinger / Troy Field 21-19, 21-18 (:52)

NEW ORLEANS NOTATIONS – The big storyline about the AVP Tour returning to New Orleans for the first time since 2016 was the connections to the area, especially on the women's side. Four of the 32 women's players had competed in beach volleyball at LSU, including both players on the second-seeded tandem of Taryn Kloth and Kristen Nuss.

- None of the men's teams competing in New Orleans had ever won an AVP title together, so it came down to individual experience. And the team with the most experience (both in terms of age and AVP titles) was the tandem of Phil Dalhausser and Casey Patterson, who were seeded first and playing together for the first time as well. The duo was the sixth oldest to ever play in an AVP main draw, but they were the strongest on Sunday when it mattered the most. In the semifinals and championship match on Sunday, Dalhausser had 10 blocks and five aces, while Patterson had 55 kills and 26 digs. The duo outlasted third-seeded Taylor Crabb and Taylor Sander in three sets after the Taylors won the first set and led 17-15 in the second set.

- The partisan crowd got what it wanted with former LSU stars Taryn Kloth and Kristen Nuss advancing to the championship match. However the team across the net, Kelly Cheng and Betsi Flint, was seeded first for a reason. Cheng and Flint played a nearly flawless match, as Cheng hit an outstanding .720 (20 kills in 25 attempts with just 2 hitting errors) and Flint hit .533 with eight digs. Uncharacteristically, Kloth had just one block in the match and Nuss only six digs. Cheng / Flint took a 4-3 lead in the first set and didn't trail in the match after that point.

#1 Phil Dalhausser / Casey Patterson def. #3 Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander 17-21, 21-19, 15-13 (1:07)

#1 Kelly Cheng / Betsi Flint def. #2 Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss 21-15, 21-15 (:37)

MUSKEGON'S MEMORIES – The AVP Tour was making history with its first ever Tour Series Event in Muskegon, Michigan. But on the first day that history was overshadowed by a 14-year old. Sarah Wood, at the age of 14 years, 1 month and 16 days old, became the youngest player (male or female) to advance from the qualifier into an AVP main draw, beating the previous mark by over two years.

- The men's championship match featured two teams that reached the title match undefeated, but not without some serious tests. Second seeded Evan Cory / Billy Kolinske won four matches, three of them in three sets, to reach the finals. Across the net was ninth-seeded Dave Palm / Roberto Rodriguez, who had teamed up this season only due to a late injury to Palm's partner before the season opener. Palm and Rodriguez won a pair of three-set matches, and in the title match were playing their fourth straight match against a team seeded fourth or better. Palm and Rodriguez won the first set handily, 21-14, then held off Cory and Kolinske 26-24 in the second to capture the title. In that second set neither team led by more than two points and there were 16 ties. Palm had seven blocks in the match.

- The women weren't done making history in the qualifier. Larissa and Lili Maestrini, the top seeds in the event, won the title and in doing so make Larissa the first woman at least 40 years old to win a domestic event. Kerri Walsh Jennings won an international tournament at the age of 40, but Larissa became the first on the AVP Tour. The couple achieved the mark by beating seventh-seeded Julia Scoles and Geena Urango as Lili had four blocks and Larissa added 13 kills and 14 digs. Urango, who had five aces in the semifinal match, was unable to register any in the finals.

#1 Larissa Maestrini / Liliane Maestrini def. #7 Julia Scoles / Geena Urango 21-17, 21-16 (:46)

#9 Dave Palm / Roberto Rodriguez def. #2 Evan Cory / Billy Kolinske 21-14, 26-24 (:48)

FABULOUS 40's – In New Orleans, Phil Dalhausser and Casey Patterson took the court together for the first time, and went undefeated in winning the title. Both players are 42 years old, and they became the oldest combined team to win an AVP title in history. This was just the third time that both winning players were over 40 years old, as the previous two times it was Dalhausser and Nick Lucena (both times in Long Beach in 2020). Not only are they the oldest combined team to win, they were the sixth oldest to ever play in a main draw:

John Hyden / Ricardo Santos in Manhattan Beach 2021 (34,881 combined days old)

Scott Ayakutubby / Brent Frohoff in Manhattan Beach 2008 (32,652 days)

Casey Patterson / Ed Ratledge in Austin 2022 (31,933 days)

Reid Priddy / Ricardo Santos in Honolulu 2019 (31,661 days)

Ty Loomis / Ricardo Santos in Chicago 2019 (31,042 days)

Phil Dalhausser / Casey Patterson in New Orleans 2022 (30,843 days)

- In Muskegon Larissa Maestrini became the first 40-year old female to win domestically. Nine of the last 12 men's AVP tournaments have been won by players aged 40 or older, but now the women have joined the trend.

RELATIVELY SPEAKING – The men's draw features some twin brothers playing together (Ben and Matt Shassol) while the women's has twin sisters Audrey and Nicole Nourse competing. Top-seeded women's team Larissa and Lili Maestrini are one of the married couples here, along with Travis and Delaney Mewirther. Abby Van Winkle and her younger sister Tessa Van Winkle are both playing but on separate teams. There are three Basey brothers playing, with Gage and Lars on the same team, and Finn on a separate team. Ian and Sean Carlson are brothers who play on separate teams.

COLORADO IS BEACH COUNTRY – There is a recent study which looked at what states produce the most NCAA women's beach volleyball players. Measured per capita, Colorado ranked fifth on the list. Arizona had the highest rate, followed by Nebraska, Hawai'i, Alabama and Colorado.

[Geography with Goudge: NCAA Women's Beach Volleyball Map, 2022 | News | kmland.com](#)

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS – Just one player competing in Denver will have a birthday during the three-day event, as Aurora Davis will turn 31 on Friday.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE – The Beach Volleyball World Championships in Rome just concluded and three AVP regulars reached the semifinals. Canada's Brandie Wilkerson, who played alongside Sophie Bukovec, won a silver medal while Theo Brunner and Chaim Schalk placed fourth.

- Here is a look at AVP players / teams which have been in the semifinals of an FIVB event this year:

MEN

Andy Benesh / Miles Evans – Silver Medal – Songkhla, Thailand – April 17

Miles Evans / Logan Webber – Silver Medal – Rhodes, Greece – May 22

Theo Brunner / Chaim Schalk – 4th place – Rome, Italy (World Championships) – June 19

WOMEN

Kelly Cheng / Betsi Flint – 4th Place – Rosarito, Mexico – March 27

Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss – Gold Medal – Coolangatta, Australia – April 3

Zana Muno / Toni Rodriguez – Bronze Medal – Coolangatta, Australia – April 3

Sara Hughes / Kelley Kolinske – Gold Medal – Itapema, Brazil – April 17

Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss – Gold Medal – Kusadasi, Turkey – May 22

Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil – Bronze Medal – Kusadasi, Turkey – May 22

Melissa Humana-Paredes / Sarah Pavan – Gold Medal – Jurmala, Latvia – June 5

Sara Hughes / Kelley Kolinske – 4th Place – Jurmala, Latvia – June 5

Jessica Gafney / Molly Turner – Bronze Medal – Klaipeda, Lithuania – June 5

Sophie Bukovec / Brandie Wilkerson – Silver Medal – Rome, Italy (World Championships) – June 19

Megan Kraft / Savvy Simo – Gold Medal – Balikesir, Turkey – June 19

Brook Bauer / Katie Horton – Silver Medal – Balikesir, Turkey – June 19

Megan Kraft / Emily Stockman – Gold Medal – Bialystok, Poland – June 26

Brook Bauer / Katie Horton – 4th Place – Bialystok, Poland – June 26

NEXT UP – The AVP has a busy week, with overlapping events coming up. The third Tour Series event will take place in Waupaca, Wisconsin on July 7-9. Like this tournament, there will be an on-site qualifier on Friday, then the two-day main draw will feature 24 teams from both genders. Importantly, this event will also serve as the qualifier for the Gold Series event in Manhattan Beach in August. The third Pro Series event will take place in Hermosa Beach on July 8-10. The main draw will be 16 teams in each gender and will have \$125,000 in prize money.