



2023 AVP PRO BEACH VOLLEYBALL TOUR

Season Event #7 • Pro Series #4

Hermosa Beach, California • July 7 – 9, 2023

ABOUT THE TOURNAMENT – The final Pro Series event of the Year on the AVP Tour takes place in Hermosa Beach. This is the fourth of four Pro Series events on this year's schedule. Total prize money for this tournament will be \$125,000, with equal payouts for men and women, and the season payout totals nearly \$1,500,000 before the Championships. On the south side of the pier, the AVP Juniors National Championship will be taking place, and then beginning on Sunday the U.S. Beach Club Championship, a joint effort between the AVP and USA Volleyball, will begin its competition.

- The main draw will be a 16-team, double elimination format. Eleven teams from each gender are granted entry directly into the main draw from having sufficient points (from the best four events points totals from their last five AVP and AVPNext tournaments). Four teams in each gender earned a berth based on their finish in the Virginia Beach event on the Tour Series last month. The final team from each gender got a spot from having the best finishes among three CBVA events. The main draw begins on Friday, July 7 and concludes on Sunday, July 9, and will be played on three courts at the Hermosaa Beach pier. Both main draws feature 29 matches in a double-elimination format. General admission is free while premium seats are available for purchase at avp.com. The championship matches will be at 1:00 pm PT (men) and 2:00 pm PT (women).

- Live streaming of stadium court matches takes place Friday through Sunday on ESPN+. Live streaming on Courts 1 and 2 will take place on the Bally Live app. Dain Blanton, Rich Lambourne, Matt Prosser and Mark Schuermann will combine to handle the announcing duties on stadium court, while Megan Burgdorf, Drew Beyer and Victoria Dennis among others will call the action on the outer courts. The championship matches will be shown live on ESPNU on Sunday from 1-3 pm PT.

HERMOSA'S HEAD HONCHOS – Tri Bourne and Chaim Schalk are playing together for the third time on the AVP Tour, and this will continue their streak as the number one seed in all three tournaments. The two players, who both competed in the Olympics in beach volleyball but for different countries in different years, come from opposite places, as Bourne was raised and still lives in Honolulu while Schalk is from Alberta, Canada, better known for snow sports than beach volleyball. Bourne was a top seed twice in 2014 and three times in 2022 but New Orleans was the first time he advanced to the title match when being the number one seed despite making the semifinals four of his first five times. Schalk was a top seed five times in 2022, three times placing second.

- The top women's seeds enter Hermosa Beach with momentum, having won last weekend in Denver on the Tour Series. This is the third AVP event as partners for the duo, but the 10th time overall playing together. All of their events have come since the middle of March, and have included tournaments in Mexico, Brazil and Latvia. The duo was seeded first in Denver, and went 6-0 in matches. This is the first Pro Series event for Harward being seeded number one in her career. Kolinske was a top seed in Austin 2017 (finished seventh with Betsi Flint), San Francisco 2017 (won with Flint), Chicago 2022 (placed fifth with Sara Hughes) and Phoenix 2022 (finished third with Hughes) before also earning the top spot last week in Denver on the Tour Series. Including the Tour Series, this marks the fourth time in her last five events that Kolinske has been a number one seed on the AVP Tour.

HOMETOWN HEROES –

- There are four men's players who list Hermosa Beach as their current residence:
Chase Budinger, Travis Mewhirter, Lev Priima, Spencer Sauter
- There are no men's players who currently live in a different city but list their hometown as Huntington Beach
- There are two women's player who lists Hermosa Beach as her current residence:
Megan Rice, Emily Stockman
- There is one women's player who currently live in a different city but list their hometown as Huntington Beach:
Zana Munro

SCHEDULE SNAPSHOT – The 2023 AVP schedule has 12 tour stops, the second most the AVP has had since 2009 (behind the 15 last season). The 12 women's tournaments marks the 10th time in AVP history there have been that many. The nine different states that the Tour is visiting is the second most since the 2008 season (12 different states last year), with only California hosting more than one (this year will be the site of four events). It is only fitting that the AVP began the season in Florida given that three of the first five AVP events ever were in Florida, and in total has hosted the second most events in Tour history. This was the earliest start since 1998 while the mid-October finish is the latest for the Tour (besides last year) since 2013, which previously had been the last time an event was held as late as October. Last year the AVP held one in November and one in December (both of which were firsts on the AVP Tour). Three locations are slated to have night sessions (New Orleans, Atlanta, and the Championships). The combined total of \$1,480,000 in prize money (in addition to the Championships) also features the third most the Tour has distributed since 2009.

• The Tour is divided into four different classifications. One level is the Tour Series, which comprises four different events in four different states from June to October. These events will all have on-site qualifiers the day before the main draw begins. The Pro Series has four events from March through July, including the Tour's first three tournaments of the year. The first three events all will have an on-site qualifier, with the fourth, in Hermosa Beach, using results from a Tour Series event to round out the field. 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 one-day single elimination qualifier held in Southern California on August 11. The last type of event is the AVP championships, which will be held in a location to be determined in September. Last season the six-team draws were based on the best two out of the three results in Gold Series events.

2023 AVP Pro Beach Volleyball Tour Schedule

Event Dates	Location	Tournament Format	Prize \$
March 16 - 19	Miami, Florida	16-team double elimination	\$125,000
	<i>Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander win 3rd straight; Brandie Wilkerson (with Melissa Humana-Parades) gets first win</i>		
April 13 - 16	New Orleans, Louisiana	16-team double elimination	\$125,000
	<i>Top seeds in both genders win after weather delay, Tri Bourne / Chaim Schalk and Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes</i>		
May 18 - 21	Huntington Beach, California	16-team double elimination	\$125,000
	<i>Andy Benesh / Miles Partain win in their AVP debut; Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes win second straight AVP title</i>		
June 9 – 11	Virginia Beach, Virginia	Pool play & 18-team single elimination	\$20,000
	<i>Four first-time winners; Hagen Smith / Logan Webber and Macy Jerger / Megan Rice claim the Tour Series titles</i>		
June 30 – July 2	Denver, Colorado	Pool play & 18-team single elimination	\$20,000
	<i>Billy Allen / Alison Cerutti win in rematch of Virginia Beach event; top seeds Hailey Harward / Kelley Kolinske win</i>		
July 6 - 7	Waupaca, Wisconsin	Pool play & 18-team single elimination	\$20,000
	<i>All previous AVP events in Wisconsin before 2022 had been in Milwaukee; this was 1st new AVP city since 2013</i>		
July 7 - 9	Hermosa Beach, California	16-team double elimination	\$125,000
	<i>Just the fifth time since 2011 that the AVP is playing in Hermosa Beach</i>		
Aug 4 – 6	Atlanta, Georgia	16-team double elimination	\$300,000
	<i>First Gold Series event of 2023; one of three 2023 locations to have night sessions</i>		
Aug 18 – 20	Manhattan Beach, California	32-team double elimination	\$300,000
	<i>Biggest event on the schedule in terms of both main draw and qualifier sizes; Gold Series event #2</i>		
Sep 1 – 3	Chicago, Illinois	16-team double elimination	\$300,000
	<i>Chicago trails only Manhattan Beach on list of most frequented stops in AVP history; Gold Series event #3</i>		
Sep 22 – 23	TBD		
	<i>Season Championships; Only invitational on schedule</i>		
Oct 13 – 15	Laguna Beach, California	Pool play & 18-team single elimination	\$20,000
	<i>First time the AVP has played in Laguna Beach since 1988; fourth California stop on 2023 Tour</i>		

CONCURRENT COMPETITIONS – Just like last season, the AVP is holding two competitions on the same weekend. There is a Tour Series event in Waupaca, Wisc., that has a qualifier on Wednesday, July 5 and the main draw on Thursday-Friday, July 6-7. The tournament is part of the Waupaca Boatribe Volleyball Tournament, billed as the world's largest outdoor volleyball tournament.

HERMOSA BEACH HISTORY – Hermosa Beach had an AVP men's event here each year from 1984 through 2010, but this is just the fourth AVP tournament here since then. In total, Hermosa Beach has been the location of 53 men's and 52 women's domestic events prior to this year (across all tours). This weekend marks the 33rd men's AVP tournament and the 18th women's AVP event. Karch Kiraly, Sinjin Smith and Todd Rogers each won six times here in their careers. In 1990, Smith and Randy Stoklos, the winningest duo ever with 114 titles together, won here in what was the debut of NBC Sports broadcasting beach volleyball. Kiraly and Kent Steffes' 2010 win marked the last of their 75 victories together. Eight different teams won tournaments here in the eight years between 1998 and 2005, then Phil Dalhausser and Todd Rogers won five straight from 2006-2010. Dain Blanton (1997), Canyon Ceman (1997), David Swatik (1999), Albert Hannemann (2002), Jeff Nygaard (2002) and Chase Budinger (2019) all chalked up their first career titles with wins here. Blanton's win in 1997 also marked the first time an African-American won on the AVP Tour. In 2006, Brad Keenan and John Mayer tied an AVP record by making it to the semifinals; it marked the best finish ever for a team emerging from the qualifier (3rd place). The 2017 men's championship featured brothers competing against each other for the first time since 1991, as Taylor Crabb defeated his older brother Trevor. Then in 2018 John Hyden won, extending his record as the oldest player to win an AVP championship at the age of 45 years, nine months, 22 days old.

• Linda Hanley, eighth in career wins, won her first tournament here in 1978. Karolyn Kirby, the all-time wins leader until 2004, won her 67th and final victory here in 1997. In 2004, Holly McPeak and Elaine Youngs won, giving them their 16th win together (eighth most all-time), and it was McPeak's record-extending 72nd title. In 2007 Misty May-Treanor became the all-time wins leader on the women's side with her 73rd career victory. The 2019 tournament was very unique as top-seeded Emily Day / Betsi Flint won, and the other three teams in the semifinals had all advanced from the qualifier, the first time in AVP history (men or women) that has happened. Here are the results of the AVP tournaments held in Hermosa Beach:

MEN – AVP events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
1984	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	John Hanley / Jon Stevenson	Ricci Luyties / Steve Obradovich	Dane Selznick / Andrew Smith
1985	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Andy Fishburn / Jay Hanseth	Ricci Luyties / Steve Obradovich
1986	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	John Hanley / Jon Stevenson	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	Scott Ayakutubby / Brent Frohoff
1987	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	Ricci Luyties / Steve Obradovich	Scott Friederichsen / Jay Hanseth
1988	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	John Hanley / Dan Vrebalovich	Leif Hanson / Jay Hanseth
1989	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Kent Steffes / Jon Stevenson	Scott Ayakutubby / Andrew Smith
1990	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Brent Frohoff / Karch Kiraly	Adam Johnson / Steve Timmons	John Hanley / Andrew Smith
1991	Adam Johnson / Ricci Luyties	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Scott Ayakutubby / Brent Frohoff	Mike Dodd / Tim Hovland
1992	Karch Kiraly / Kent Steffes	Adam Johnson / Tim Hovland	Sinjin Smith / Randy Stoklos	Mike Dodd / Pat Powers
1993	Karch Kiraly / Kent Steffes	Ricci Luyties / Randy Stoklos	Mike Dodd / Mike Whitmarsh	Eduardo Bacil / Jose Loiola
1994	Karch Kiraly / Kent Steffes	Eduardo Bacil / Jose Loiola	Scott Ayakutubby / Brent Frohoff	Mike Dodd / Mike Whitmarsh
1995	Adam Johnson / Jose Loiola	Scott Ayakutubby / Karch Kiraly	Bill Boullianne / Brian Lewis	Kent Steffes / Randy Stoklos
1996	Karch Kiraly / Kent Steffes	Mike Dodd / Mike Whitmarsh	Rob Heidger / Troy Tanner	Bill Boullianne / Eric Fonoimoana
1997	Dain Blanton / Canyon Ceman	Lose Loiola / Kent Steffes	Randy Stoklos / Troy Tanner	Adam Johnson / Karch Kiraly
1997	Adam Johnson / Karch Kiraly	Dax Holdren / Todd Rogers	Dain Blanton / Canyon Ceman	Mike Dodd / Mike Whitmarsh
1998	Adam Johnson / Karch Kiraly	Jose Loiola / Emanuel Rego	Roberto Lopes / Franco Neto	Kent Steffes / Mike Whitmarsh
1999	David Swatik / Mike Whitmarsh	Jose Loiola / Emanuel Rego	Brent Doble / Lee LeGrande	Adam Johnson / Karch Kiraly
2001	Dax Holdren / Todd Rogers	Dain Blanton / Eric Fonoimoana	Stein Metzger / Kevin Wong	Brent Doble / Matt Lyles
2002	Albert Hannemann / Jeff Nygaard	Stein Metzger / Kevin Wong	Eduardo Bacil / Fred Souza	[3rd] Scott Ayakutubby / Brian Lewis
2003	Scott Ayakutubby / Brian Lewis	Matt Fuerbringer / Casey Jennings	Brent Doble / Karch Kiraly	[3rd] Jake Gibb / Adam Jewell
2004	Eric Fonoimoana / Kevin Wong	Karch Kiraly / Mike Lambert	Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena	[3rd] Todd Rogers / Sean Scott
2005	Matt Fuerbringer / Casey Jennings	Dax Holdren / Jeff Nygaard	Jake Gibb / Stein Metzger	[3rd] Sean Rosenthal / Larry Witt
2006	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	Mike Lambert / Stein Metzger	Matt Fuerbringer / Casey Jennings	[3rd] Brad Kennan / John Mayer
2007	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	Matt Olson / Jason Ring	Mike Lambert / Stein Metzger	[3rd] Dax Holdren / Jeff Nygaard
2008	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	Matt Fuerbringer / Casey Jennings	John Mayer / Jeff Nygaard	[3rd] Matt Olson / Kevin Wong
2009	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	John Hyden / Sean Scott	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	[3rd] Brad Keenan / Nick Lucena
2010	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	John Mayer / Matt Prosser	Casey Jennings / Brad Keenan	[3rd] Jeff Nygaard / Matt Olson
2017	Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb	Trevor Crabb / Sean Rosenthal	Piotr Marciniak / Roberto Rodriguez	[3rd] Avery Drost / Chase Frishman
2018	Theo Brunner / John Hyden	Billy Allen / Ryan Doherty	Ed Ratledge / Roberto Rodriguez	[3rd] Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb
2019	Chase Budinger / Casey Patterson	Ryan Doherty / Miles Evans	Ed Ratledge / Roberto Rodriguez	[3rd] David Lee / Sean Rosenthal
2022	Theo Brunner / Chaim Schalk	Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander	Phil Dalhausser / Casey Patterson	[3rd] Paul Lotman / Miles Partain

WOMEN – AVP events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
1993	Cammy Ciarelli / Holly McPeak	Linda Hanley / Jackie Silva	Rita Crockett / Nancy Reno	Linda Chisholm / Angela Rock
1994	Cammy Ciarelli / Holly McPeak	Nancy Reno / Angela Rock	Linda Chisholm / Linda Hanley	Valinda Hilleary / Pat Keller
1999	Liz Masakayan / Elaine Youngs	Lisa Arce / Barbra Fontana	Annett Davis/Jenny Johnson Jordan	Kerri Pottharst / Ali Wood
2001	Lisa Arce / Holly McPeak	Barbra Fontana / Elaine Youngs	Nancy Mason / Leanne McSorley	Linda Hanley / Sarah Stratton

WOMEN – AVP events cont'd

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
2002	Holly McPeak / Elaine Youngs	Dianne DeNecochea/Barbara Fontana	Annett Davis/Jenny Johnson Jordan	[3rd] Carrie Dodd / Nancy Mason
2003	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh	Holly McPeak / Elaine Youngs	Annett Davis/Jenny Johnson Jordan	[3rd] Lisa Arce / Rachel Wacholder
2004	Holly McPeak / Elaine Youngs	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh	Barbra Fontana / Jennifer Kessy	[3rd] Carrie Dodd / Nancy Mason
2005	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh	Rachel Wacholder / Elaine Youngs	Jennifer Kessy / Holly McPeak	[3rd] Tyra Turner / Makare Wilson
2006	Rachel Wacholder/Elaine Youngs	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh	Annett Davis/Jenny Johnson Jordan	[3rd] Jennifer Kessy/Nancy Mason
2007	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh	Tyra Turner / Rachel Wacholder	Nicole Branagh / Elaine Youngs	[3rd] Jennifer Kessy / April Ross
2008	Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh	Annett Davis/Jenny Johnson Jordan	Nicole Branagh / Elaine Youngs	[3rd] Carrie Dodd / Tatiana Minello
2009	Nicole Branagh / Elaine Youngs	Jennifer Kessy / April Ross	Annett Davis/Jenny Johnson Jordan	[3rd] Angie Akers / Tyra Turner
2010	Jennifer Kessy / April Ross	Rachel Scott / Elaine Youngs	Annett Davis/Jenny Johnson Jordan	[3rd] Angie Akers / Tyra Turner
2017	Emily Day / Brittany Hochevar	Angela Bensed / Geena Urango	Caitlin Ledoux / Maria Clara Salgado	[3rd] Lane Carico / Alix Klineman
2018	Sara Hughes / Summer Ross	Alix Klineman / April Ross	Kelly Claes / Brittany Hochevar	[3rd] Caitlin Ledoux/Geena Urango
2019	Emily Day / Betsi Flint	Kathryn Hogan / Megan Rice	Mackenzie Ponnet / Sheila Shaw	[3rd] Crissy Jones / Zana Muno
2022	Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil	Kelly Cheng / Betsi Flint	Julia Scoles / Geena Urango	[3rd] Sara Hughes / Kelley Kolinske

HERMOSA BEACH SAND BITS – Of the 32 men's players competing this weekend the youngest is 23-year old Timothy Brewster, and just eight of the players here are still in their 20's. While 22 players are in their 30's, the two oldest are Phil Dalhausser (43) and Billy Allen (41). Four players are listed at 6'0" while at the other end of the spectrum are 6'9" Phil Dalhausser and a pair of 6'8" players (Alison Cerutti and Spencer Sauter). The least experienced player here is Wyatt Harrison, who is playing in his 16th pro beach tournament (all on the AVP) players with the most experience is Phil Dalhausser. Phil Dalhausser, with 62 AVP titles, has the most of any player here, followed by Taylor Crabb (11 AVP wins plus an AVP Tour Series win) and Tri Bourne (nine AVP wins). Out of 16 partnerships, two are competing together for the very first time (Chase Frishman / Billy Kolinske and Wyatt Harrison / Jacob Landel) while the two most experienced tandems are Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander and Timothy Brewster / Kyle Friend. The teams that have previously won on the AVP Tour are Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander (two AVP titles plus a Tour Series title), Tri Bourne / Chaim Schalk (in New Orleans 2023), Dave Palm / Roberto Rodriguez (two Tour Series wins), Hagen Smith / Logan Webber (on the Tour Series in Virginia Beach 2023) and Billy Allen / Alison Cerutti (Tour Series win in Denver last week).

• There are also 32 women playing this weekend, and of the information known there are two teenagers (15-year old Sarah Wood and 17-year old Ashley Pater) and they are teammates. On the flip side, Larissa Maestrini (41 years old) and Lili Maestrini (35) are the two oldest and they are also playing on the same team. Kimberly Hildreth, Ashley Pater and Molly Turner (all 5'8") are the shortest competitors, while at the other end of the spectrum are 6'4" Jennifer Keddy and 6'2" Kelley Kolinske. All of the women here have played at least five previous pro beach volleyball tournaments, while four players have played in more than 100 tournaments (Larissa Maestrini, Emily Stockman, Lili Maestrini and Kelley Kolinske). Larissa Maestrini is the all-time FIVB wins leader with 62 titles, to go with four AVP wins (three of those on the Tour Series). Kelley Kolinske leads the field with four AVP victories (in addition to one Tour Series win last weekend in Denver). One of the 16 women's tandems is playing alongside each other for the first time (Megan Rice and Savvy Simo, as Rice was a last minute substitution for an injured Toni Rodriguez) while the most experienced are Corinne Quiggle / Sarah Schermerhorn and Megan Kraft / Emily Stockman. There are three teams competing here which have previously won the on the AVP Tour as partners: Larissa / Lili (three Tour Series titles, all in 2022), Hailey Harward / Kelley Kolinske (one Tour Series win in Denver 2023 last weekend) and Macy Jerger / Megan Rice (one Tour Series win in Virginia Beach 2023).

THREE HUNDRED AND COUNTING – Entering this season, the AVP has held 208 men's events and 91 women's events in the state of California, for a combined total of 299. While there have now been just over 300 tournaments in California, no other state has reached 100 (next most is Florida with 95). The AVP, celebrating its 40th year, has played at least one tournament in the state of California in all 40 of those years. The state with the next most different number of seasons hosting an AVP event is Illinois, which has done so in 32 different years (and will be 33 with the Gold Series event scheduled over Labor Day weekend).

FAMILIAR FOES – Two of the big men competing here are very familiar with each other and have similar accomplishments on the court. Phil Dalhausser has won 62 AVP titles plus 38 FIVB gold medals (in addition to other domestic wins). Alison Cerutti won 40 times on the Brazilian Tour plus 25 times on the FIVB. Dalhausser has played in four Olympics, winning gold in 2008 while Alison is a three-time Olympian, winning silver in 2012 and gold in 2016. If both players win their first two matches in Hermosa, they would face each other in the quarterfinals. They have played against each other 30 times in their career, with the last meeting a three-set Brazilian win in the Tokyo Olympics (pool play). Fittingly, four of the five last meetings between the big blockers went to a third set. Dalhausser has won 21 of the 30 meetings, including seven times in a gold medal match, while Alison has won 4 gold medal matches against Dalhausser.

FROM CONTENDER TO CHAMPIONS – A big change has happened recently on the women's side, as teams from the contender's bracket have been winning tournaments. In the last seven AVP tournaments (excluding Tour Series and the AVP Championships in Phoenix which didn't have a contender's bracket), four times the winner was a team which had suffered a loss prior to the semifinals. To put that into perspective, prior to this latest stretch 26 of the 29 tournament winners went undefeated in the event (only three times did a team lose prior to the semifinals but came back to win the title).

DOMINATING DUO DEBUTS – In each of the last two Pro Series events a men's tandem playing for the first time on the AVP Tour won the title. In New Orleans, Tri Bourne and Chaim Schalk were playing together for the first time on the AVP, although they had previously played three times internationally. The duo went 5-0 on the weekend in winning the title, beating three teams seeded fifth or better. Then in Huntington Beach, Bourne and Schalk advanced to the finals where they would face Andy Benesh and Miles Partain, who had played five times as partners internationally but were making their AVP debuts. Although Bourne and Schalk had sent Benesh and Partain to the contender's bracket the day before, the new duo was up to the challenge and won the finals in a three-set match.

YOU GET A TITLE, AND YOU GET A TITLE – Beginning with the 2021 season finale in Chicago and including the Tour Series, there have been 21 events and 16 different men's teams have won a title. Phil Dalhausser won three times, each time while playing with a partner for the first time ever. Tri Bourne and Taylor Crabb each have four victories in that span. In the 21 championship matches, there were 19 unique matchups, as only Tri Bourne / Trevor Crabb vs Theo Brunner / Chaim Schalk and Billy Allen / Alison Cerutti vs Hagen Smith / Logan Webber have been featured twice.

- Not to be outdone, the women had 15 different teams claim a title in that same span of 21 tournaments. Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss, Larissa Maestrini / Lili Maestrini and Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes all had three wins each in that span. In the 21 championship matches, there were 20 unique matchups, as only Kelly Cheng / Betsi Flint vs. Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss was featured twice.

CALIFORNIA DREAMING – In May the Huntington Beach Open ended some streaks. Prior to that, in the last 12 AVP tournaments (including Tour Series) held in California the men's winning team had at least one Olympian (beach or indoors) on the roster. The last exception was in San Francisco 2018 when Ed Ratledge and Roberto Rodriguez won the title. In that span six times the winner was the top seed, and the lowest seed to be named champion was No. 4. Before Andy Benesh / Miles Partain, seeded fifth, won the event.

- On the women's side, the number one-seeded team generally wins in California. In the past 25 events (including the 2022 Tour Series event in Huntington Beach), the top seeds have won the tournament 19 times. And in the six other events the top seeds played in the championship match four times. There have been 79 California events since 1999 and in 78 of them the seeds were known. Amazingly, the top-seeded women's team in those has advanced to the semifinals every time (and to the championship match 68 times).

RELATIVELY SPEAKING – Larissa and Lili Maestrini are a married couple that reside in Florida (Winter Garden). They are playing as partners on the AVP Tour for the 17th time with three Tour Series wins to their credit. Top women's seed Kelley Kolinske is married to Billy Kolinske, who is seeded ninth. Taylor and Trevor Crabb are brothers who were partners for 12 AVP events, finishing second three times and third six times.

GPS TO THE MAIN DRAW – Here's a look at teams can qualify for each tournament's main draw:

- Miami (Pro Series) – on-site qualifier
- New Orleans (Pro Series) – on-site qualifier
- Huntington Beach (Pro Series) – on-site qualifier
- Virginia Beach (Tour Series) – on-site qualifier
- Denver (Tour Series) – on-site qualifier
- Waupaca (Tour Series) – on-site qualifier
- Hermosa Beach (Pro Series) – top 4 teams from Virginia Beach
- Atlanta (Gold Series) – top 4 teams from Denver
- Manhattan Beach (Gold Series) – on-site qualifier plus top 4 teams from Waupaca
- Chicago (Gold Series) – top 4 teams from a single day qualifier in Southern California on August 11
- Laguna Beach (Tour Series) – on-site qualifier

MORE FOR YOUR MONEY – The women have been giving fans more for their money lately, as five of the last nine championship matches (excluding Tour Series) have gone to a third set. In 2018-19 there was a stretch which saw six of seven title matches require a third set, but following that 14 of the next 16 finals were sweeps before this latest span. The men have had 11 of their last 19 championship matches go to a third set.

OLYMPICALITY – This week's AVP event features seven players who have played in the Olympics (either indoors or on the beach). Players here have competed for three different countries.

• Men with Olympic experience:

Tri Bourne played beach in 2020 as a substitute for Taylor Crabb (ninth place)

Alison Cerutti played beach for Brazil in 2012 (won silver), 2016 (won gold) and 2020 (5th place)

Phil Dalhausser played beach in 2008 (won gold), 2012 (ninth place), 2016 (fifth place), and 2020 (ninth place)

Paul Lotman played indoors in 2012 (fifth place) and was an alternate for the 2016 team

Taylor Sander played indoors in 2016 (won bronze) and 2020 (10th place)

Chaim Schalk played beach for Canada in 2016 (ninth place)

• Women with Olympic experience:

Larissa Maestrini played beach for Brazil in 2008 (fifth place), 2012 (won bronze) and 2016 (fourth place)

COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONS – The NCAA first sanctioned women's beach volleyball in 2016 and there have been seven national champions crowned since then (none in 2020 due to COVID). Southern Cal won the first two (in 2016 and 2017), then UCLA claimed the next two (2018 and 2019). After the one-year hiatus, Southern Cal, with coach Dain Blanton, have won the past three titles (2021, 2022 and 2023). Here is a look at the four women who competing in Hermosa Beach who have won a national championship, three of whom have won a pair of titles and one (Megan Kraft) has won three rings.

Hailey Harward (Southern Cal) 2021, 2022

Megan Kraft (Southern Cal) 2021, 2022, 2023

Zana Muno (UCLA) 2018, 2019

Savvy Simo (UCLA), 2018, 2019

SEEDINGS SCHMEEDINGS – On the men's side, the seedings do not seem to be a good indicator of who will win the tournament. Excluding Tour Series events, in the last 16 events just four times did the number one seed emerge victorious. Going back further, at the end of 2014 and start of 2015 top seeded Jake Gibb / Casey Patterson won four consecutive tournaments. However since then, the top seeds have won just 16 times in the 54 tournaments (again, excluding Tour Series).

SEEDINGS SUPREME – In New Orleans a rarity happened on the women's side; the top four seeds advanced to the semifinals and the top two seeds played for the title. The last time both of those things happened in the same tournament was in Santa Barbara in 2012, an event that featured pool play as opposed to the traditional double-elimination bracket. The last time that happened in a double-elimination bracket tournament was in Chicago 2009.

WILL THE REAL SLIM SHADY PLEASE STAND UP – Megan Rice (who played beach volleyball at Loyola Marymount and lives in Hermosa Beach, Calif.) made her pro beach volleyball debut in the qualifier in New Orleans, playing alongside former LSU beach volleyball player Kahlee York as the 14th-seeded team in the qualifier. Meanwhile on the other side of the bracket Megan Rice (who played beach volleyball at Florida Atlantic and lives in Highland Beach, Fla.) was the fourth seed in the qualifier with Macy Jerger but had to withdraw due to weather issues for her outbound flight. Both of the Megan Rices competed in the qualifier in Huntington Beach and in the main draws in both Virginia Beach and Denver, however they have yet to face each other. This weekend both will be playing in the main draw, with the Florida Rice as the 12th seed and the California Rice as the 13th seed. If both teams win their first match, or both teams lose their first match, they will meet on the court.

ALISON'S ACHIEVEMENTS – Three-time Brazilian Olympian Alison Cerutti is returning to the AVP this season, as he played in Glendale, Ariz. in 2009 with Harley Marques, finishing in second place. This will mark his fourth AVP event, but he has accomplished quite a bit since his last appearance. He has won a gold and bronze in his three Olympic appearances. On the Brazilian Tour, he has won 40 golds, 21 silvers and 19 bronzes. Last week he and Billy Allen won in Denver on the AVP Tour Series. His Brazilian Tour awards:

• Three-time Brazilian champion (2009, 2011, 2016)

• Four-time Super Praia champion (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017)

• Six-time Best Attacker (2009, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2019)

• Six-time Best Blocker (2009, 2010, 2011, 2016, 2017, 2018)

TWO TEEN TEAMMATES – The two youngest players this weekend (men or women) are 15-year old Sarah Wood and 17-year old Ashley Pater. Those two youngens also happen to be partners for the fourth time on the AVP. Pater advanced from the qualifier in Virginia Beach last year on the Tour Series, then in the 2023 season opener she advanced in Miami alongside another teenager, Kennedy Coakley. Wood made history in Muskegon 2022 on the Tour Series when she became the youngest player (men or women) to advance from an AVP qualifier as she was 14 years, 1 month and 16 days old, eclipsing the previous record by over two years.

MIAMI'S MEMORIES – The AVP began its season in mid-March, the earliest the Tour has begun its season since 1998. For the fourth time in the last eight AVP events (excluding Tour Series), both the men's and women's champions were number one seeds. Florida extended its lead of hosting season openers, with its 16th in the 40-year history of the AVP despite the fact this was the first time since 2014 that Florida has hosted an inaugural event.

- You aren't given a top seed, you have to earn it. And Taylor Crabb and Taylor Sander wanted to make sure people knew they earned their top billing. That is not to say they weren't tested however. In the third round they dropped a 21-14 first set to Timothy Brewster / Kyle Friend, but rebounded to win 23-21 in the third set after fending off five match points. In the semis, they again lost the first set but pulled out a 21-19 third-set win over Cody Caldwell / Chase Frishman, this time withstanding three match points. Chase Budinger and Miles Evans lost in the second round but then swept four straight opponents to reach the title match. In the first set the Taylors never trailed in winning 21-14. Budinger and Evans jumped out to early leads in the second set, 9-1 and 12-3, but the Taylors took control and won 21-19, extending their AVP match winning streak to 13 straight. Crabb had 15 kills with just one hitting error plus nine digs, while Sander had six blocks to go with nine kills and seven digs. Both players had two aces in the match. Budinger had 13 kills and one block, while Evans had 13 digs and three aces.

- Melissa Humana-Paredes / Brandie Wilkerson were playing together for just the second time on the AVP, but for the second straight time they advanced to the championship match. After losing to fifth-seeded Larissa Maestrini / Lili Maestrini in the third round, the duo responded with three straight sweeps including the championship match. Humana-Paredes entered Miami having won twice on the AVP Tour but both were in 2019, while Wilkerson had finished in second place four times but in Miami they were able to claim a victory. The stats bore out how they did it, as Wilkerson had 19 blocks and Humana-Paredes led all players with 92 digs and an average of 7.08 per set. In the title match they faced a first time partnership, Betsi Flint and Julia Scoles. Flint and Scoles followed nearly the same path, losing in the third round to the same team that Humana-Paredes / Wilkerson defeated in the semis, second seeded Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil. They then defeated Larissa / Lili in the semis. In the title match Humana-Paredes had 12 kills and 18 digs, while Wilkerson recorded 18 kills, 10 digs, two blocks and three aces. On the other side of the net Flint was limited to seven kills but had 19 digs, while Scoles had 21 kills.

#1 Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander def. #3 Chase Budinger / Miles Evans 21-14, 21-19 (:44)

#1 Melissa Humana-Paredes / Brandie Wilkerson def. #3 Betsi Flint / Julia Scoles 21-16, 24-22 (:53)

NEW ORLEANS NOTABLES – Contrary to rumors, Wilson did not pull its sponsorship of the AVP on Saturday afternoon in New Orleans when the giant Wilson ball went floating away from the site. Instead, it was due to the sudden and intense rain and wind storm that blew in, causing play to be halted at 12:40 pm and about 16 minutes later the ball was seen flying off. Play was resumed that evening at 6:00 pm with an extended night session and an earlier start on Sunday ensured the tournament was finished on time. This was the fourth time that New Orleans hosted an AVP tournament in which seeds were known (2015, 2016, 2022 and 2023), and all eight winning teams (men and women) were top seeds.

- Top seeds Tri Bourne and Chaim Schalk lost just one set en route to the championship match in what was their first AVP event as partners (they had played three international events together). The AVP was guaranteed to have a first-time team as the winner as the opponents were the newly-formed duo of Billy Allen and Troy Field. The third-seeded team also lost just one set in reaching the title match. In the first set, Allen and Field won 27-25 in what was the highest scoring set of a men's championship match since the 2019 season opener. In the next two sets the No. 1 seeds were nearly perfect, with just two hitting errors and three Bourne blocks in winning 21-12 and 15-10. For the match Bourne had 17 kills, two hitting errors and four blocks, while Schalk had 24 kills and 17 digs. Allen had 22 kills and 11 digs while Field added 16 kills, four blocks and 11 digs.

- The top four women's seeds advanced to the semifinals and the top two seeds played for the title. The last time both of those things happened in the same tournament was in Santa Barbara in 2012, an event that featured pool play as opposed to the traditional double-elimination bracket. The last time that happened in a double-elimination bracket tournament was in Chicago 2009. Kelly Cheng and Sara Hughes, the top seeds in the event, seemed to like blowouts in the first set, as their first set scores in the tournament were 21-8, 21-16, 10-21, 8-21 and 21-9. Despite trailing big twice they managed to go undefeated into the title match, where their opponents were a team that brought in a seven-match winning streak, Melissa Humana-Paredes and Brandie Wilkerson. That duo was playing for the title for the third time in as many AVP events as partners. Clearly the day belonged to Cheng and Hughes, who combined for just two hitting errors in the match. Cheng had 17 kills, two blocks and three aces, while Hughes had 13 kills and 14 digs. Humana-Paredes finished with six kills and 10 digs, and Wilkerson had seven kills and one block.

#1 Tri Bourne / Chaim Schalk def. #3 Billy Allen / Troy Field 25-27, 21-12, 15-10 (1:00)

#1 Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes def. #2 Melissa Humana-Paredes / Brandie Wilkerson 21-9, 21-18 (:41)

2023 QUALIFIER LIST – In the season opener in Miami the highest seeded men’s qualifier team to advance to the main draw was seventh-seeded Ian Satterfield / Jake Urrutia. That marked just the second time since the start of the 2003 season that no team in the top six in the qualifiers managed to advance to the main draw on the AVP Tour. The other instance was in Hermosa Beach 2019, when the seventh seeds were also the highest seeded team to advance. The women in Miami included a pair of teenagers. Entering Huntington Beach the women’s number one seed in the qualifier has advanced in nine consecutive tournaments (including Tour Series). 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:

MIAMI - Men (Onsite Qualifier)

Ian Satterfield / Jake Urrutia (Q7) – 9th
 Alex Diaz / Brandon Joyner (Q9) – 9th
 Peter Connole / Steven Roschitz (Q13) – 13th
 Jordan Hoppe / Charlie Siragusa (Q19) – 13th
No seed 6th or better qualified for 2nd time ever

MIAMI - Women (Onsite Qualifier)

Aurora Davis / Megan Gebhard (Q1) – 13th
 Kennedy Coakley / Ashley Pater (Q4) – 13th
 Katie Hogan / Katie Pyles (Q6) – 13th
 Amy Ozee / Mariah Whalen (Q7) – 13th
17-year olds Coakley and Pater qualified

NEW ORLEANS - Men (Onsite Qualifier)

Andrew Dentler / Jacob Landel (Q2) – 9th
 Ian Satterfield / Jake Urrutia (Q4) – 9th
 Djordje Klasnic / Brian Miller (Q6) – 7th
 Noah Dyer / Wyatt Harrison (Q8) – 13th
Satterfield / Urrutia qualify for 2nd straight time

NEW ORLEANS - Women (Onsite Qualifier)

Brook Bauer / Katie Horton (Q1) – 13th
 Kimberly Hildreth / Teegan Van Gunst (Q2) – 7th
 Jessica Gaffney / Kelly Reeves (Q3) – 9th
 Aurora Davis / Lydia Smith (Q5) – 13th
4th seeds forfeited, all other top seeds advance

BIRTHDAYS – No players will celebrate their birthdays during this week’s AVP tournament. In fact, just two players have July birthdays (Lev Priima and Ashley Pater).

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE – So far this season, 14 different teams (seven men, seven women) comprised of players who usually play on the AVP Tour have been to a semifinal on the World Pro Beach Volleyball Tour or NORCECA. The men have won two golds, one silver and three bronze medals, while the women have won four golds, three silvers and two bronze medals. This weekend there is an Elite 16 event in Gstaad, Switzerland where several AVP teams are competing. Andy Benesh / Miles Partain is the only men’s team, but several women are playing. Sarah Pavan lost in the qualifier, but Betsi Flint / Julia Scoles, Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil, Melissa Humana-Paredes / Brandie Wilkerson, Taryn Kloth Kristen Nuss, and Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes are all in the main draw.

• Here is a look at players and teams who competed on the AVP Tour which have been in the semifinals of an international event this year.

MEN

Dave McKenzie / Ben Vaught – Bronze Medal – Mount Maunganui, New Zealand – March 19
 Jordan Hoppe / Charlie Siragusa – Bronze Medal – Coolangatta, Australia – April 2
 Ian Satterfield / Jake Urrutia – 4th Place – Tahiti, French Polynesia – April 8
 Chase Budinger / Miles Evans – Silver Medal – Saquarema, Brazil – April 16
 Andy Benesh / Miles Partain – 4th Place – Saquarema, Brazil – April 16
 Cody Caldwell / Chase Frishman – Gold Medal – Aquascalientes, Mexico (NORCECA) – April 23
 Andy Benesh / Miles Partain – Bronze Medal – Ostrava, Czech Republic – June 4
 Evan Cory / Troy Field – Gold Medal – Helsinki, Finland – July 2

WOMEN

Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss – Gold Medal – La Paz, Mexico – March 19
 Toni Rodriguez / Savvy Simo – Silver Medal – La Paz, Mexico – March 19
 Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes – Gold Medal - Tepic, Mexico – March 26
 Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil – Bronze Medal – Itapema, Brazil – April 9
 Carly Skjodt / Geena Urango – Silver Medal – Aquascalientes, Mexico (NORCECA) – April 23
 Katie Lindstrom / Teegan Van Gunst – 4th Place – Aquascalientes, Mexico (NORCECA) – April 23
 Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss – Gold Medal – Uberlandia, Brazil – April 30
 Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes – 4th Place – Uberlandia, Brazil – April 30
 Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil – Silver Medal – Ostrava, Czech Republic – June 4
 Melissa Humana-Paredes / Brandie Wilkerson – Bronze Medal – Ostrava, Czech Republic – June 4
 Melissa Humana-Paredes / Brandie Wilkerson – Gold Medal – Jurmala, Latvia – June 18

UP NEXT – After beginning the season with a mix of Pro Series and Tour Series events, the AVP Tour will feature three consecutive Gold Series tournaments. The first is in Atlanta from August 4-6, and will feature a 16-team draw in both genders and \$300,000 in prize money.