



2023 AVP PRO BEACH VOLLEYBALL TOUR

Season Event #3 • Pro Series #3

Huntington Beach, California • May 18 – 21, 2023

ABOUT THE TOURNAMENT – After a pair of events in the southeast to begin the season, the AVP has the first of four events in California with a Pro Series tournament in Huntington Beach. This is the third 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 \$1,600,000 before the Championships.

- The main draw will be a 16-team, double elimination format. Twelve 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). The remaining four teams in each gender will earn a spot via the qualifier tournament, a single elimination event on Thursday, May 18. There are 32 teams in each gender in the qualifiers, which will each have 28 matches to determine the final four spots in the main draw. The main draw begins on Friday, May 19 and concludes on Sunday, May 21, and will be played on three courts at the Huntington 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 around 1:30 pm PT (men) and 2:30 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 on ESPNU on Monday, May 22 from 8-10 pm ET.

HUNTINGTON'S HEAD HONCHOS – Tri Bourne and Chaim Schalk made their AVP debut in New Orleans as the number one seed and won the title, and for the second straight event they will again be the top seeds. 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. Each of the first two AVP events in 2023 has been won by the number one-seeded team.

- Unlike the men, the number one seeds on the women's side, Kelly Cheng and Sara Hughes, have a long history as partners. The duo competed together in the 2013 FIVB U-19 World Championships, on the AVP Tour from 2014-2017, on the sand at Southern Cal for three seasons, then reunited late last year. Cheng is no stranger to being the top seed (twice in 2018, once in 2019, twice in 2022 and now twice in 2023). She won titles the last three times being seeded number one, in New Orleans 2022 with Betsi Flint, in Huntington Beach 2022 on the Tour Series with Hughes and in New Orleans 2023 with Hughes. Hughes won titles the first two times she was the top seed (in 2018 with Summer Ross), and was a number one seed a total of three times in 2018. In her last three events she played in 2022, Hughes was the top seed each time, culminating in the win in Huntington Beach on the Tour Series then she won in New Orleans 2023 as the top seed. Huntington Beach marks the fifth straight AVP tournament (including one Tour series event) that Hughes has been seeded number one.

HOMETOWN HEROES –

- There are five men's players who list Huntington Beach as their current residence:
Cole Aidnik, Brice Paxson, Ed Ratledge, Taylor Sander, Ben Vaught
- There are no men's players who currently live in a different city but list their hometown as Huntington Beach
- Of the colleges known, there are no men's player who attended a college in Huntington Beach
- There is one women's player who lists Huntington Beach as her current residence:
Xolani Hodel
- There are no women's players who currently live in a different city but list their hometown as Huntington Beach
- Of the colleges known, there are no women's player who attended a college in Huntington Beach

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>Huntington Beach is fourth most frequented stop in AVP history; first of four California stops on 2023 Tour</i>		
June 9 – 11	Virginia Beach, Virginia	Pool play & 18-team single elimination	\$20,000
	<i>Just the third time since 2002 that the AVP has a tournament in Virginia (along with 2010 and 2022)</i>		
June 30 – July 2	Denver, Colorado	Pool play & 18-team single elimination	\$20,000
	<i>Only two previous AVP events in Denver were in 1987 and 2022; this will be second time in Colorado since 2008</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>		

250 AT 5280 – When the AVP takes the tour to new heights (5,280 feet to be exact) in Denver in early July, it will mark the 250th women's tournament in the history of the AVP. The women have played in 23 different states over the years. All AVP events since August 2001 have been dual gender, a streak of 196 events coming into the 2023 season. There were 10 seasons, all between 1987 and 1998, in which the women had no AVP tournaments (during that span there was a women's only tour, the WPVA). Entering this season there have been 64 different women win an AVP title (including Tour Series), with Kerri Walsh Jennings (77) and Misty May-Treanor (66) leading the pack. A total of 10 different women have won at least 10 AVP titles.

HUNTINGTON BEACH HISTORY – Huntington Beach has previously hosted 22 men's and 26 women's events. The men have had a stop on the AVP Tour every year from 2000-2017 (the first two events here were different tours as was the one in 2012), while the women had eight years of events on other tours before the AVP made it an annual stop from 2002-2017, with the 2012 event coming on a different tour.

- Across all the different tours, each of the first 10 men's tournaments had been won by different teams before Phil Dalhausser and Todd Rogers claimed their second title in 2008. That duo won four times in Huntington Beach, and no other team had been able to win more than once before 2016 when Jake Gibb / Casey Patterson claimed their second title in three years here. Karch Kiraly won three times including 2005, which marked the final victory in Kiraly's career, and he set a record for being the oldest to win an event at 44 years and 9 months. His win in 2003, with Brent Doble, retains the mark as the oldest team to win a tournament (just shy of 76 years, 5 months of age). Despite the numerous tournaments in Huntington Beach, only five players have won multiple times. The 2004 victors were Jason Ring / George Roumain, whose title was the only one in their careers, while in 2011 Matt Prosser won his only tournament. In 2013 Theo Brunner won his first AVP title, while in 2015 John Hyden's win with Tri Bourne established him as the second oldest player to win an event (42 years, 11 months). At least one Olympian (beach or indoors) has been on the winning team in Huntington Beach in all but six of the past men's events across all tours.

- The women have had 18 different winning teams, with four teams winning at least twice. Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh Jennings won five times, and three other teams won twice. The title by Holly McPeak / Elaine Youngs was in their first tournament playing together, the first of their 10 wins as a team. In 1989, McPeak played here and finished 17th, marking the only time in her career she had a finish as low as 17th in a domestic event. The 2010 win by Jennifer Kessy was her 15th overall win (seventh domestic), but her first time winning in SoCal. In 2013 Jennifer Fopma and Brooke Sweat each chalked up their first AVP titles here. April Ross won five titles here, the most in any domestic location for the three-time Olympian. In 22 of the 25 team events across all tours, the winning team contained at least one Olympian.

- Here are the results of all of the tournaments held in Huntington Beach:

MEN – AVP events (2022 was a Tour Series event)

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
2000	Canyon Ceman / Brian Lewis	Adam Johnson / Karch Kiraly	Eduardo Bacil / Fred Souza	Matt Unger / Mike Whitmarsh
2001	Scott Ayakatabby / Eduardo Bacil	Canyon Ceman / Mike Whitmarsh	Nick Hannemann / Adam Jewell	Mike Lambert / Collin Smith
2002	Eric Fonoimoana / Dax Holdren	Canyon Ceman / Mike Whitmarsh	Brent Doble / Karch Kiraly	[3rd] Stein Metzger / Kevin Wong
2003	Brent Doble / Karch Kiraly	Todd Rogers / Sean Scott	Sean Rosenthal / Larry Witt	[3rd] Scott Ayakatabby / Brian Lewis
2004	Jason Ring / George Roumain	Sean Rosenthal / Larry Witt	Dain Blanton / Jeff Nygaard	[3rd] Karch Kiraly / Mike Lambert
2005	Karch Kiraly / Mike Lambert	Sean Rosenthal / Larry Witt	Jake Gibb / Stein Metzger	[3rd] Todd Rogers / Sean Scott
2006	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	Brent Doble / Ryan Mariano	Mike Lambert / Stein Metzger	[3rd] John Hyden / Jeff Nygaard
2007	Mike Lambert / Stein Metzger	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	[3rd] John Hyden / Brad Keenan
2008	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	John Hyden / Brad Keenan	Matt Fuerbringer / Casey Jennings	[3rd] Stein Metzger / Mark Williams
2009	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	Matt Olson / Kevin Wong	[3rd] John Hyden / Sean Scott
2010	Phil Dalhausser / Todd Rogers	John Hyden / Sean Scott	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	[3rd] Casey Patterson / Kevin Wong
2011	Matt Olson / Matt Prosser	John Hyden / Sean Scott	Nick Lucena / Stein Metzger	[3rd] Jake Gibb / Ty Loomis
2013	Theo Brunner / Nick Lucena	Tri Bourne / John Hyden	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	[3rd] Brad Keenan / John Mayer
2014	Jake Gibb / Casey Patterson	Tri Bourne / John Hyden	Adrian Carambula / Stafford Slick	[3rd] Ryan Doherty / Nick Lucena
2015	Tri Bourne / John Hyden	Ryan Doherty / John Mayer	Jake Gibb / Casey Patterson	[3rd] Taylor Crabb / Trevor Crabb
2016	Jake Gibb / Casey Patterson	Taylor Crabb / Trevor Crabb	Ryan Doherty / John Mayer	[3rd] Billy Allen / Theo Brunner
2017	Phil Dalhausser / Nick Lucena	Ryan Doherty / John Hyden	Theo Brunner / Casey Patterson	[3rd] Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb
2019	Taylor Crabb / Jake Gibb	Chase Budinger / Casey Patterson	Tim Bomgren / Troy Field	[3rd] Tri Bourne / Trevor Crabb
2022	Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander	Avery Drost / Chase Frishman	Billy Kolinske / Silila Tucker	[3rd] Seain Cook / Logan Webber

MEN – non AVP events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
1975	Greg Lee / Jim Menges	Mike Carey / Dennis Hare	Gary Hooper / Marshall Savage	Bob Jackson / Ron Von Hagen
1999	Adam Johnson / Karch Kiraly	Carl Henkel / Kevin Wong	Rob Heidger / Sinjin Smith	Brent Doble / Lee LeGrande
2012	John Hyden / Sean Scott	Jake Gibb / Sean Rosenthal	Ryan Doherty / Casey Patterson	[3rd] Brad Keenan / John Mayer

WOMEN – AVP events (2022 was a Tour Series event)

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd
2002	Holly McPeak / Elaine Youngs	Barbra Fontana/Dianne DeNecochea	Annett Davis / Jenny Johnson Jordan	Lisa Arce / Linda Hanley
2003	Misty May-Treanor/Kerri Walsh	Holly McPeak / Elaine Youngs	Annett Davis / Jenny Johnson Jordan	Jen Meredith/Wendy Stammer
2004	Misty May-Treanor/Kerri Walsh	Barbra Fontana / Jennifer Kessy	Angie Akers / Rachel Wacholder	Carrie Dodd/Nancy Mason
2005	Rachel Wacholder/Elaine Youngs	Misty May-Treanor/Kerri Walsh	Dianne DeNecochea / Tammy Leibl	Jennifer Kessy/Holly McPeak
2006	Misty May-Treanor/Kerri Walsh	Rachel Wacholder/Elaine Youngs	Nicole Branagh / Holly McPeak	Mimi Amaral/Tatiana Minello
2007	Misty May-Treanor/Kerri Walsh	Nicole Branagh / Elaine Youngs	Tyra Turner / Rachel Wacholder	Jennifer Kessy / April Ross
2008	Misty May-Treanor/Kerri Walsh	Tyra Turner / Rachel Wacholder	Annett Davis / Jenny Johnson Jordan	Nicole Branagh/Elaine Youngs

WOMEN – AVP events (2022 was a Tour Series event) continued

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd
2009	Nicole Branagh / Elaine Youngs	Jennifer Kessy / April Ross	Annett Davis / Jenny Johnson Jordan	Brooke Hanson / Lisa Rutledge
2010	Jennifer Kessy / April Ross	Nicole Branagh / Misty May-Treanor	Rachel Scott / Elaine Youngs	Angie Akers / Tyra Turner
2011	Lauren Fendrick / Brooke Niles	Jenny Kropp / Whitney Pavlik	Kristen Batt / Brooke Sweat	Angie Akers / Nicole Branagh

WOMEN – AVP events cont'd

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
2013	Jennifer Fopma / Brooke Sweat	Lauren Fendrick/Brittany Hochevar	April Ross/Kerri Walsh Jennings	Emily Day / Summer Ross
2014	April Ross / Kerri Walsh Jennings	Heather McGuire / Whitney Pavlik	Lauren Fendrick/ Brooke Sweat	Lane Carico / Kim DiCello
2015	Lauren Fendrick / April Ross	Nicole Branagh / Jenny Kropp	Brittany Hochevar / Misty May-Treanor	Emily Day / Jennifer Kessy
2016	April Ross / Kerri Walsh Jennings	Angela Bensed / Geena Urango	Kim DiCello / Kendra Van Zwieten	Lane Carico / Summer Ross
2017	Emily Day / Brittany Hochevar	Betsi Flint / Kelley Larsen	Lane Carico / Lauren Fendrick	Whitney Pavlik / April Ross
2019	Alix Klineman / April Ross	Melissa Humana-Paredes/Sarah Pavan	Emily Capers / Betsi Flint	Sara Hughes/Summer Ross
2022	Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes	Brook Bauer / Katie Horton	Kimberly Hildreth / Karolina Marciniak	Kaitlyn Malaney / Molly Turner

WOMEN – non AVP events

Year	1st	2nd	3rd	3rd / 4th
1989	Patty Dodd / Jackie Silva	Nina Matthies / Elaine Roque	Judy Bellomo / Lisa Strand Ma'a	Gail Castro Kehl / Lori Forsythe
1989	Patty Dodd / Jackie Silva	Linda Chisholm / Janice Harrer	Nina Matthies / Elaine Roque	Dale Hall / Karolyn Kirby
1990	Patty Dodd / Karolyn Kirby	Janice Harrer / Jackie Silva	Linda Chisholm / Linda Hanley	Nina Matthies / Elaine Roque
1995	Holly McPeak / Nancy Reno	Linda Hanley / Karolyn Kirby	Liz Masakayan / Angela Rock	Lisa Arce / Patty Dodd
1996	Lisa Arce / Holly McPeak	Barbra Fontana / Linda Hanley	Patty Dodd / Christine Podraza	Krista Bloomquist/Danalee Bragado
1997	Lisa Arce / Holly McPeak	Barbra Fontana / Linda Hanley	Linda Chisholm / Deb Richardson	Marla O'Hara / Ali Wood
1998	Lisa Arce	Angela Rock	Barbra Fontana	[3rd] Holly McPeak
1999	Lisa Arce / Barbra Fontana	Annett Davis / Jenny Johnson Jordan	Liz Masakayan / Elaine Youngs	Holly McPeak / Nancy Reno
2012	Jenny Kropp / Whitney Pavlik	Lauren Fendrick / Rachel Scott	Jennifer Fopma / Brooke Sweat	[3rd] Brooke Niles / Tyra Turner

HUNTINGTON BEACH SAND BITS – Of the 88 men's players competing this weekend (and of the information known), there are three teenagers competing with the youngest being 18-year olds Zephyr Dew and Thomas Hurst, and 19-year olds Gage Basey, and four players in their 40's (Jon Mesko 46, Ed Ratledge 46, Phil Dalhausser 43, Billy Allen 41). Of the heights known, the shortest is Diego Perez (5'11") while at the other end of the spectrum are three 6'9" players (Andy Benesh, Phil Dalhausser and Charlie Siragusa). The players with the most experience are Phil Dalhausser, Ed Ratledge and Billy Allen, while Cole Pender is making his pro beach volleyball debut. Phil Dalhausser, with 62 AVP titles, has the most of any player here, and is more than the total number of tournaments (on all tours) played for all but 17 players. Following Dalhausser is Taylor Crabb (11 AVP wins plus an AVP Tour Series win) and Tri Bourne (nine AVP wins). Out of 44 partnerships, 18 are competing together for the very first time and only four have played together 10 or more times before Huntington Beach (Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander, Timothy Brewster / Kyle Friend, Peter Connole / Steven Roschitz and Evan Cory / Logan Webber). The two teams that have previously won on the AVP Tour are Taylor Crabb / Taylor Sander (two AVP titles plus a Tour Series title) and Tri Bourne / Chaim Schalk.

• There are 88 women playing this weekend, and of the information known there are three teenagers (15-year old Sarah Wood, 17-year old Ashley Pater and 19-year old Bailey Showalter). On the flip side, Larissa Maestrini (41 years old), Melanie Fleig (40) and Maria Clara Salgado (40) are the three oldest. Katie Lindstrom (5'4"), Lisa Reed (5'5") and Katie Spieler (5'5") are the shortest competitors, while at the other end of the spectrum are 6'5" Sarah Pavan and three 6'4" players (Katie Hogan, Taryn Kloth and Jennifer Keddy). Ella Gray is the only female making her pro beach volleyball debut. Eleven players have played in more than 100 tournaments, and six of them were born outside of the U.S. (Maria Clara Salgado, Larissa Maestrini, Melissa Humana-Paredes, Sarah Pavan, Brandie Wilkerson and Lili Maestrini). 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). Betsi Flint leads the field with six AVP victories while Sara Hughes has five AVP wins plus a Tour Series victory. Of the 44 women's tandems, 17 are playing alongside each other for the first time while the most experienced are Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes, Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil, Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss and Corinne Quiggle / Sarah Schermerhorn. There are five teams competing here which have previously won on the AVP Tour as partners: Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss (four AVP wins), Kelly Cheng / Sara Hughes (two AVP wins plus a Tour Series win), Terese Cannon / Sarah Sponcil (one AVP win) and Melissa Humana-Paredes / Brandie Wilkerson (one AVP win), and Larissa / Lili (three Tour Series titles).

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. This weekend will put that total over 300, while 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).

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 six 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).

THE CRABBS' CROWNS – In five of the last six AVP events held (including the Tour Series), one of the Crabb brothers has won the title. Taylor Crabb has won last four, while his older brother Trevor won once in that span. Starting with the Huntington Beach Open in 2016, there have been 47 AVP events (excluding Tour Series), one of the Crabb brothers has won 17 times. Furthermore, an additional 15 tournaments featured one of the Crabbs in the title match (finishing second). In total, out of those 47 events, just 15 did not have a Crabb playing in the championship 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 18 events and 13 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 18 championship matches, there were 17 unique matchups, as only Tri Bourne / Trevor Crabb vs Theo Brunner / Chaim Schalk was featured twice.

- Not to be outdone, the women also had 13 different teams claim a title in that same span of 18 tournaments. Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss and Larissa Maestrini / Lili Maestrini had three wins each but two other players, Kelly Cheng and Sara Hughes, also won three times in that span. Just like the men, in the 18 championship matches, there were 17 unique matchups, as only Kelly Cheng / Betsi Flint vs. Taryn Kloth / Kristen Nuss was featured twice.

CALIFORNIA DREAMING – 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.

- On the women's side, the number one-seeded team generally wins in California. In the past 24 events (including the 2022 Tour Series event in Huntington Beach), the top seeds have won the tournament 18 times. And in the six other events the top seeds played in the championship match four times. There have been 78 California events since 1999 and in 77 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 67 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. Veronica and Victoria Corcoran are twin sisters that are playing in the qualifier, marking their fifth AVP event as partners. The Corcorans both played beach volleyball at the University of New Orleans. Taylor and Trevor Crabb are brothers who were partners for 12 AVP events, finishing second three times and third six times. Chase and Duncan Budinger are brothers who have never played as partners. Chase is in the main draw while Duncan is in the qualifier.

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 eight 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 10 of their last 18 championship matches go to a third set.

OLYMPICALITY – This week's AVP event features 12 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 bronze) 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:

Kelly Cheng played beach in 2020 (fifth place)

Melissa Humana-Paredes played beach in 2020 for Canada (fifth place)

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

Sarah Pavan played beach for Canada in 2016 (fifth place) and 2020 (fifth place)

Sarah Sponcil played beach in 2020 (ninth place)

Brandie Wilkerson played beach in 2020 for Canada (fifth 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 10 women who competing in Huntington Beach who have won a national championship, nine of whom have won a pair of titles and one (Megan Kraft) has won three rings.

Terese Cannon (Southern Cal) 2016, 2017

Kelly Cheng (Southern Cal) 2016, 2017

Hailey Harward (Southern Cal) 2021, 2022

Sara Hughes (Southern Cal) 2016, 2017

Megan Kraft (Southern Cal) 2021, 2022, 2023

Zana Muno (UCLA) 2018, 2019

Julia Scoles (Southern Cal) 2021, 2022

Savvy Simo (UCLA), 2018, 2019

Sarah Sponcil (UCLA), 2018, 2019

Allie Wheeler (Southern Cal) 2016, 2017

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 15 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 53 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. In Huntington Beach both of the Megan Rices will be competing in the qualifier but will not meet in the qualifier.

ALISON'S ACHIEVEMENTS – Three-time Brazilian Olympian Alison Cerutti is returning to the AVP, as he played in Glendale, Ariz. in 2009 with Harley Marques, finishing in second place. This will mark his second 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. 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, as much as info is known) are 15-year old Sarah Wood and 17-year old Ashley Pater. Those two youngens also happen to be partners for the first 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.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE – So far this season, 13 different teams (six 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 one gold, one silver and two bronze medals, while the women have won three golds, two silvers and one bronze medal. This weekend there is a Futures event in Madrid, Spain where a U.S. tandem is playing, Logan Beitler and Jessica McGuire.

• 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

WOMEN

Tina Gaudina / Anastasija Samoilova – 4th Place – Doha, Qatar – February 5
 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

UP NEXT – After beginning the season with three straight Pro Series the AVP Tour switches gears and has three consecutive Tour Series events. The first of those will be in Virginia Beach June 9-11. The 24-team draws have on-site qualifiers and the top teams will lock in berths in the Hermosa Beach main draw.