Manhattan Beach – Semifinal Notes

Men's general semifinal notes

- The past two years in Manhattan Beach have been all about the favorites; last year the top four seeds were in the semifinals while in 2024 it was seeds 1, 2, 3 and 5… #12 Gage Basey / Thomas Hurst tie for the 3rd lowest seeds to make the Manhattan Beach semifinals
    - #26 (qualifier #8) Eric Beranek / Billy Kolinske in 2019 (placed 3rd)
    - #13 Taylor Crabb / Trevor Crabb in 2015 (placed 3rd)
    - #12 Cody Caldwell / Seain Cook in 2023 (placed 3rd)
- With seeds 6 and 12 playing in one semifinal, there is guaranteed to be the lowest seeded team in the finals of Manhattan Beach since at least 2014 (#6 Phil Dalhausser / Sean Rosenthal won)… if #12 Gage Basey / Thomas Hurst advance to the finals they will become the lowest seeded team ever to play for the title here
- Lotman and Schalk are both 40 years old… the only 3 40-year olds to win in Manhattan Beach under the AVP umbrella are Karch Kiraly in 2004 (43 years old), Jake Gibb in 2016 (40) and Reid Priddy in 2019 (41)
- With the #1 seed getting knocked out prior to the semifinals, this marks the first Manhattan Beach Open since 2017 with the top seed in the semifinals
- In the 23 years in which seeds were known in Manhattan Beach, a team coming from the contender's bracket has won 7 times (last times were in 2021 and 2023)
- Each of the last 6 Manhattan Beach Open championship matches have been sweeps (2018 was the last three-set match)

#2 Andy Benesh / Taylor Crabb

- Between AVP and League, Benesh / Crabb are 16-1 this season with 15 of those wins in sweeps
- In their 8 sets in Manhattan Beach this weekend they are winning by an average of 21.0 to 15.1
- In Huntington Beach 2026 they won in their first AVP event ever… excluding Contender Series events, the last time a men's team won when playing together on the AVP for the first time as partners was in Huntington Beach 2023 (Andy Benesh / Miles Partain)
- Benesh on the AVP Tour (not League) has now won his last 18 matches in 17 by sweeps
- Benesh has played in the championship match in each of his last 7 AVP tournaments entering Manhattan Beach
- Crabb enters the semifinals with a 46-16 (.742) all time match record in Manhattan Beach

#3 Chaim Schalk / James Shaw

- This duo is one of just 5 to play in both last year's and this year's Manhattan Beach Open, and the only one of those to finish 13th or better both times
- 5 of their 6 Manhattan Beach matches have gone 3 sets… they are 6-0 in second sets here… in the AVP League this season 5 of their 6 matches went 3 sets
- Schalk this season has played 29 matches between the AVP Tour, League and the World Tour (with 4 different partners)… of those 29 matches 20 have gone to a third set
- Shaw is playing in his 12th AVP tournament and looking for his first championship match appearance

#6 Paul Lotman / Miles Partain

- They have played more AVP tournaments together (this is their 14th) than any other semifinal team, they haven't played in a beach event (i.e. non-League) since September 2022
- In the League this season they started 7-4 in matches but then went 1-8 and missed the playoffs
- The duo enters this match having just played the tournament's top three seeds in their last 3 matches
- Lotman is playing in his 53rd AVP tournament in his career… his only 2 title matches have come alongside Partain (won in Atlanta 2022 and placed 2nd in Phoenix 2022 in his last outing with Partain)
- Lotman since the start of the 2025 season has played 9 AVP tournaments with 8 different partners
- Across all tours Partain has played 38 events with other players in the semifinals (34 with Benesh, 4 with Shaw) and just 16 with his current partner Lotman

#12 Gage Basey / Thomas Hurst

- The duo is playing in their 9th AVP event together and have won 3 times (on the Contender Series) and this marks their 5th AVP semifinal
- They first played together in the 2021 FIVB U-19 World Championships… since then they have played together in 5 of the 6 seasons (all but 2022)
- They are trying to become the lowest seeded team to play in an AVP final since Honolulu 2019 (#12 Theo Brunner / John Hyden placed 2nd) and the lowest to win an AVP event since Cincinnati 2005 (#12 John Hyden / Mike Lambert)
- They are the only duo in this year's semifinals which does not have an Olympian on the roster
- Entering the Manhattan Beach semifinals the duo has won 10 straight AVP matches (and 13 of the last 14), including Contender Series
- The duo is 21-2 against all other teams in the Manhattan Beach field (lost to Derek Bradford / Evan Cory and Cody Caldwell / Jacob LaBouliere)
- Basey was 1-6 on the AVP Tour against Olympians (beach or indoors) coming into Manhattan Beach… he is coming off a win against a pair of Olympians (Miles Evans and Alex Ranghieri) is looking to chalk up a second straight win against Paul Lotman / Miles Partain
- Hurst is playing in his 22nd AVP event (including Contender Series)… eight of his top 10 finishes have come with Basey