Manhattan Beach – Championship Notes

Women's general championship notes

- We have had 21 years of Manhattan Beach Opens in which seeds were known before this year… the #1 seed has won each of the last 3 years and 13 times in total in that span… there have only been 4 AVP title matches here since 2001 that DID NOT include the top seeds (2004, 2013, 2017 and 2022) and all 4 times the top seeds finished in third place
- Each of the last 2 years the winning team in Manhattan Beach were undefeated in the tournament (as opposed to coming through the contender's bracket)… there have been 5 champions since 2001 who suffered a defeat yet won the title (in 2008, 2013, 2016, 2022 and 2023)
- Brasher / Cruz have won the last 2 Manhattan Beach Opens and are trying to join a short list of teams to three-peat here:
    - Kathy Gregory / Miki McFadden 4 in a row (1975-1978)
    - Linda Chisholm / Jackie Silva 3 in a row (1987-88)
    - Misty May-Treanor / Kerri Walsh Jennings 4 in a row (2005-08)
- 7 of the last 11 women's title matches here have gone three sets and each of the last 2 years the team losing the first set came back to win the match (both times done by Taryn Brasher / Kristen Cruz)
- This marks the 8th time that Manhattan Beach championship match has featured the event's top two seeds… #1 seeds are 6-1 in those

#1 Kristen Cruz / Taryn Brasher

- Including this weekend, the duo has played in the championship match in 8 of their last 9 AVP events
- In Huntington Beach this year 3 of their 4 matches went three sets… this weekend they have swept 4 of their 5 opponents
- Entering the title match they have won their last 17 Manhattan Beach matches (Misty May-Treanor and Kerri Walsh Jennings won 21 in a row during their 4 in a row streak from 2005-2008)
- The duo's record in 2026 by tour:
    - AVP 8-1 match record (6 wins by sweeps)
    - World Tour 25-1 match record (18 wins by sweeps)
    - AVP League 11-8 match record (3 wins by sweeps)
- All time on the AVP Tour they are 90-20 (82%) in matches, 73-5 (94%) when winning the first set, and 29-10 (74%) in third sets

#2 Kelly Cheng / Megan Kraft

- As partners on the AVP they are 8-1 in matches, with the only loss to a Brazilian team (Thamela Coradello / Victoria Lopes)
- This weekend the duo is 10-1 in sets and they have held opponents to 16 or fewer points in 8 of 10 first and second sets
- The duo is seeded 2nd here and the championship match will be their first one against a team seeded 11th or better (faced #31, #18, #26, #14 and #12)
- One of these two players has played in the Manhattan Beach semifinals every year since 2017 (Cheng in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, Kraft in 2023, Cheng in 2024, Kraft in 2025)
- Cheng has played at least 3 AVP events with 4 different partners, and 3 of them have their name on the pier (Sara Hughes, Betsi Flint and Brittany Hochevar… Sarah Marmelstein is the only one who does not)
- Kraft has won 10 of her last 11 matches played in Manhattan Beach, with the loss coming against Brasher / Cruz in the 2025 semifinals
- At 23 years old, Kraft could become the 2nd youngest player (men or women) to ever win in Manhattan Beach under the APV umbrella… the youngest was Kent Steffes in 1991 (two weeks after he turned 23)