

Florida Region (USAV) FloridaVolleyball.org
Vol-eNews
 The official source for Florida volleyball news!

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WELCOME NOTE FROM OFFICIAL'S CHAIR

Hello from your new Official's Chair. I am excited and a little anxious about this role. I am excited because I am part of one of the best USA Volleyball Regions and anxious because I am filling some very big shoes. Speaking of big shoes, I want to personally thank Michael Gale. Many of you know him to be one of the most accomplished officials in our region. Some of you may know him as a personal friend. What you probably didn't know is that over the last several years as Officials Chair, Mike managed to achieve a top rating as one of the country's newest international officials. He oversaw the establishment of a rating team, central assignments and doubling the number of officials in the region. I can only hope to have the same impact on our region that he did.

In preparation for the 2011 season, I want to hear some of your ideas for how we can make the Official's Division better. Be on the look-out for a link on the region website to submit your ideas. You can also email me: Doug@floridavolleyball.org.

See you on the courts!

Doug

Doug Darling
 Official's Chair
 Florida Region of USA Volleyball

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We are just returning from the 2010 USAV High Performance Championships that was held in Wisconsin Dells, WI. This year we took 5 all-star teams (3 girls and 2 boys) and brought home a gold medal! Our Girl's International Youth team, lead by Head Coach Lynze Roos went 6-1 in matches and 20-7 in sets over the 4 days of competition and were crowned as the HP Champions for their respective division.

For those of you that are not familiar with the USAV High Performance Championships, it is a mixed-gender event that takes place annually and has domestic and international teams competing in three age divisions: Junior, Youth, and Select. (Generally speaking the divisions are 17's-18's, 15's-16's, and 13's-14's respectively.) This year we had international teams from Puerto Rico, Peru, and Chile. Our delegation from Florida consisted of the following teams:

- 🏐 Women's International Junior
- 🏐 Girl's International Youth
- 🏐 Girl's National Select
- 🏐 Boy's International Youth
- 🏐 Boy's National Youth

In next month's Vol-eNews we will highlight the HP All-Star teams and their coaches. This month you get to learn more about Jason Kucera and the West Pasco Volleyball Club. In addition, we have also highlighted the JJVA 17N-Rox team that won a National Championship title (17-American) at the 2010 Girl's Jr. National Championships in Reno, NV.

Our beach season is winding down, but we still have two events scheduled for August: the East Coast Beach Nationals on Aug 7-8 and the USAV Jr. Beach National Tour Championships on Aug 22, both in Ft. Lauderdale. We hope you will make plans to join us.

As always, let us know how we are doing!

Steve

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CLUB HIGHLIGHT –WEST PASCO VOLLEYBALL CLUB

Each month a member club is featured in *Vol-eNews*. This is a great way to get to know the Club Director(s) and learn more about the clubs throughout Florida. This month **Jason Kucera** and **West Pasco Volleyball Club** will be highlighted.

Q: Tell us how you got started in volleyball?

A: Growing up in the Chicago area, I never had the opportunity to play volleyball for a school team because they didn't have a boy's volleyball program at my junior high or high school. I played all my volleyball at the intramural level both at the recreation level during high school and at Illinois State University. Luckily, for me, there was some quality volleyball being played in the area so I was exposed to playing the game the right way. However, I had to essentially teach myself the game. I remember watching men's beach volleyball on television when I was a kid and I was fascinated. Not only because of the way Karch and the others could play the game, but also because of the environment they were playing in. I was sitting in the suburbs in Chicago (most likely a cloudy day) and I was watching beach volleyball in the California sunshine! That's how I really got hooked. I think it's also why I am so excited about the Wolf Pack Beach Program that I started this summer.



Q: How long have you been coaching volleyball?

A: This season will be my 5th year of coaching volleyball. I am 31 years old and have been coaching all together for 14 years. I have coached track, baseball, football, tennis, softball, basketball, golf, soccer, etc. I have always loved coaching and playing volleyball and have enjoyed my experience with this sport more than all the other sports combined. Volleyball is truly a team sport. Everyone on the court needs to do their job or the team will be in trouble. There are a lot of team sports where you can "hide" a player who isn't up to par, but not in volleyball. I think that when volleyball is played properly and smoothly, there is no sport that compares to it. I think that my experience with coaching several other sports is an advantage when coaching volleyball. I feel that I can relate very well to kids who play or have played other sports. We have a lot of girls who also play basketball and softball so having coached those sports too; I feel that I can connect with those players on the adjustments needed for success on the volleyball court.

Q: What would you consider to be your biggest accomplishment in volleyball?

A: As a Coach and Club Director, my biggest accomplishment in volleyball by far is that I make the game fun for my players while expecting quality volleyball in return. I try to give the girls opportunities to play throughout the year (Indoor, Beach, Open Gyms, etc.) My goal in developing the West Pasco Volleyball Club (Wolf Pack) was to give the girls an affordable, yet very competitive place to play Club volleyball. This was the first

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season for the Wolf Pack and over 90% of my players had never played Club volleyball until this year. Not because they weren't good enough, but because they couldn't afford it. Our U15 team ended the USAV season ranked 32nd out of 100 teams. Giving the girls an opportunity to play is what I am most proud of.

Q: What motivated you to start a junior's club? Is coaching your full time obligation or do you hold any other job titles?

A: I am a full-time teacher at the local middle school where I coached volleyball for 4 years (I am now coaching volleyball at neighboring Mitchell High School in Trinity, FL). Several of the current Varsity players are girls who I had coached when they were in 7th/8th grades. Since our area didn't have a local club, the idea of starting a club would come up every season, but it seemed so daunting. This season, a parent brought in a form they had printed off of the USAVFL.ORG website "How to Start a Junior Club". It seemed simple enough and didn't cost too much so I got the ball rolling. I didn't realize at the time that it would become so important to me and my players. Starting the Wolf Pack was the greatest decision I ever made (or was encouraged to make!). I would like to thank the group of parents and players that helped to get the Wolf Pack started. If I didn't have such a strong relationship with these people, I would have never started a Club.

Q: What future plans do you have for your club?

A: The future of the Wolf Pack is really a story of 2 clubs, Indoor and Beach. As far as the Indoor Club is concerned, the goal is to develop as many "quality" teams as possible every year. When we walk into a tournament, I want people to say, "The West Pasco Wolf Pack is a great CLUB" with the emphasis on the word club. I want the entire club to be strong. Last season, we had 3 teams (U14, U15, and U16). This season, we may have as many as 6 teams. We will have two levels of teams this season. We will have our regular Wolf Pack Teams, which will play 7 tournaments in the Club Division (6 local, 1 Orlando), and we will have Wolf Pack Black Teams, which will play 10 Tournaments (mostly in Open Division). The "Black" teams will have 6 local tournaments, 3 overnight events in Florida and they will play in the Big South in Atlanta.

We recognize that many girls are hoping to play in college and the only way for them to be recognized by scouts is to play in Open tournaments and to travel to some quality events. For the integrity of the game and the integrity of the tournaments, I think it's important to keep a certain level of competence on the court from the player's and coaches standpoint. Sometimes, more is not necessarily better. As for Beach, our program was huge this summer and I want to see it grow as much as possible each summer. There were 34 Wolf Pack Beach girls this summer (more than my Indoor season!). I feel very strongly that since we are getting in on the USAV Beach Volleyball Program so early, we can become one of the biggest and best beach clubs in the state. The future of the Wolf Pack is strong and very exciting. I hope to see some new faces next season.

Q: What makes your club different from the others?

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A: I feel that the West Pasco Wolf Pack is unique in many ways. For starters, we are very affordable. Our fee for last season was \$525 which included 2 Mizuno uniforms, 6 tournaments, warm-up shirt, coaching, equipment, etc. Our fee for 2010-2011 will be around \$700 for 7 tournament, 2 uniforms, etc. I don't have a huge coaching staff and I don't have a lot of overhead fees. We do some fundraising and several local businesses support us as well. We competed against and often defeated clubs who charge 2, 3 and 4 times our fee. Because this is not my full time job, I don't rely on it to pay my personal bills. I just want the kids to have a place to play that is competitive and fun.

Our goal is to break the top-10 next season with at least one of our teams. As the Club Director, I also like to be accessible to everyone at anytime. I send weekly emails with any important information and I know all the kids very well and they know me because I am at all the practices. I also coach a team so I understand what is going on from the point of view of the kids, coaches, parents, etc. I am not someone who is behind the scenes who you never see. I think it's important for the growth of the club that I am visible and accessible at all times. I also have wonderful coaching staffs who work very hard for the good of the kids. Coach Brittnee Gibbs and Coach Chrissy Nafis took a chance with my new club and I couldn't have done it without them.

Q: If you could brag about your club, what would you say?

A: The compliment from opposing coaches and parents that I heard more than anything else throughout the season was how nice our girls are. The Wolf Pack players are respectful to the other team almost to a fault. They often feel bad to question a call even if they know they're right. They compete at a high level but they do so with respect for the game, and with a smile on their face. I would also brag about the dedication and enthusiasm of our players. They love to play and love to practice. I often run "optional" practices and everyone will show up. There are times when I mention to one or two players that if they can get a group together for beach volleyball, I'll go down and set my nets up. Within hours, they will have 8-12 girls ready to go.

It's an awesome experience working with these kids. They are the reason that I do this and it's nice to see them taking advantage of the opportunities offered to them. I hope that within a year or two, I will be bragging about the college scholarships that my players will be getting.

Q: Tell us about some of your outstanding outdoor athletes?

A: This is a tough one because I feel that all my girls work hard to be the best volleyball players they can be. Some girls who have had more success than others in tournaments, but I also have girls who have shown more individual growth, have become better servers, passers, hitters, teammates, etc.

The team that stands out in the Wolf Pack Beach program is:

TONI IMBIMBO/LOGAN MCGEE. They won an SSOVA beach tournament this summer, placed T-3rd (Open) at Siesta Key in May, placed 3rd (Club) at Clearwater Beach in June and went 4-1 at Siesta in July. Considering they will play in U16 again NEXT summer, I see some great things in their future. I am proud of all the Wolf Pack girls and I know that their hard work is paying off.

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Q: What do you look forward to in the future for the Florida Region?

A: I am very excited to be part of the Florida Region. After attending all the beach tournaments this summer and seeing over 150 beach teams at Siesta Key and Clearwater, then seeing over 190 teams at Siesta Key in July, I am blown away by the number of girls/boys interested in playing beach volleyball. As a club director, this is exciting because the sky is the limit and as a volleyball coach, it's exciting because I know it means that the quality of volleyball will only improve. I commend the Florida Region for their efforts in developing this Jr. Program. I think USAV is doing a great job and I am just happy to be along for the ride.

*Thanks Jason for participating in the Club Highlight. The Florida Region wishes you and your club continued success in the 2010 season! Stay tuned for next month's Club Highlight to learn about **Connie Denaburg** and **Cape Coast Volleyball Club**.*

FLORIDA COLLEGIATE VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE (FCVL)



The Florida Collegiate Volleyball League (FCVL) was formed to create more opportunities for men to play Club Volleyball at the collegiate level and eventually transition to being a scholarship sport in Florida.

The FCVL will be recognized by the National Collegiate Volleyball Federation (NCVF) as an official league. Currently, there are 13 other leagues/conferences across the US for men's college club volleyball and they offer a national championship tournament each year during the month of April or May.

Florida has 38 colleges that are eligible to participate in the FCVL. The plan would be to split Florida into three conferences: North, Central, and South Florida. All participating FCVL members would be required to have a USAV college membership in the Florida Region, which could potentially increase our membership each year as the league grows.

The FCVL will start in the Fall of 2010. For more information regarding the FCVL, please visit www.FloridaVolleyball.org and click on the FCVL Logo located on the Home page.

USA VOLLEYBALL HP CHAMPIONSHIPS RECAP

TEAM FLORIDA WINS GOLD IN WISCONSIN!



Congratulations to Girl's Youth International HP All-Star team on winning the GOLD at the 2010 USAV High Performance Championships!

Stay tuned for an in depth article in the September 2010 *Vol-eNews* newsletter.

BOY'S & GIRL'S JNC RECAP

The 31st Annual Boy's and Girl's Junior National Championships were held at The Reno Sparks Convention Center in Reno Tahoe, NV from June 24th – July 3rd. We would like to congratulate **JJVA 17N-Rox** for being crowned NATIONAL CHAMPIONS in the 17 American Division of the 2010 USAV Girl's Jr. National Championships! We would like to share some questions we asked Adis Imamovich, Head Coach of JJVA 17-N Rox, about his experience at the Jr. National Championships.

Q: How did you prepare for the Jr. National Championships?

A: The preparation started in December. We set goals in many areas: personal and team goals. As coaches we continued to revisit these goals during the season. We provided opportunities for practice, skills sessions, strength and conditioning, private lessons, and competition. The players pushed themselves and their team mates; we had solid leadership continuing to remind players of their responsibilities to attend all of these opportunities.

Q: What were some highlights from the JNC Tournament?

A: Walking to the convention center the day before we played, we just enjoyed the whole experience; we got our credentials and visited the courts we would be competing on day 1. We visited the championship court too. On the court, our match vs. Empire 17 Mizuno was intense. We split sets 1 and 2, and we were down 8-2 at the switch and never ever gave up, slowly coming back point by point and winning 15-13 was a huge boost for our team. We had so much energy and excitement. We also had a tough semi final vs. Southwest 17 Asics we won set 1 32-30 after missing 9 serves! Then they cranked on us set 2 defeating us 25-12 - yikes! We started set 3 point for point, but our passing was amazing allowing Kamryn to set whomever she wanted. She established the middles and then went outside and bam we won 15-11. It was a tremendous feeling! Walking onto center court was a great feeling too. We lined up in number order standing tall and walked right in front of FC Elites bench making our presence known. I believe we psyched them out some. We seemed in control from the first serve on. It was a great feeling to be in control of the final match. Winning was tremendous. The girls deserved it and worked hard for it.

Q: Can you tell us a little about the MVP and the two girls that made the All Tournament team?

A: Cari Whitmire had the tournament of her life. This was her first National Tourney. She just brought so much energy and competitive edge to our team! She was a real

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emotional leader. She is a small outside hitter (5-7) and had to work for every point at the net. She developed shots, dinks and WILLED the ball to drop. She understood her role on the team too. Mariah McCallum, our libero, had been to two National tournaments and expected to win this time. She knew what she had to do, running our serve receive and at times passing with only 2. She developed a great sense of calm and continued to make great dig after great dig sometimes it looked effortless. She handled the majority of serve receive and passed with great composure. Kamryn Sherman, our setter, had been to two National tournaments in the past. After losing the finals at the Big South, she and McCallum KNEW that they could WIN the American Division that was their consolation. Kamryn is an athletic setter who can move the ball around to a variety of hitters. She has improved her reading skills this year and was able to get our hitters many 1 on 1 situations. She is highly competitive and many times just went for the ace serve leading our team in aces. She was our leader and held everyone accountable for their responsibilities to the team.

JJVA 17N Rox was coached by Janice Pressly, Adis Imamovic and CJ Sherman. The team was relying on different coaches for different needs-Janice pushed our middle hitters and continued to demand that they stay disciplined and active. Adis called serve and encouraged our players to not just hit the spot but put a lot of pace on the ball, he also reminded our setter of every option and to always look at the opposition for weaknesses. CJ lead the emotional charge and built the reception and defense. Together the coaches proved that team work really can be beneficial.

Congratulations Janice, Adis, CJ and JJVA 17N-Rox! What an incredible accomplishment and success for the Florida Region!

2010 DIG THE BEACH USAV JUNIOR SERIES TOUR

The Dig the Beach USAV Junior Series tour has been very successful! The Dig the Beach Junior Series provides a professional, competitive, and fun atmosphere for everyone involved. Juniors have the opportunity to participate in all 9 stops along the series, with four more events remaining this year.



Note: You must have a current USAV membership in order to participate in the following tournaments:

August 7-8 East Coast Beach Nationals, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

September 11-12 National Championships, Miami Beach, FL

Visit our Region website, www.FloridaVolleyball.org and click on the Dig the Beach USAV Junior Series logo for more information and to sign up a team. (Note: Junior players, please pre-register, we will not be accepting onsite registration due to the increase in participation.) See you on the beach!

BEACH OFFICIAL'S TRAINING CLINIC

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The Beach Official's Training Clinic will be held on August 7th, 2010, in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. The clinic will take place on the beach, next to the Sheraton-Yankee Clipper, from 9am to 12noon. The cost is \$25 in advance and \$35 onsite.

To register in advance, please visit our website at www.FloridaVolleyball.org and click on the Officials link at the top of the homepage.

EAST COAST BEACH NATIONALS

The Dig the Beach Series and USAV have partnered to bring you The East Coast Beach Nationals! This year the East Coast Beach Nationals will be held on August 7th – 8th. The location for this event is Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Teams from all over will be here to see if they have what it takes to be the champions of the 2010 East Coast Beach Nationals. This is a premier national invitational event which will ensure top level play. First place in all divisions will have their names engraved onto the East Coast Beach Nationals Cup, becoming part of beach volleyball history! Visit our Region website, www.FloridaVolleyball.org for more information. Hope to see you there!

USA JR. BEACH TOUR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Florida Region is excited to announce that the USA Beach Junior National Championships will be held on Sunday, August 22nd in Fort Lauderdale, FL. This is the first time Florida has ever hosted this event! The top athletes will be competing for the national title, age's 12U-18U. No Walk-Up registration for the U20 division. Players must sign up online.



Pre-registered athletes must check in between 8:00 AM and 8:45 AM. After check-in and any walk-up registrations are complete, the pre-tournament meeting will take place between 9:00 - 9:15 AM. For this event, all age divisions will have the same start time.

DISTRICT JUNIOR FORUM MEETINGS REMINDER

The dates for District Junior Forum Meetings are as follows:

- August 14th – District 4 (GIRLS)
- August 15th – District 3 (GIRLS)
- August 21st – ALL DISTRICTS (BOYS)
- August 28th – District 1 (GIRLS)
- August 29th – District 2 (GIRLS)

All Club Directors must attend one of the 2010 Junior Forum Meetings. Failing to do so will result in penalties and monetary fines.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Florida Region Office at 352-742-0080 or info@FloridaVolleyball.org.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

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It's that time again! Membership Renewal time is here for all current and future USAV members. You will notice on your membership cards that it expires October 31st, 2010. You can renew your membership, after September 1st, by visiting our website and logging into your account. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at (352)742-0080 or info@floridavolleyball.org.

JUNIOR INDOOR CLUB RENEWAL REMINDER

All club directors must renew their clubs by October 31st, 2010. You will not be considered a USAV club if this is not completed. You can renew your club by viewing our website's homepage and clicking on the "How Do I..." drop box located on the left under "Quick Links". Contact us at (352)742-0080 or email us at info@floridavolleyball.org for any questions.

GIRL'S JUNIOR CLUB TRYOUT DATES

This year, the earliest date for girl's junior tryouts (ages 10U – 14U) is September 1st, 2010. The earliest date for girl's junior tryouts (ages 15U – 18U) is November 21st, 2010. Any club found to be holding tryouts prior to these dates will be subject to fines and/or penalties!

INDOOR IMPACT TRAINING CLINICS

The Indoor IMPACT Training Clinics are as follows:

- August 14th – Summit Christian School, West Palm Beach, FL
- August 15th – St. Stephens Episcopal School, Bradenton, FL
- August 28th – Middleburg High School, Middleburg, FL
- August 29th – Lyman High School, Longwood, FL

The sessions will run from 9am – 1pm. The District hosted clinics are free to all registered Florida Region coaches. Registration must be submitted no later than seven (7) days prior to the clinic. Register online at www.FloridaVolleyball.org by clicking on the Education link at the top of the homepage.

MEMBERSHIP COUNT UPDATE

Our current membership count as of August 1st, 2010 is 8,510 members. Our goal for this year is 10,000 members. Please let others in your area know about the playing, coaching, and officiating opportunities offered in Florida by USA Volleyball.

REGION INFORMATION

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