



PRESS RELEASE

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FIRST SEASON OF AMERICAN BEACH TOUR GAINS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT AMONG USA VOLLEYBALL REGIONS

The American Beach Tour has already gained participation from over half of the forty (40) USA Volleyball regions in the United States. This tour is the only grassroots beach volleyball tour produced on the USA Volleyball regional level across the United States.

Eustis, FL – February 13, 2017 – The American Beach Tour (ABT), a new national-level beach volleyball tour for juniors and adults which kicked off in December 2016, is produced and sanctioned by the USA Volleyball (USAV) regions. As of this release, twenty-five (25) of the forty (40) regions have affiliated for 2017 with several more expected to join in the coming weeks.

Twelve (12) of the twenty-five (25) affiliated regions have already scheduled events on the 2017 schedule, found here www.AmericanBeachTour.com. Currently there are seventy-three (73) ABT beach volleyball events for USAV members in the USA. There are forty-seven (47) events for juniors and twenty-six (26) events for adults.

Steve Bishop, Executive Director and President of the Florida Region of USA Volleyball, which has led this initiative, said, “It is humbling to see how many regions have already affiliated with the ABT and how many events we have in our first year of operations. The response from the regions is consistently positive as they find the ABT to provide unique opportunities for their regional junior beach HP teams and for their adult members, which is something not found on any other USAV sanctioned beach tour in the US. Aside from creating new playing divisions for USAV members, the ABT is bringing the USAV regions together and drawing on our collective strengths as the grassroots/membership arm of USA Volleyball. This tour is resonating with our fellow regions and with our 300,000+ USAV members that register and participate in the USA.”

The ABT will culminate with a tour championship event for both groups in Florida later in the year. The ABT Junior Championships will be held on July 26-28, 2017 and the ABT Adult Championships will be held on September 9-10, 2017. Both events were voted on by the participating USAV regions, called the ABT Council, and they will be held at Hickory Point Beach in Tavares, FL. Hickory Point Beach is a twenty-one (21) court, state-of-the-art sand volleyball complex that was built in 2014 through a privatization partnership between the local Lake County government and the Florida Region of USA Volleyball. More information on Hickory Point Beach can be found at www.HickoryPointBeach.com.

The affiliated regions involved in the ABT have had a voice and a vote on all aspects of the tour since its inception and they do not pay any additional fees to participate, keeping costs down for participants. At the beginning, an ABT Workgroup comprised of five (5) regions was formed to carry out the plan and handle daily operations of the tour. Full marketing support has been provided to all affiliated regions, resulting in the availability of ABT branded banner flags, tents, ball stops, print materials, and much more.

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Philip Bryant, Commissioner of the Gulf Coast Region, said, “We are a small region and are very interested in beach developmental programming and the grassroots level of play. The American Beach Tour enables us to collaborate with all regions to help ‘grow the game.’ We are honored to be a part of the larger whole of USA Volleyball and the ABT gives us a chance to be seen on the national stage. Creating playing opportunities for all levels of skill and for our families is exciting. With the progress the collegiate women’s beach game has made from an emerging sport to a NCAA championship sport in five short years, joining other USAV regions who are collectively working to improve and enhance the beach volleyball model is so very important. I have long said, if USA Volleyball is going to have a millionth member it will come from the growth of beach!”

Some of the highlights of the ABT include, but are not limited to:

- **COST EFFECTIVE:** Both the participating USAV regions and members will incur no extra costs or fees to be a part of the ABT.
- **PROVIDES SAFEGUARDS:** Extensive background screens, SafeSport certification, coaches’ education and current USAV insurance for sanctioned events ensure that all members and affiliates are protected.
- **MORE PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES:** Includes a wider variety of athletes to help each region’s membership base grow. This includes more junior age divisions, more boys programming and more adult divisions.
- **SYNERGY BETWEEN USAV REGIONS:** The tour allows promoters to customize events to fit the needs of their members, while collaborating with other successful regions. All of the regions get a voice in how the ABT is operated and managed.
- **ONLINE EVENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:** The ABT allows promoters and members to take full advantage of the convenience of a comprehensive event management system. Features include online registration, online pool/bracket options and work is being done to develop an automatic sync with a tour ranking system.

About AmericanBeachTour.com

AmericanBeachTour.com is a USA Volleyball (USAV) sanctioned tour produced by the Regional Volleyball Associations (RVA’s) in the USA. Their goal is to offer regional and zonal beach events for junior and adult USAV members, culminating with a tour championship event each year. Additional information on the tour can be found at www.AmericanBeachTour.com.

About Regional Volleyball Associations of USA Volleyball

The Regional Volleyball Associations (RVA) of USA Volleyball are an unincorporated association of forty (40) regions across the US. The RVAs are responsible for registering all 300,000+ USAV members and for delivering grassroots programming in the USA, for juniors and adults. The RVAs have elected representation to the USAV Board of Directors and meet twice annually to support the missions of the regions. Additional information can be found at www.teamusa.org/usa-volleyball/membership/regions.

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