



Digs – Summer 2016

From the President

Rebecca Ruiz Johannes, CHRVA President

The summer is upon us and though it feels like a break there is still a lot of volleyball around us. As the new USAV season begins September 1, expect some new improvements; we will have details in the September issue of Digs.

At this time last year, I mentioned the board's strategic plan; we have chairs appointed and look to make progress during the upcoming season. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone on the courts.

CHRVA had a great turnout at Adult Nationals, Girls Nationals, Boys Nationals and on the Beach. The Indoor season was great and Regionals was a great success as well.

A bonus for the summer: Olympic volleyball! We won't spoil anything in case you haven't caught up on results, but suffice it to say that the USA had a strong showing in Rio! Next up: the [Paralympics](#) with Men's and Women's sitting volleyball. Matches will be played September 9-16 with medal events taking place on September 17-18. GO TEAM USA!



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Commissioner's Corner

Lisa DiGiacinto, CHRVA Commissioner

It's summer time and that means exciting times for the Chesapeake region!

Each year our region recommends individuals to USA Volleyball for the Robert L. Lindsay Meritorious Award. This award recognizes members whose countless hours of work in the region have made our volleyball experience so wonderful.

Our 2016 award winners for the Robert L. Lindsay Meritorious Award are: Rebecca Johannes, Monica Peele and Irv Rodrigues. Please join me in congratulating them for their endless commitment to their work in the region.

Our outdoor Juniors opportunities have grown tremendously again this summer especially for beach! I'd like to thank our Junior Outdoor Coordinator, Irv Rodriguez, whose tremendous passion for Juniors beach development has led him to work countless hours to grow the game.

For summer 2016, we once again hosted the USAV High Performance Juniors Beach Tryouts with our CHRVA Regional Juniors Beach tryouts in May. During June we hosted two USAV Juniors Beach Tours on the beach in Ocean City, Maryland. Our athletes performed very well at the USAV Juniors Beach Championship, which concluded mid-July.

Continuing our outdoor Juniors tournaments again this year, CHRVA has partnered with Fairfax Volleyball Club, Mid Atlantic Volleyball, Dulles Volleyball and Kids gone Beach to name a few. Outdoor volleyball is a great way to stay in shape; it's relaxing, fun and it improves your indoor play. So, c'mon out and play in our tournaments – there's still time, [check out the schedule](#).

Planning ahead to next year's indoor championships, we will see our teams travel to Minneapolis for the Adult National Championships and the Summer Girls National Championships. The 18s National Championship site will be determined at a later date. The Boys will travel to Columbus Ohio for their National Championships.

The Olympics may be over but there's still great volleyball to be played. Next up: the [Paralympics](#) with Men's and Women's sitting volleyball. Matches will be played September 9-16 with medal events taking place on September 17-18. Visit USAV's website to stay up on all the news about [the sitting teams](#).

Have a great volleyball summer!



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Meet the USA's Paralympic Men's Sitting Team

Dixie Collins, CHRVA Scorer Chair and USA Paralympic Men's Sitting Team Leader

I'm thrilled to introduce you to the [Men's Sitting Team](#) that is going to the Paralympics in September! We have been working very hard and the guys have improved tremendously over the past year with our new coaches.

Head Coach –
Greg Walker

Assistant Coach –
Joe Skinner

Technical Assistant –
Elliot Blake

Trainer –
Katherine King

Team Leader –
Dixie Collins



Players

- #2 - Dan Regan
- #4 - Ben Aman
- #5 - Eric Duda, Captain
- #6 - Jese Schaag
- #8 - James Stucki
- #10 – Edgardo LaForest
- #11 – Roderick Green
- #13 – Charles Swearingen
- #14 - John Kremer, Libero
- #15 - Chris Seilkop
- #16 - Josh Smith
- #18 - J Dee Marinko

Play starts September 9. Be sure to cheer us on and look for possible live streaming through USA Volleyball!



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CHRVA Alumnus Played in Rio

Cindy Hillard

Did you know that a CHRVA alumnus played in the Olympics? I am talking about [Aaron Russell](#), the 6' 9" Outside Hitter who wears #2 for Team USA.

Back when he played in CHRVA, he was a middle hitter for MVP (Maryland Volleyball Program). He was a dominant force surrounded by a wonderful team. But during his time at Centennial High School, Aaron actually was a soccer star since there was no Boys volleyball there. His family was filled with volleyball players, so Aaron played outdoor with his family and was in the gym whenever he could be.



After high school he played for Penn State where he transitioned to being an Outside Hitter.

In 2014 Aaron joined the Men's USA National Team. In fact, he was the leading scorer in the final three matches of the 2015 FIVB World Cup as the US won and qualified for the 2016 Olympic Games. His professional time this year was with the Italian club [Sir Safety Perugia](#).

His dad, Stew, is now a coach for the Annapolis Volleyball Club. One day back in May before a Junior club practice that Aaron could not attend, his dad asked Aaron and his fiancée, Kendall Pierce, who was a libero/back row specialist for Penn State, what they would tell the U-14 boys if they could be at the practice. They said:

1. Play and watch as much volleyball as you can;
2. Energy is as important as skill; and
3. You're always part of the play.

What perfect advice for young players and applicable to the highest levels of volleyball.

Aaron and his youngest brother, Paul, met up at the Boys Junior Nationals in the Dallas convention center this year. Paul was there playing 16U in Hall C and Aaron was there competing for Team USA in the arena. Family gatherings are always great!

And now Aaron has played for Team USA in Rio! Congratulations, Aaron! The Chesapeake Region is proud of you and your team's accomplishments.



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From the Ladder

Rebecca Ruiz Johannes, Referee Chair

As we approach the new season and I get into my new role as the recently-appointed Referee Chair, I would like to start by bringing some clarity regarding the expectations and requirements for referees to be in good standing with the region.

As referees we are independent contractors but we also should support and help nurture our region and grow our cadre. We will work on documentation and communication. I will also make sure that all officials take Safesport. The certification process will continue to stay as it was last year with some improvements; please stay tuned to the website for further details. I look forward to this new position and serving the region.



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Outdoor Program Update

Dado Singer, Director of Junior Programs

CHRVA BEACH PLAYERS JOINING THE COLLEGE RANKS

(This article was contributed by Seng Chiu; Seng is the club director for Dulles Volleyball and head coach for the 2015 and 2016 CHRVA Beach HP program)

Beach volleyball in the Chesapeake region is growing at a tremendous rate. When Stevenson University began its beach program, the coaches looked to their indoor players such as Annika Schwartz (MVSA VBC) to staff their beach team. But as NCAA beach volleyball began to expand and our beach program started to develop, more players focused their efforts on making a collegiate beach team. Samantha Harris and Shannon Williams become the first two D-1 players from our area. Caroline Skaff will follow in their footsteps as she starts her collegiate beach volleyball career at the University of South Carolina.

In 2016, Samantha Harris represented Stetson University in the first ever NCAA Beach Volleyball National Championships. She played the #4 seed. Shannon Williams, also a freshman last year, played as the #1 seed for the University of South Carolina. All three players trained at Dulles Volleyball while also playing indoor club volleyball during their senior year of high school.

While most beach players play beach only in college, this year four players will be participating in both indoor and beach at the Division I level. Angela Tender (Dulles 18-1) will be competing at UNC-Wilmington. Lauren Twitty will be a freshman at the University of New Mexico University and Giorgio Borgiotti will be attending Florida Gulf Coast University. Also in the 2016 class is Abby Harry (NVVA) who will be playing both sports at the University of Central Arkansas. In 2017, Hailey Rubino will be joining Lauren Twitty at New Mexico. Lauren, Giorgio and Hailey played for Metro Volleyball Club.

Also in 2017 is Savannah Siegrist who will be competing for the beach volleyball program at Jacksonville University. Being one of the best beach volleyball players for South River Volleyball Club, she was able to partner up with various players from different clubs to get the recruiting exposure she needed.

Although most beach volleyball programs were started by Division I programs, more and more non-Division I programs will be offering beach volleyball. In the 2016 class, Darian Hileman will be attending Stevenson University to play both indoor and beach. Stevenson University is the first Division III school to offer beach volleyball. They compete against other Division I schools as well as NAIA schools. At the NAIA level, Kelly Hughes will be attending Missouri Baptist University as an indoor and beach player. In the 2015 class, Dawson Boese from CHRVA competed at the NAIA level for Webber International University.

CHRVA JUNIORS COMPETE AT USAV NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

(This article was contributed by Irv Rodrigues, CHRVA Coordinator for Outdoor Volleyball.)

Historical Background: In 2011, when I took on the role as the CHRVA Coordinator for Outdoor Volleyball programs, less than 30 juniors played the sport. At the time, juniors played only a couple sand tournaments and a few grass tournaments during the summer. In most cases, players learned the game on their own or had parent-players who introduced them to the sport.

Some of the boys in Northern Virginia were the first to participate in the National High Performance program. They were selected to participate in the A2 camps in Florida and California in 2012. A few of our girls joined the boys in A2, A3, and Regional HP programs in 2013. Since then, several girls from region have been offered scholarships to play sand volleyball in college. On the boys' side, one boy has been selected to represent the U21 USA National Beach team at the FIVB world championships in Lucerne, Switzerland. We are striving to develop high level players such as these athletes.



Clubs in Northern Virginia were the first to start beach program training for juniors. No Panic Volleyball offered the first clinics for juniors. They were followed by programs offered by Coach Steve (Reston, Virginia), Dulles Volleyball (Sterling, Virginia), Evolution (Alexandria, Virginia), NVVA (Sterling, Virginia) and South River (Annapolis, Maryland). The advent of beach volleyball as an NCAA sport and a very successful Olympic year (2012) propelled growth in the sport.

In the region, National and Regional HP programs helped further develop our juniors. The Junior Beach Tour (JBT) followed the HP programs offering juniors additional opportunities to compete nationally. Some CHRVA juniors partnered with their A2 friends from around the nation to play other national qualifiers. Each year, our player's participation, skill and commitment has continued to increase. The top players in our region are playing at an open level and competing in over 10 tournaments each year.

2016 Successes and Results: This year, clubs all across the region have begun showing success in developing strong players. Brandywine (Delaware) and DVL's Ocean City Beach Club (Ocean City, Maryland) have now joined in producing highly skilled players, thus expanding the talent across the region. In 2016 we've also seen the growth in number of players to make Regional and National HP programs. Despite our growing success, we still struggle against A1 and A2 HP National teams. We are however claiming top finishes in other national events such as in the JBT. Some of the records are listed below:

BEACH HIGH PERFORMANCE

With 104 nets strung across the Rehoboth Beach sand for the First Rites of Summer Beach Tournament, we knew the turnout for the USAV and CHRVA High Performance beach team tryouts would be significant. Congratulations to those players that stood out among the crowd and made either the USAV or our regional Beach HP teams.

Regional HP teams

CHRVA U15 TEAMS

Raychel Ehlers - female
Abby Carian - Female
Emma Kate Zimmerman - female
Annika M. Stevens - female
Amber Oliver - Female
Abby Gates - Female

	SETS	MATCHES
Carian / Ehlers	2-3	5-6
Zimmerman / Stevens	0-5	0-10
Oliver / Gates	1-5	2-11

CHRVA U17 TEAMS

Peyton Gray - Female
Jackson Friedman - Female
Morgan Faith Lowery - Female
Maddie Sachs - Female
Christiana Stevenson - Female
Megan Bukala – Female

	SETS	MATCHES
Gray / Friedman	3-4	7-11
Sachs / Lowery	2-4	4-12
Bukala / Stevenson	2-6	5-13

CHRNA U19 TEAMS

Parker Gray - Female
Carolyl Cain - Female
Savannah Siegrist - Female
Ashley Stevens - Female
Alison M. Thomas - Female
Emma Lucey – Female

	SETS	MATCHES
Gray / Cain	4-3	11-6
Siegrist / Stevens	5-4	11-10
Thomas / Lucey	2-5	4-14

CHRNA U21 TEAMS

Cameron Rodrigues - Male
Kyle Skinner – Male

	SETS	MATCHES
Rodrigues / Skinner	1-3	2-7

Keep reading for the Junior Beach Tour results!

JUNIOR BEACH TOUR

This year our region hosted two Junior Beach Tour stops in Ocean City, Maryland. Having watched these tournaments for the last two years, I can tell you that the level of play has improved significantly. The top finishers earned bids to the Junior Beach Tour Championships in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We are all very proud of how well they represented our region. Congratulations to our teams.

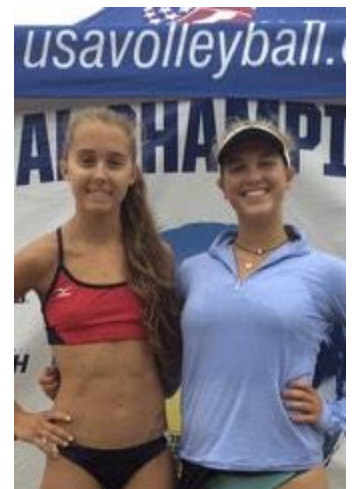
Here are the finishes from the Junior Beach Tour Championships in Milwaukee:

Boys 18U Club/Open (17 teams)
Goettman/Bukala – 2nd Gold

Girls 14U Club (40 teams)
Oliver/Johnson – 5th Gold

Girls 16U Open (84 teams)
Hughes/McKinney – 2nd Gold
Handlich/Kuchar – 1st Silver
Sachs/Lucey – 2nd Silver
Friedman/Dunnigan – 9th Silver
Gray/Bukala – 2nd White
Middleton/Lowery – 5th White

Girls 18U Open (42 teams)
Thomas/Friedman – 5th Gold
Siegrist/Carrick – 9th Gold
Gray/Cain – 9th Silver





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Girls Junior National Championship

Gina Trinsey

Gina Trinsey

The GJNC (Girls Junior National Championships) started in April in Milwaukee, Wisconsin with the 18 Open and the 18 National Divisions. Our Chesapeake Region sent three teams to this Championship event. The Metro 18 Travel Team competed in the 18 Open Division and finished 22 out of 36 teams. We also had two teams compete in the 18 National Division: MD JRS 18 Elite (finished 27 out of 48 teams) and Arlington Elite 18 (finished 46 out of 48 teams).

For the GJNC in Indianapolis in June our region saw 18 of our other age level teams compete! Starting with some of our youngest teams to our oldest teams we saw a lot of great play and great experiences.

The finishes of our teams were:

- Brandywine BAM (12 National) 38 out of 48 teams
- MVSA Vortex (12 American) 43 out of 48 teams
- MVSA Wahoo (13 National) 18 out of 48 teams
- Delaware Juniors (13 National) 35 out of 48 teams
- Columbia Eagles (13 American) 46 out of 64 teams
- Brandywine Blitz (14 Open) 30 out of 36 teams
- Virginia Jrs 14 Elite (14 National) 22 out of 48 teams
- Metro 14 Travel (14 National) 26 out of 48 teams
- Vienna Elite (14 American) 49 out of 64 teams
- Metro 15 Travel (15 National) 13 out of 48 teams
- MVSA Riot (15 National) 41 out of 48 teams
- Virginia Jrs (15 American) 13 out of 64 teams
- Brandywine Blast (15 American) 49 out of 64 teams
- Metro 16 Travel (16 National) 37 out of 48 teams
- Brandywine Blackout (16 American) 11 out of 64 teams
- Metro 17 Travel (17 National) 6 out of 48 teams
- Brandywine Bobcats (17 American) 26 out of 64 teams
- Virginia Jrs (18 American) 3 out of 64 teams

All these teams did an amazing job with so many really tough matches. We are proud of all our teams that competed at the National level and how well they represented the CHRVA region. Great job players, coaches and parents! We hope to see even more CHRVA teams competing in Minneapolis next year at the 2017 GJNC!



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CHRVA Volunteers Help at PanAm Qualifier/Championship and World Deaf Championships *Rebecca Ruiz Johannes, CHRVA President*

The 2016 PanAm Qualifier and Championship games were held in Washington, DC for the first time ever. The five Men's teams and four Women's competed for a chance to qualify for the 2017 Deaflympics in Samsun, Turkey. The PanAms were a great success for USA as both the Men and Women's teams will be headed to Turkey for the 2017 games! The USA women took Gold and the USA Men a Silver medal.

After the PanAms, the World Championships followed immediately and was twice the size. The games were live-streamed daily and the officiating crew was top notch. The Chesapeake region was a great supporter of these events and was well represented in terms of referees and scorers.

Thank you to everyone that helped make the World Championships a great success! The referees were FIVB-Columbia Juan Carlos Saavedera, FIVB-USA Jung Park, WPV-USA Thang Nguyen, National-PUR Hector X. Villanueva, National USA Bryan Strong, National USA Steve Burinsky and I.

We had the opportunity of using E-Scoresheet with some great scorers: USA International Scorer Debbie Reed, Qualified Scorer Lynette Muller and National Scorers Karen Smith, Nathasha Claxton and Tia Storey.

The line judges were CHRVA's own cadre of officials Don Wu, Alim Ahmand, Greg Folts, Caliey-Ann Folts, Elizabeth Lamont, Sheila Crider, Brian Hall, Tom O'Connor, Julianne Loth, Sondra Johnson and Maha Alstafy. Also, I can't forget Patrick Kinast from Texas and McKenzie Cox who has moved to South Carolina.



CHRVA is proud to have sponsored and helped with the [World Deaf Volleyball](#) events in Washington, D.C. this summer! It's all about team work! (L to R) Cathy Schelvis, ICSD TD Volleyball; Kang Chen, Vice President of World Deaf Sports; and I (head referee/SLO and CHRVA President) did our part to help make these games successful.

Everyone did an excellent job and great teamwork to make a successful event. The USA Women ended with a Gold medal and the USA Men a fifth-place finish. We wish both teams the very best as they work to train and raise money for the 2017 Deaflympics in Turkey.



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Congratulations to Rich Welch, CHRVA's newest Junior National Official!