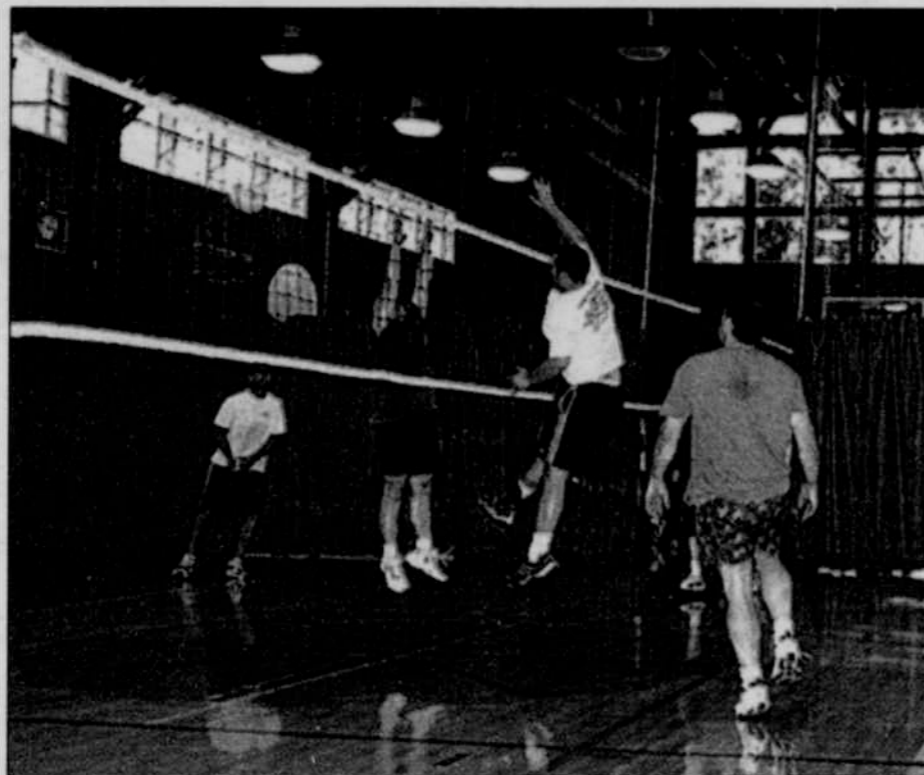


**SPORTS**

**Do you like to spike?**

More gay volleyballers wanted for growing group

BY RICHARD BRAY



Who says white men can't jump?

**W**e homos sure like our sports. In defiance of limp-wristed stereotypes, gay athletes get together for softball, tennis, running, skiing and bowling. So it should come as no surprise that an organization exists for gay volleyball.

The North American Gay Volleyball Association is composed of 10 regions located across the continent. West Coast players will be in town Oct. 6 and 7 for the Portland Fall Ball tournament at Tualatin Hills Recreation Center, 50 N.W. 158th Ave. in Beaverton.

Between 25 and 30 teams will travel here from as far away as Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia. Each of these cities has multiple teams that play in various tournaments throughout the region. Portland will have six teams competing.

Volleyball essentially has four levels of competition: AA, A, BB and B. The Northwest, which has a smaller population base, only uses the bottom three divisions.

According to tournament director Ryan Reilly, an active, enthusiastic member of Portland Team Volleyball, the competition can be fierce, especially in upper-level play. However, the emphasis is mostly on having a good time with lots of socializing.

Although the teams are open to everyone, Reilly notes that only guys have shown up to play in Portland and "that 99 percent of all NAGVA players are men." He hopes this tournament will generate more local interest in the sport.

Portland Team Volleyball has existed for about 10 years but still has organizational matters to deal with: It plans to register as a non-profit entity, establish a Web site and more actively recruit new players. At this point getting hooked up with the guys is mostly a word-of-mouth thing, Reilly acknowledges, but they also can be reached via the Internet.

The team plays every Sunday afternoon in Northwest Portland on a drop-in basis. Although the number of participants fluctuates, "We usually have from 25 to 30 people on two courts," Reilly reports.

It's too late to sign up for the tournament if you're not on a team already, but spectators are greatly appreciated. Play begins at 8:30 a.m. Oct. 6 and continues until about 4:30 p.m.

Teams are divided into their division levels in round robin pool play, then seeded for the next day's final competition based on win/loss records. On Oct. 7 play will be a double elimination tournament running from 8:30 a.m. until about 4:30 p.m.

Saturday evening players will get together for a banquet at Fez Ballroom. Those with excellent stamina most likely will be out and about on the town later that night.

Reilly predicts quite a few fellows will stay over Sunday night, too, so they can party some more. He says this isn't like bowling where you can sit around drinking beer during a tournament. These guys are here to play ball!

Still, he adds, "It's a good way to get to know people from other cities and make friends." He just laughs when asked if there was ever any "geographically undesirable romance," so we'll take that as a yes.

Reilly wants to make sure his group doesn't sound too serious. In fact, he reveals, "At the Seattle tournament last June, two teams played their first game in drag." ☐

PORTLAND TEAM VOLLEYBALL plays from 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays at Hillside Community Center, 653 N.W. Culpepper Terrace. Learn more from [www.nagva.org](http://www.nagva.org) or [portland\\_fall\\_ball@hotmail.com](mailto:portland_fall_ball@hotmail.com).

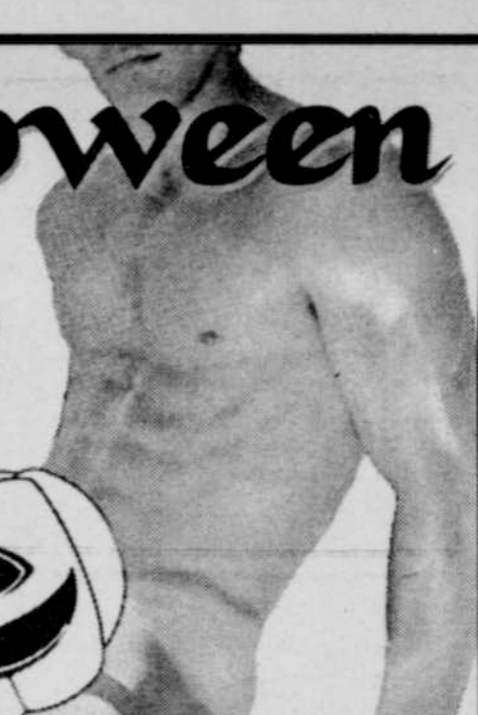
RICHARD BRAY is a somewhat short free-lance writer who always wondered why they put the net so damn high. He can be reached at [richbray2000@hotmail.com](mailto:richbray2000@hotmail.com).



Members of Portland Team Volleyball get hot and sweaty every Sunday

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