

this year, the youth division will be guaranteed to play at least two days in a row, according to Seaside Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Brian Owen.

“These divisions used to be single eliminations, but we wanted to make sure that we were creating a positive traveling experience for these families who are coming from all over the country to participate,” Owen said.

‘So much magic’

While the minutiae of game logistics varies from year to year, what has remained constant over three decades is the feeling of excitement that builds throughout the weekend, culminating Saturday when open players battle for first place.

“I thrive on that environment myself as an extrovert,” Maag said. “There’s so much magic involved with meeting new people and playing alongside such talented players.”

Maag didn’t start playing volleyball until college. At University of Portland, he joined a club team and immediately fell in love with the sport, he said.

In that circuit he heard about Seaside’s tournament, and, after attending one, decided he “didn’t want to be missing any of these.”

Maag started playing in the eight-player division, eventually worked up to the open division, and now competes in what he calls the “dinosaur division” — more cordially known as “golden masters” for people over 45.

But as his volleyball career has progressed, competition is balanced with making memories with his kids and friends.

“For me, it’s a vacation. I’m still competitive and want to do well, but a lot of the people we’re playing with and against have been playing for 20 years. We get to carry on that relationship,” he said.

While Maag has found many reasons to return each year, Owen said what makes this event special for some is just the opportunity to get to play beach volleyball in the first place.


“I enjoy watching the kids get an opportunity to play. Not all players get to have regular beach access, so that is an opportunity, too,” Owen said. 



PHOTO BY ALEX PEJUNAS

At a previous tournament, Craig Barrow, of Mill Creek, Washington, dives to keep a rally alive during quad, or four on four, action on the main court.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Joel Maag, center, with his sons, Quin, 11, and Sullivan, 14



PHOTO BY ALEX PEJUNAS

David Vorobets, of Portland, is tossed into the air by a hoard of friends and volleyball fans after winning the Double A division championship with teammate Ivan Paulenko, middle right, at the 2014 Seaside Beach Volleyball Tournament.