



Miami's Lucas Roque, left, Portland's Matthew LaPlante, center, and Washington D.C.'s Chris Dove, right, get their kicks during the Team USA Footvolley qualifying final.

DANNY MILLER/EO MEDIA GROUP

# FOOTVOLLEY FLIES IN SEASIDE

By Eli Stillman  
EO Media Group

While July will bring the track and field Olympic Trials to Eugene, in late June Oregonians got to witness another national qualifying competition in Seaside.

Teams of two came to the beach and faced off in footvolley tournament play to see who will represent America later this year. The hybrid sport that mixes soccer and beach volleyball will be featured at the 2016 Olympic games in Rio de Janeiro as a demonstration event.

On April 7, Brazilian senator and ambassador of the sport, Romário Faria, released a statement saying, "We will have footvolley during the Olympics and Paralympics this year. But please remain calm. It will be more of a cultural event and not an official competition. Nevertheless it will be an excellent opportunity to present footvolley to the world."

Rules for the sport follow standard beach volleyball fairly closely.

However, unlike volleyball, players aren't allowed to use their hands or arms. This is where the soccer influence comes into play, as they put together combinations using their legs, chests and heads. Teams are allowed three touches per possession, and attempt to get the ball over the net and



DANNY MILLER/EO MEDIA GROUP

Miami's Lucas Roque makes a kick mid-air during the Team USA Footvolley qualifying final. Team Miami defeated Team Los Angeles 2-1 and will represent the U.S. footvolley team as a demonstration sport in Rio.

land in their opponents' boundaries.

Each rally for points begins after one team serves the ball to the other side by kicking it off of a mound of sand on the backline.

Utilizing different parts of the body to control the ball can

set up more strategic returns for teammates, as they dive around the court and try keep the ball in the air. Instead of spikes, like in volleyball, the most tactical hit is called a "shark attack, where a player goes upside down in the air to slam the ball down with their foot.

Footvolley was created in Rio in response to their national sport of soccer being banned on the beaches. Players would kick around a ball until police showed up, and then would start volleying it over the net to stay out of trouble.

Eventually, the game caught on and players started setting up boundaries and creating official rules.

Because of the foot skills and juggling it requires, most footvolley players have a strong background in soccer.

Sergio Menezes, president of the U.S. Footvolley Association and competitor in the weekend tournament, said the organization chose Seaside to show the sport to the Pacific Northwest. "We've never had any competitions or events here before and really wanted to plant the seed," he said.

Teams for the weekend's tournament came from all across America, including places like: Miami, Santa Cruz, California, and even Washington, D.C., but Menezes' plan has already started to take root.

One pair of Oregonians made the trip to Seaside and tried out the sport for their first time. Felyx Tsoi and Matt LaPlante are former club soccer players at University of Portland. While still involved in beach matches and pickup games, they found out about footvolley only a week before and decided to give it a shot.

"The community was great, but it's tough playing a new sport against some top athletes," said Tsoi.

"Portland is a big soccer city, but it still has room for the sport to grow," said LaPlante, "We just need more people to get out playing on the beach."

The qualifying match served as the Northwest's first taste of footvolley, but with television coverage and exposure expected from the Olympic hype, the sport is poised to grow.



DANNY MILLER/EO MEDIA GROUP

Team Northern California's Cody Pillion bounces the ball off his chest during the Team USA Footvolley qualifying matches.

## Road to Rio: Top footvolley qualifiers head to Olympics

EO Media Group

Only two female teams competed in the Team USA Footvolley qualifying matches in Seaside, so the players rotated partners and tallied the results for the title of "Queen of the Court." In the end, Melony Poviones of Miami and Leah Morales of Oakland, California, proved to be the best pair and will make the trip across the world for a demonstration event of the sport at the summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

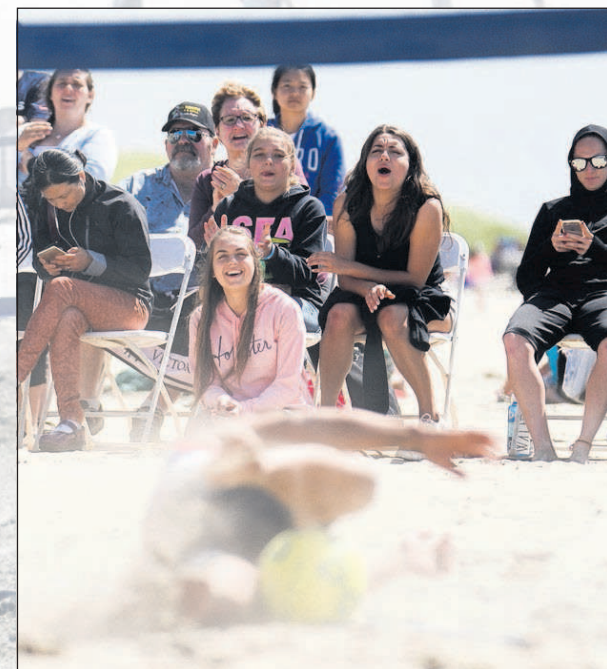
Both are former collegiate soccer players but have never played at this level of competition.

"There's really nothing better than getting to travel

and continue doing what you love," Poviones said.

Six male pairs faced off over the weekend for the opportunity to represent America in Rio de Janeiro.

While Sergio Menezes serves as president of the U.S. Footvolley Association, he also was on the winning team of the beach battle. His partner, Lucas Roque, is a native to Brazil and has played soccer professionally, as well as with the U.S. indoor team. "I've played many tournaments with big prizes before," Roque said after the tournament. "But this chance ... who doesn't want to play in the Olympics?"



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Fans react during the Team USA Footvolley qualifying final. Team Miami defeated Team Los Angeles 2-1 and will represent the U.S. Footvolley team as a demonstration sport in Rio.

## STAYING FIT IN THE POOL

# Instructor Zoe Manhire has 'a passion for aquatic fitness'

By Susan Romersa  
For Seaside Signal

Following a program of aquatic therapy can have some positive effects on your body's systems and can enhance your mental well-being at the same time. Aquatic classes are currently available several times per week at the Sunset Empire Pool & Recreation's warm water pool taught by instructor Zoe Manhire. It is the only warm water indoor pool in Clatsop County.

Manhire was hired as recreation manager in 1998 by then-director Mary Blake.

Manhire was introduced to this warm water therapy when she injured her knee and developed arthritis in that knee. "I was working at the pool and found that the warm water helped me a great deal," Manhire said.

She eventually became certified as an aquatic fit-

ness professional through the Aquatic Exercise Association in Portland; and in 2013, went on to develop a series of classes at the Sunset pool which include aquatic yoga, Pilates for aquatic fitness and ai chi. Ai chi is described as a water-based total body strengthening and relaxation progression that combines tai chi, qi gong, and watsu techniques performed in chest deep water using a combination of deep breathing and slow, broad movements of the arms, legs, and torso.

Participants began to see better body tone and strength. With tai chi and Pilates, they were developing core strength, balance, and relaxation. Aqua yoga challenges the body, mind and spirit for healing and stress relief. "We can give you modifications to work with each level," Manhire said.

Manhire has worked with stroke patients who start out



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Instructor Susan Manhire leads a class at the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation Department pool in Seaside.

by holding on to the edge of the pool and slowly let the water's buoyancy guide them in their movements. It is the safest form of exercise, she says. It connects the brain with the body.

"I have a passion for aquatic fitness," she adds. She mentions too that children

find the warm water calming. Manhire says that her son has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and sensory issue. Working with him in the warm water is soothing, and he feels good when he is done. The water fitness classes have helped many with the chronic pain of certain conditions. "In

addition," she says, "we do have an actual arthritis exercise class for those with limited mobility."

Providence Hospital Rehabilitation Services uses the warm water pool to work one-on-one with aquatic physical therapy patients.

## Aqua yoga

Practicing yoga in warm water can provide a number of benefits. It acts as a safeguard against any injuries that will most likely occur on land. The buoyancy of water can reduce your "weight" by about 90 percent, Manhire said, which reduces stress on joints and connective tissue.

Water decreases the amount of shock which is transmitted through the bones/joints/ligaments on land activities, while in chest-deep water. The movements of your hands and legs become smoother in water and therefore your body will not

experience the strain.

Aqua yoga takes place when water temperature is 29 to 34 degrees C.

This reaction is thought to lessen pain sensitivity, stimulate the immune system, aid lymphatic drainage, increase blood circulation and leave you both physically and mentally relaxed.

When you are immersed up to your neck, only about 15 pounds of compressive force is exerted on your spine, hips, and knees. This benefits people with degenerative diseases such as fibromyalgia, ligament instability, cartilage breakdown, or obesity. It helps the lungs get stronger and improves cardiovascular health too. Manhire directs those who would like to research water yoga more thoroughly to visit aqua4balance.com.

For class schedules, visit sunsetempire.com or call 503-738-3311.