

Tournament directors 'live the volleyball culture'

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With that burgeoning demographic in mind, Owen said, the chamber knew change was necessary to improve the player experience. To help bring the volleyball event up to speed this year, the chamber hired new tournament directors: NWS and Bad Boys Open Volleyball, two Portland groups operated by Deng Thepharat, PT Thilavanh and Mike Griffin, who are active members of the volleyball community and former players at the Seaside tournament.

"Those three individuals really have helped us move the event into a technologically forward product," Owen said. "They do understand and live the volleyball culture."

New app to free up players

The chamber received feedback last year that some event participants were not pleased with how late the games were finishing nor the system of communicating a team's next match. In previous years, teams had to finish their game, walk to center of the event to report the score and winner and wait to find out the time, location and competitor for their next game, which would get posted on dry erase boards. This method virtually held participants "captive on the beach," Owen said.

"We were trying to do business the way we would want to do business, and that wasn't our consumer," he added.

This year, the chamber will be using a smartphone application to keep players informed about their upcoming matches. Players also can report their scores at one of three stations diversely located at the north side, south side and middle of the playing area.

This new system will free up players to leave the beach and eat, shower, visit the city or do other activities in between their matches. The chamber also has improved communication through its website and is publishing the event's first Players' Guide with court information.

As for getting play to end earlier each evening, the chamber added an extra day to the event.

"The games were not ending until after dark," Owen said. "Starting it a day earlier, we're able to manage the time



JEFF TER HAR PHOTO

Over 3,000 players on 1,450 teams are expected to turn out this year for the 35th volleyball tournament staged on the beach at Seaside.

and have a better player experience."

Youth doubles will begin Aug. 11 and finish Aug. 12, the day adult doubles also start. Parent/child doubles will take place Aug. 12, as well. Doubles games for all divisions will conclude Aug. 13. The quads and sixes divisions, including the new boys quads division, will take place Aug. 14.

"The pinnacle of the event is really Saturday afternoon and evening," Owen said. "We have the best players for both the men's and women's brackets playing on center stage."

Burgeoning youth participation

The doubles divisions include the majority of participating teams. Registration for the whole event may be down a little this year, "because families were used to playing Friday," instead of Thursday, Owen said, but organizers still anticipate upward of 1,450 teams. Players had until July 31 to register.

For average spectators who want to watch good



Since 2011, the Seaside Chamber Beach Volleyball event has been recognized by the World Records Academy as the largest beach volleyball tournament.



SUBMITTED BY THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

having a lot of travel to other areas," Owen said.

The fast pace with which the youth divisions are growing also is drawing more college scouts and sponsors to the Seaside tournament.

In the adult divisions, there were no brand name adult players yet registered, but some of the better doubles teams from last year, such as British Columbia's Dan and Sean Casey and Eric Brewer and Aleksey Kruglikov, plan to return.

In an effort to provide newcomers to the sport the chance to learn and play, the event will feature a court, sponsored by Providence Seaside Hospital, that is specifically designed for novice players.

"We truly designed this year with the player experience in mind," Owen said, adding organizers want to give the event a fun and exciting vibe — "a youthful vibe" that will appeal to the young players who are becoming the lifeblood of the Seaside tournament. "[That vibe is] the laughter, it's the fun, it's the enthusiasm of the event and the day."

'We truly designed this year with the player experience in mind.'

Brian Owen

Seaside Chamber of Commerce executive director

matches, Owen would suggest keeping an eye on the youth players, or the 14- to 16-year-olds. He would not give names, as the players are minors, but he said some of the best northwest players,

in addition to clubs from Chicago, San Diego, Los Angeles and other large cities, are attending the Seaside event.

Because many of the youth are working toward obtaining scholarships to

play collegiate beach volleyball, they compete at a high caliber.

"This is an event that a lot of these clubs come to so they can play each other at one location, rather than



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Northwest Blazers' Orange team, following their recent championship win in Arizona. The team includes Abby Anderson of Glencoe (top row, center), N'Dea Flye of Oregon City (front row, far left) and Seaside's Maddi Utti (front row, far right).

Utti and the Blazers win big in Arizona

EO Media Group

Led by a trio of players from Oregon, the Northwest Blazers' Orange team won the Arizona Elite NCAA-certified high school girls basketball tournament, held July 23-25 in Phoenix.

An Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) 17U Top Division team, the Orange are led by Abby Anderson of Glencoe High School, N'Dea Flye from Oregon City, and Seaside High School's Maddi Utti, a senior-to-be for the Gulls next season.

The tournament was played in front of college coaches from across the West, and represented the

sixth-straight finals appearance for the Northwest Blazers in their sixth National NCAA-certified event this season.

The Blazers went 5-0 in the Arizona Elite tournament, scoring wins over Team Arizona Red Elite (47-33) and the AZ Sting-Slaga (40-28) in Saturday pool play, and victories over Team Bibby Girlz (57-23) and the Clutch Players-Red (33-32) Sunday.

In the championship game held July 25, the Blazers cruised past Arizona Elite Black, 57-44.

The Blazers concluded their season in the Adidas Nationals last week in Atlanta, Ga.

Nominations wanted for Hall of Fame

The Seaside High School Hall of Fame was launched in 2001 by a group of teachers and coaches from Seaside High School.

The Hall of Fame has inducted individuals and businesses in the community who have supported Seaside High School activities, totaling 125 individuals, 27 teams and more than a dozen businesses.

An induction ceremony takes place every other year. Past inductees come and speak to the students.

Guidelines for honorees include:

- Alumni of Seaside High School who have been out of

school for at least five years and have demonstrated exemplary performance warranting consideration of nominations as student athletes or in the areas of career accomplishments or meritorious service;

- Supporters, sponsors, coaches and other individuals in the Seaside community who have over a period of time, supported, encouraged, and advanced the above members of Seaside High School;
- Teams or individuals who have earned state championships or state recognition.

The nominations for athletes will come from all the

sports offered at Seaside High School.

Nominations for activities come from academia, the arts, choir, band, debate, science, government or public service,

military commendations, noted authors and business executives.

Send nominations to Seaside Hall of Fame, PO Box 2101, Gearhart, 97138.

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Day & Time	5 AM Class	6 AM Class	8 AM Class	9 AM Class	10 AM Class	12pm Class	4 PM Class	5 PM Class	6 PM Class	7 PM Class
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TUESDAY	Court	Strength & Conditioning		Strength & Conditioning	Adults ball	Table Tennis/Cards	Strength & Conditioning	OCR	Court	Adults ball
WEDNESDAY	Court	Strength & Conditioning		Strength & Conditioning	Adults ball	Table Tennis/Cards	Strength & Conditioning	Court	Pool/Flies	
THURSDAY	Court	Strength & Conditioning		Strength & Conditioning	Adults ball	Table Tennis/Cards	Strength & Conditioning	OCR	Court	Adults ball
FRIDAY	Court	Strength & Conditioning		Strength & Conditioning	Adults ball	Table Tennis/Cards	Strength & Conditioning	Court	Court	
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