

Commissioner's Report  
18 Nov 2024

1. Since June ERVA Board Meeting...
  - a. ERVA hired and welcomed Laura Fitzgerald as the new ERVA Operations Manager - she began full time in mid-July and Lindsay Callaghan has stayed on part-time as our Operations Liaison, as Laura has been learning during our busy start to Jrs Div summer tryouts about 10 days after she started.
  - b. No Divisional Work Sessions were scheduled with the new Operations Manager even after her July 19 availability poll to all of us.
  - c. End of August we did a review of our part-time Operations Assistant, Lexi Morasch. She expressed at that time that she would need to diminish work to 10hrs/wk and through a review of the duties she supported last year it was determined that the 10hrs would be focused on Social Media with addtl help as able.
  - d. WOOHOO!! Laura Fitzgerald worked with Lindsay Callaghan to turn in our ERVA ROAS (Region Organizational Advancement Standards) submission to the RVAA Compliance Committee on Sat 14 Sept 2024. Should know by December about how we did!!
  - e. Several phone/zoom check-ins with both Laura Fitzgerald, Lindsay Callaghan and Treasurer Margie Ray.
  - f. Attended a portion of the Annual ERVA Club Directors Zoom on Sun 6 Oct
  - g. Attended USAV RVAA Meetings in Boston, MA Oct 10-14 - hosted by New England Region - Laura Fitzgerald also attended.
  - h. Connected our ERVA Coaching Ed Staff to Dr. Jenny Johnson, the new USAV Education Dept head, specifically regarding the Body Confident Sport Grant that USAV was awarded BUT to also help connect our Region's Leslie Flores-Cloud as Dr. Johnson gets to know the Regions and their successes/needs.
2. ERVA Member Statistics
  - a. 2023-24 Season End Stats - 🎉
    - i. FULL Members - 6010 up 13.4% (710 members)
    - ii. FULL + Limited Members - 10,104 up 19.8% (1,673 members)
3. October RVAA Meetings - Boston, MA
  - a. USAV Staff Report Highlights
    - i. Introduction of NEW USAV CEO - John Speraw
    - ii. Member Services highlighted several initiatives - New Club Director training (in the different systems USAV uses), Try Volleyball Events/National VB Day, National Ranking System support
    - iii. Events Indoor - 2025 Announcements (Girls' 18s in SLC 4/25-27, Adult Opens in Denver 5/23-28, Girls' U10-13s in Kansas City, MO 6/21-24, Girls' U14-17s in Dallas 6/25-7/3, Boys in Minneapolis 7/3-6
    - iv. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion - Welcome Dr. China Jude as USAV Organizational Inclusion Strategist.
    - v. HIROS - for Officials and Event Staff - in its second year and the training materials are available for training modules. It is 15min online training and will empower and prepare your event staff.

vi Education - New director Dr. Jenny Johnson - 125+ modules on Litmos (this is a challenging platform and Dr. Johnson presented she is going to be req a budget item from USAV for an LMS that is easier to work within and can multitask.

vii Natl Teams - GO USA!! Womens Indoor SILVER, Mens Indoor BRONZE, Beach Women Tied for 5th & 9th, Beach Men Tied for 5th & 9th, Womens Sitting - GOLD BABY GOLD 3PEAT!!

b. RVAA Meeting Highlights

i. AVCA - AVCA First Serve Showcase was held on August 27 th featuring Nebraska vs. Kentucky and Louisville vs. Wisconsin. The showcase had attendance of 9200 and TV viewership of 377,000 (2 nd highest of an in-season broadcast & 40% female).

ii. Sponsor/Vendor Highlights

SportWrench - Matthew McGabe - Built and managed by tournament directors. Includes options for team registration, club validation, rostering, hotel bookings, officials, and ticketing.

Starlings - Ginny Alexander (Director of Clubs) - in 28 states (19 regions) - \$70k in financial assistance to players, 98% academic graduation rate, They would like to hear about underserved areas in OUR region. If a STARLINGS group starts can we waive/discount our fees, support new club growth.

Go Sleeves - Roy Carillo - New partnership with USAV regions. A sleeve version of KT Tape - built in kinesio strips made of silicon that mimics the pull of the skin to open up the blood flow and Lymphatics. A recovery system after a hard day of training/performance.

VolleyStation - tech co for vb events - scoresheets ;-)- mobile app that replaces the scoresheet - tried it myself...NOT BAD ;-)

NCSI (BGS Company) - Turnaround time is down to 3.8 days over 5.2 days last year.

EPIC - Jennifer Rains - Per member rate decreased 2%. The expiring rate was \$6.48 cost per member, and the renewal estimate is \$6.35 per member. USAV assessed amount decreased to \$7 per member. VERY UNUSUAL AND FAVORABLE. Coverage bound through Rokstone

iii ALL STAR CHAMPIONSHIPS UPDATE Kenyon/Bishop –

2024 DesMoines IA – July 18-21 – GO ERVA!

2025 Madison, WI - July 22 arrival, July 23 check-in/practice, July 24-27 competition

The 20 Regions participating in DesMoines will vote for the 2026 location - choices were Tulsa OK, Columbus OH, and Ft Lauderdale FL

2024 NTDP training dates are moving to a trimester and not a quarterly training (from 4 to 3) – they are removing the summer training

2026 Announcement!! Columbus OH!!!

iv. YMCA/USAV Alliance Proposal - Steve Bishop (FL) & Chris Seilkop (YMCA)

Propose a strategic alliance between USA Volleyball and the YMCA stands to create a significant impact on community sports engagement and youth development. By harnessing our collective resources, expertise, and commitment to creating more opportunities, we can enhance the volleyball experience for countless individuals, ensuring the growth and vitality of the sport for generations to come.

v. Motions of Note - per new requirements from the USOC, there are athletes present on the NGBs various voting bodies - athlete present for our meetings was Erin Shean - Kawika Shoji was not available.

Compliance Motion 2 - Beginning in Sept. 2025, the ROAS commitment is a two-year commitment required by the Regions. In the first year, the region will submit their information to be reviewed, as consistent with previous policy. In the second year, the region will provide an individual (commissioner, staff member, board member or approved volunteer) to participate in the review committee. A region is considered out of compliance if both cycles of the commitments are not fulfilled. (Armson-Dyer, Cranswick) - Motion carries 37-1

Competition Motion 3 - RVAA ENDORSES THE PROPOSED RULES OF THE GAME CHANGES FOR 1) SUBSTITUTION LIMIT TO INCREASE FROM 12 TO 15. 2) LIBERO RULE To allow two libero players to be designated for each set by indicating the players' numbers on the lineup sheet for the set. Only one libero is allowed on the court at a time and is only allowed to serve in one position. Motion carries 37-0-1

Beach Motion 1 - The RVAA recommends that USAV move all USAV sanctioned BEACH event division registration, from the current "Date-of-Birth" (DOB) model to the "Graduation Year" model, effective immediately (incl. current 24/25 season). For initial seasons, the Divisions would include 12th grade, 10th grade, 8th grade, and 6th grade divisions (similar to the current 18U, 16U, 14U, 12U two-year registration process). We recognize future potential of moving to single grade-year in unison with other select organizations, after more analysis is completed - Motion carries 26-2-3

Floor Motion 1 - Do away with all RVAA weighted voting in the RVAA

Currently this includes USAV BOD seats and the Nominating Committee position for the USAV Board of Directors. Each region would then have one vote for these positions and all future votes. Motion carries 35-1-2

Floor Motion 2 - Recommend to USAV Board of Directors to allow a one-event membership be available for participation in boys national qualifiers and boys junior national championships - Motion carries 25-8-5

vi NEXT MEETINGS - USAV Annual Mtgs May 18-20 in Denver and RVAA Mtg Oct 11-12 in Denver AGAIN!!

SO MANY THINGS!!! 😊

Submitted by Meredith Coupland, ERVA Commissioner

**Operations Report**  
EVERGREEN REGION BOARD MEETING  
November 2024

**1. General**

a. **Staffing:** The office is adding another part-time administrative staff member, Kristinia Litau. She has begun onboarding and will start work within the next week. Her duties will include answering the general inbox, phone calls and prep for tournaments.

b. **Social Media Update, Lexi Morasch-** Lexi has taken a step back from administrative duties. Her hours are now minimal up to 10 per week and she will be focusing solely on social media and content creation.

**i. Facebook/Instagram**

1. Create posts to remind members/followers of upcoming events
  - a. S2C Tournaments, registration reminders
  - b. Sizzler Adult Tournament/others outside of S2C
  - c. Newsletters
2. Creative posts for more engagement
  - a. Posting on stories for more audience engagement
  - b. Prize package posts & giveaways
  - c. Team pics from tournaments w/ results
  - d. Reposting popular volleyball videos
3. Target
  - a. Get more engagement, follows, likes
  - b. Increase popularity in the area and beyond
  - c. More giveaways with our sponsors
  - d. Sponsor recommended posts

**ii. TikTok Plans**

1. Make creative videos to increase engagement with the younger community
  - a. These videos will be able to be reposted on our other socials
2. Videos can be informational
  - a. New rules (ex: purple card)
  - b. Upcoming tournaments
3. Make videos at tournaments to showcase the event
  - a. Funny interactive videos
  - b. Action shots of players
  - c. Interviews with players or spectators
  - d. Also just videos to increase followers that align with trends

**c. Region Audit | ROAS**

- i. ERVA will be in the last group of Regions who will need to submit their full ROAS submission in 2024 versus the annual audit information.
- ii. Laura completed and turned in the 2024 ROAS in October. We are waiting on review and feedback to make any necessary changes. .

**d. Membership**

- i. 2024-25 membership season began on September 1, 2024 and recent membership reports show large growth already at the beginning of the season compared to last season.

## 1. Outdoor | Browns Park

- a. Nets have been taken down and the courts are shut down for the season.
- b. Met with City of Spokane Valley for a season end meeting on November 19th to review 2024 outdoor season at Browns Park.

Overall, partnership has improved and any park issues have been addressed by the new park director. With the fall season approaching we requested the park maintenance group clean up falling leaves daily to maximize keeping them off the courts so they aren't incorporated into the sand. Additional attention was requested out at Browns this season and the improvement was noticed. ERVA expressed concern for the sand and needing a special piece of equipment to help level sand quickly in between league and tournament weekends. The city advised they would not be able to fund it but would help look into grant opportunities for ERVA. We requested WiFi and a camera at the courts to help deter vandalism to equipment. The city is working on adding an addendum in the contract to allow these changes.

The City, ERVA, and Kokua are still working towards making Browns a premier location for beach events in the northwest. We all want to work towards seeing more events and in turn the City will continue efforts into helping support these events whether it be related to costs or marketing etc.

## 2. Adult Division

### a. Sizzler | December 27-29, 2024

- i. 91 Teams total so far
- ii. Keeping the bar in the same location as 2023. Which will allow us to take up to 112 teams. Planning on working towards a Master's Division for 2025.
- iii. Looking at adding additional enhancements to the event
  1. Center Court Add-Ons
  2. Open Finals run like a full match with "media" timeouts for spectator engagement
  3. Added giveaways, contests during event while engaging social media presence
  4. Song request and/or shout outs QR code
  5. 50/50 Raffle for the day.
  6. Social Change to Casino Night from the traditional Banquet. New location at the Ballroom in the DoubleTree Hilton.

### b. Spike2Care

- i. December Tournament
  1. Sizzler Warm-Up: Dec. 7 at the HUB
- ii. Other events scheduled 1 per month Jan-April

### c. General Adult

- a. Isaac stepped down from Spike2Care. We are in need of a Spike2Care rep for the region to replace him.

## 3. Junior Division

### a. Boys

#### i. Western Boys Power League Unification

1. The partnership between CEVA, ERVA and the WBPL is going strong.

Registration opened for all the events on October 1, 2024 in AES. Numbers for the WBPL and Border Smackdown are already approaching 20-30 teams.

We have also updated the website for the WBPL and the three partner groups will keep the website updated throughout the season with event information, links, the ranking sheet, photos and more. <https://www.boyswbpl.org/>

## **ii. Boys High School League**

1. Efforts for Boy's High School remain the same per last year's report: Working with Chan Esperas, Kokua VBC Director, Billie Hwang, Roland Madany and other interested parties. The ERVA is supporting the effort to get a boys high school league started in the Spokane/CDA area for the 202 Spring Season.

Billie has 20 teams on the west side of the state and Kodiak from Leavenworth, WA participated last season in the WA State Championship event in May.

We are looking to organize efforts within local schools to develop school teams to participate in local practices, games and travel to participate in the culminating WA State Championships event this year in May as well. We are looking at hosting a fundraiser tournament to raise money for these teams to travel to the championships while keeping cost as low as possible for participating players.

We are seeking support from school districts and Athletic Directors. We have interested parties and Chan has started efforts by engaging his players and contacts within schools. We are looking to support his efforts through the winter to have the league begin in the Spring.

The goal of these efforts is to be able to create these opportunities throughout the State and move towards HS sanctioning of the sport of Boys Volleyball in the schools.

## **iii. Border Smackdown | May 10-12, 2023**

1. Registration is open on AES, 57 teams have registered so far.
2. Planning a coaching education clinic on Friday evening.

## **b. Girls**

### **i. Junior Work Session Topics**

#### **1. Power League Expansion**

- a. Will expand Power League from 16 to 40 teams instead of moving non-qualified teams into alternate tournaments. Allows for more movement within the power league by adding another division.

Current registration is at 39 for the U14 division and 40 for the U16 division.

#### **2. Bid Tournament Dates**

- a. Consolidated Bid tournaments to the "early" March date that has been previously only the U18 age group. All ages will participate in March for the Region bids.

By hosting them earlier it allows teams to make travel arrangements earlier reducing the cost of airfare and book hotel blocks sooner if needed. Many of the ERVA bid divisions are awarded without a tournament due to limited interest so we are able to award bids earlier either way to allow teams a longer planning window.

**c. Preseason Meetings**

**i. Tournament Directors Meeting on October 20, 2024 via Zoom.**

1. This meeting covered any updates and information clubs need if they are hosting an event sanctioned under the Region this season.
2. Tournament Sign Up Day on AES will be December 7, 2024 this season.

**ii. General ALL Directors Meeting on October 6 , 2024 via Zoom**

1. This meeting covered all the upcoming information club admin will need for the 24-25 season. This was hosted via zoom to incorporate Lindsay, since Laura was still training. The goal for next year is to do an in-person meeting. To increase interaction and engagement with the attendees we did the jeopardy game again. We had engagement from a lot of the attendees for the game portion and it was fun to see the playful competitiveness via the Zoom meeting. We awarded the top 4 winners with ERVA prizes and sent those via mail.

d. Fall Tryouts begin on November 1, 2024 for all age groups.

**e. Coaching Education**

**i. 2023-24 Coaching clinics**

In addition to the Region hosted clinics we are continuing to add a clinic request to the 2024 tournament request forms so clubs could request coaching clinics to accompany their club hosted tournaments. Co-Hosting a clinic allows the host club to send coaches to the clinic for free by providing the facility for the event at no cost to the Region. Outside coaches can register for the clinics at a low cost of \$25/person. Charging a small fee helps offset clinic costs and ensures attendees who register come to the clinic.

1. Spokane, Dec 27-28
2. Yakima, Dec 30-31 | Team Yakima-Midwinter Classic
3. Wenatchee- TBD
4. Lewiston, Dec 30th
5. Montana- TBD

**ii. AVCA**

We have not finalized our contract yet with AVCA. They have not responded back to Leslie and Laura to schedule a meeting. Teams haven't taken them up on the offer to get

AVCA memberships. We may look to drop this partnership as it is not seemingly something the region community members are wanting to participate in.

iii. **Art of Coaching**

We will continue to purchase 150 memberships for our region. Leslie is divvying out these memberships this season.

f. **All-Stars**

i. **Tryouts**

Currently setting up our tryout schedule for 2024-2025 season. Tentative schedule to follow soon! See Leslie's report for more information.

g. **Work Session**

i. **Pay Rate**

1. Moved R1's to per match rate versus a flat rate to ensure officials are compensated for all the matches they work.
2. Day Officials will track number of matches for R1's and report to tournament director's
3. R1's at club hosted events may not be paid on site due to the per match payment but they will need to send payment by mail within 3 business days of event or communicate otherwise to officials.

ii. Addition of Area Representatives to the Advisory Board Positions to Officials Division to create the same committee structure as the other divisions.

1. Allows for more involvement within the officials division to help mentor and grow officials to be a part of the ERVA.
2. Allows for local contact for officials in our large region.
3. Allows for officials to bring area specific knowledge and issues forward

iii. Separated the Assignor position from the Officials Director description in the bylaws. New Assignor is Heather Darrough, working alongside Linda Kildew.

Approved increase in stipend for the assignor position requested due to an increased number of overall events.

iv. **Officials Incentive Program**

1. Partnered with BAMBU to create the officials incentive program. We will continue to use this platform throughout the 2024-2025 season with hopes to expand to Club Directors and Coaches then finally Junior players.
2. There were some pain points with the system last year. We will be doing an overview for officials at the upcoming meeting with hopes they can utilize this app more frequently this year.

v. **Junior Officials Program**

1. We are continuing efforts to develop Junior Officials pins/cards to distribute to the officials at the meeting so they can hand them out throughout the season to award juniors for outstanding officiating and recruit them to our junior officials program.

The card with the pin will have a QR code that will take them to the Region interest form for them to fill out so we can contact them to get involved.

USAVolleyball has a similar program for recruiting juniors at Nationals and have created marketing material #refvolleyball that we will incorporate in our promotion on social media and in the newsletter as well. They have developed some good materials we can utilize.

**vi. Officials Advancement**

1. Continue developing and making the officials incentive app a success providing more opportunities, incentives and engagement for officials.

**vii. Region Hosted Ref/Score Clinics**

1. Spokane, Dec 27-28
2. Yakima, Dec 30-31 | Team Yakima-Midwinter Classic
3. Wenatchee- TBD
4. Lewiston, Dec 30th
5. Montana- TBD

**viii. Preseason Meetings**

1. Clinician Meetings | December 1, 2024 | 9am via Zoom
2. Officials Meeting
  - a. **December 7, 2024 | Spokane at Gonzaga University, Jepson Center**
  - b. **December 8, 2024 | Tri-Cities, CBC, Building SWL, Room 104**
  - c. **MAKEUP CLINIC | December 28, 2024 | Spokane Convention Center at Sizzler Tournament**

## All-Stars 2025

This year the All-Stars option is:

15's (Birth Years 2010 and 2011)

17's (Birth Year 2009 and 2008)

My suggestion for the 2025 All-Stars, is to host a 15's team. This would bring a new class of athletes an opportunity to compete in All-Star Championships. I would also like to move forward in keeping the All-Star championships in this "Birth Year" group for 2 rounds, this first year in 15's the second year they would move to up to the 17's group. (\*this would also be subject to the FIVB birth year updates, which can regroup the birth years as they are adjusted every two years)

Last season we hosted an "All-Stars Camp" for this group as a fundraiser. Instead of the fundraiser for younger athletes, I would suggest hosting a college showcase. I am in the works of asking a few different questions to college coaches as to when this would have the most impact for our older athletes.

## Coaching Clinics

Starting the season by bringing in a national brand, GMS. We (ERVA) has teamed up with Gonzaga University and GMS on Dec 13-15, to host a 2.5 day clinic.

I will be working with Art of Coaching to host a clinic at our Regionals. We previously had a lot of success when we hired them in 2023. So, I am looking forward to a big turnout for regionals.

Along with these clinics we will have local coaching clinics sprinkled out through our season.