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○ September
Issue

○ 2020

Carolina *Volleyball Review*

From the Top:

USA Volleyball believes that volleyball has so many positive things to offer those who participate. First, and most importantly, whether one is a gifted athlete or a recreational player, volleyball is FUN!

For the last 42 years, the Labor Day weekend signified the traditional end of the outdoor volleyball season for me, and the beginning of a new indoor season. The weather was changing and getting cooler, the sun was setting earlier, and the change from playing barefoot on grass or sand to wearing shoes and playing on hardwood or SportCourt brought its own set of challenges...diving for a loose ball meant keeping your chin up to avoid stitches, rather than simply getting a mouth full of sand. (I did not always remember to keep my chin up and have the scars as a not-so-distant reminder). My good friends in Charlotte usually ran the season opening indoor tournament and sent all the participants home with a pumpkin to celebrate Halloween and the beginning of Fall. One thing that has not changed over the years is the fact that playing volleyball is a great way to make friends and create memories that truly last a lifetime and I have many of both.

Unfortunately, the 2020 Fall season will be remembered as the “season that wasn’t” and while it will create memories, they are in many cases not the ones we would choose to remember. High schools and colleges have postponed or cancelled their indoor seasons, clubs throughout our region have struggled with how to safely bring their coaches and players back in to the gym, players have been forced to worry about scholarships and potential lost seasons, and coaches and referees have had to find creative ways to continue to do what they love (coach and/or referee) while still managing to pay their bills. Many longstanding traditions went by the wayside as we

were all forced to come to grips with a challenge unlike any of us had seen before and none of us were prepared to deal with.

But that’s where the true character, creativity, and commitment of those that love volleyball has shown itself. Players have found a way to play. Outdoors, in groups of two, or three or four. Indoors, in small numbers as the state began to relax the guidelines – with masks on, and washing their hands between matches, playing in front of no one. Fist bumping after a great play instead of hugging. Coaches found a way to coach – online, or one on one, or in small groups as the state permitted. YouTube videos, Skype, Zoom, FaceTime. Sanitizing the gym, the balls, their hands and their language. Taking time to really look at WHY we do what we do, instead of simply looking at HOW we do what we do. All for the Love of the Game.

I know there will be a day when we are back in the gym, playing alongside our friends and teammates, scowling through the net at our old adversaries. Coaches yelling at referees. Parents



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CEO Report

The 2021 Season can't get here soon enough. From what I've been hearing and seeing, kids are itching to get back into the gyms and play this sport we all love. For sure, things are still in flux and the 2021 season will still have a lot of challenges and changes. But, we are at least hopeful we'll be able to start and end the season in some capacity—something we were not able to do this past season. Fingers crossed!

Until COVID-19 effectively shut down all sports and our country, we were actually having a great 2020 season. Memberships and teams grew once again and the Region was in a solid position. In the age of COVID-19, we are unsure of what we'll see this season. We're projecting a decline in memberships this year for the first time in a long time. We're still excited for a new season and hoping our clubs and tournament hosts will be able to provide a safe environment so that all that want to participate can. Stay tuned for more information on formats and plans to safely get teams playing again.

In addition to dealing with COVID-19 this season, returning members will see a new Member Management System being utilized for membership registrations and team roster processing. This has been a 3 year process to bring this new system to USA Volleyball. As with any new system, there will be some bumps along the way but the system has a lot of Help documents and videos. We're hopeful that eventually this new system will be a vast improvement to the old way of registering. See page 4 for more on this system.

Thank you to all that sent notes of encouragement to the region during this difficult time. We're ready to see you back on the courts soon!

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CarolinaRegionVB>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/CarolinaRegion>



Official Indoor Volleyball of the Carolina Region

Regional Achievements

Here's some accomplishments that Deserve Regional Recognition!

- The USA Volleyball Officials Assembly recently recognized National Officials for their service to USA Volleyball. Several Carolina Region officials were recognized:

10 Years of Service

- ♦ **Brian Jones** (Durham)— National Referee
- ♦ **Brian Webb** (Kernersville) - Junior National Ref/National Scorer

20 Years of Service

- ♦ **Bonnie O'Connor** (Apex) - Junior National Referee

25 Years of Service

- ♦ **Ronnie Mutter** (Carolina Beach) - National Referee/Scorer/Beach

- The USA Volleyball Officials Assembly honors numerous officials for their performance at various National events. The Gold Whistle is awarded to the Most Outstanding Referee at the previous year's USA Open Volleyball Championships. We are pleased to announce that **Michael O'Connor** (Apex) was honored with the 2020 Gold Whistle Award by USA Volleyball.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THESE GREAT
CAROLINA REGION OFFICIALS!**

2020 Meritorious Service Award Winners

Each year, USA Volleyball presents Meritorious Service Awards to individuals and/or groups that provide outstanding contributions to the sport of volleyball across the country. Each Region is allowed to select up to five individuals or groups for this recognition each year. The Carolina Region is pleased to announce the following individuals as recipients of 2020 Robert L. Lindsay Meritorious Service Awards. All award recipients will be recognized in the 2021 digital USA Volleyball Guidebook. A listing of all previous winners of Carolina Region Meritorious Service Awards can be found on the Archives page on our website.



Jim Ross – Jim Ross has been involved with the Carolina Region as a volleyball player, coach, or board member since picking the sport up in Graduate School in Greensboro in 1980. He was a successful indoor and outdoor player during his "younger" years. He served as the Men's Player Rep to the Board of Directors until he moved out of state in 1987. Jim returned to NC in 1996 and immediately became involved with the Region again as a Junior Coach and eventually the Junior Girl's Rep to the board. In 2018, Jim was elected as President of the Board of Directors.

Jennifer Rotan – Jennifer was hired in 2014 to become just the second Administrative Assistant in the office for the Carolina Region. She spent the next 5 years answering member's inquiries, helping club directors with building rosters, processing in person clinic results, and numerous other tasks needed for an organization with 12,000+ members. She had to move on in 2019, but her dedication and the smooth operations of the office made a significant impact on the Carolina Region.



USAV Launches New MMS For 2021 Season

USA Volleyball has launched a new Member Management System (MMS) for the 2021 season. The system went live on September 1 and began accepting membership registrations for the new season at that time. The Carolina Region is excited to see all the improvements that the new system will bring (some features will be available immediately and some are still in development—the system will continue to be updated with new features). Some highlights of the new system:



- ◆ Family accounts are now possible. Families that have more than one member in the household with a USAV membership may now manage all with a single login.

- ◆ Click on one link on the Region website to buy a particular membership or choose the “quizzard” to answer some questions to be directed to best membership option.

- ◆ No more transferring memberships/accounts if you move to a new region. Each region has their own links to their memberships. Just go to your new region’s registration page on their website to select the membership you need.

- ◆ Individuals will not choose a club during the registration process any more. Clubs will now send an invitation out to players to join their club for the season. Players will need to accept that invitation to be added to the club. NOTE: There are actually two types of invitations: (a) An invite to join the club’s directory to receive communications about events like clinics, tryouts, etc. This is NOT an invite to join the club as part of a team for the 2021 season. (b) Once you are in their Directory, the club can then send you an invite to join their club to be added to a team. So, families will need to respond to two invitations to join a club to play for the 2021 season. And players may receive invitations from more than one club (Especially the first kind to be in their directory). Only accept the second invitation when you are ready to officially commit to the club for the entire season!

- ◆ Members will see all their eligibility requirements in their account with links to complete them. There is easier access to the USAV Learning Management System from within the account. The region can also auto-enroll members into Officiating clinics.

- ◆ Club Directors will see paperless team registrations for the first time. Clubs can build the rosters inside their account and then upload them into the Region’s side of the system.

[Click here for more HELP information](#) on the new System.

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yelling at coaches. Hopefully when that day comes, we will all remember the “season that wasn’t” and maybe be a little less critical of the referees, the coaches, our adversaries, and ourselves. Hopefully we’ll remember all the great things about the game we all love and appreciate what we missed when it was taken away from us for a time. There are new traditions to be started...new memories to create...new friendships to make. In the meantime, take a moment to thank your coaches, your referees, your teammates and especially your parents. They are what make these memories and these traditions possible. On behalf of the Carolina Region, thank you for making all my volleyball friendships and the great memories they’ve created possible. I wouldn’t trade them for the world...okay, maybe not the stitches in my chin...

Keep finding ways to safely play/coach/participate in this great sport and help others do the same. You never know when you may need the favor returned. Hopefully, I’ll see many of you in a gym before too long. Or on YouTube. Or in the upcoming Olympic Games. You never know. There are still great memories to be made. In the meantime, stay safe!!