

2003 USA Volleyball National Championships

Nearly 500 teams competed in the 2003 USA Volleyball National Championships, held at the Minneapolis Convention Center on May 24-31, 2003. Competition was divided into two sessions: May 24-27 and May 28-31. The following accounts were contributed by the participants.



Miami Valley Masters 55s



Miami Valley Masters 60s

Miami Valley Masters 55s

Seeded 4th in our 5-team pool at the US Open we finished 4th, with a 1-3 match record and a 4-6 game record. We defeated Bay Magic, 25-10, 25-17 and lost to Sao Paulo Masters, 14-25, 18-25, Papakoa, 25-18, 18-25, 9-15, and Rustys, 19-25, 25-22, 7-15. All seventeen teams were placed in a double-elimination Gold bracket championship. In the playoffs, we beat Louisville Masters, 19-25, 30-28, 15-10, then lost to Just Volleyball, 16-25, 19-25. This put us in the losers' bracket, where we were victorious over Colorado, 25-16, 25-17 and Northern Heat, 25-21, 25-19. Facing Quicksilver Legends in the quarter-finals of the losers' bracket on the final day, we lost 14-25, 13-25. Of the six teams still left on the final day, three came from our original 5-team pool: Papakoa (who finished 3rd), Sao Paulo, and us. The Brazilians defeated Just Volleyball in an exciting double final for the gold medal. Miami Valley Masters finished tied for 5th in the Gold, which is the best we have done in the 55s' division. Team members were Rick Laskey (Jacksonville, NC), Terry Miller (Dayton, OH), Steven DiBacco (Huber Heights, OH), Steve Crane (Houston, TX), Rich Knouff (Sidney, OH), John Tokash (Newnan, GA), and Ken Rahn (Northridge, CA).

Following Nationals, the Miami Valley Masters 55s competed at the Senior Games in Virginia Beach, Virginia, on June 3-5. In the first 3-team pool, we lost to PA Keystone 55s and defeated Third Ward from New York. In the second 3-team pool, we defeated Bombers II of Tennessee and lost to Michigan 55s. Only the top two teams from each of the pools on the second day went to a single elimination playoff. We finished 2nd in our pool and were seeded 5th for the final day. In the quarter-finals we beat Oxford 55s from Alabama. In the semi-finals we lost to Michigan 55s, who eventually won the tournament. In the Bronze Medal match, we were victorious over Tennessee Wheels. Team members were Rick Laskey (Jacksonville, NC), Terry Miller (Dayton, OH), Steven DiBacco (Huber Heights, OH), Mike O'Hair (Hamilton, OH), Fred Gealey (Pittsburgh, PA), Ivan Woltmann (West Chester, OH), Rick Harpster (Wadsworth, OH), and Don Clark (Toledo, OH).

— Rick Laskey

Miami Valley Masters 60s

The Miami Valley Masters 60s participated in the 2003 USAV National Volleyball Tournament representing the Ohio Valley Region. We were in Pool 2, from which the Gold and Bronze winners came along with the 4th- and 5th-place teams overall. In pool play we lost to Just Volleyball (1st), 14-25, 7-25; Team Sota (3rd), 18-25, 14-25; Outback Steakhouse (4th), 20-25, 10-25; Rusty's (5th), 22-25, 22-25; and beat Palmetto 60, 25-22, 25-18.

We won our first match in the playoffs with Warren Six Pac, 15-25, 25-10, 15-9. Then we lost to champion Just Volleyball, 16-25, 18-25. We ended with a disappointing loss to Palmetto 17-25, 25-15, 13-15 after leading 13-10 in the third game. A fun time was had by all and plans are being made for next year in Atlanta.

— Tom Fulton