

The Juniors' Page

Bill Zehler, OVR Juniors' Program Director

ANOTHER SEASON... MORE RECORDS. We didn't get to 12,000 female junior athletes, but 11,880 was pretty close. There were 945 teams in the *Ohio Valley Region Kaepa® USA 2005 Girls' Volleyball Championships*, including 21 teams in the 10-and-Under division. We had a record 52 teams compete in the 2006 *USA Junior Olympic Girls' Volleyball Championships* in Salt Lake City, Utah. Three members of the *USA Volleyball Junior National Team* hailed from the OVR (Christa Harmotto, Bryn Kehoe, and Ami Stevens).



Grade Level Teams

The grade level category for Club teams was a huge success! Many of our clubs took advantage of this opportunity for athletes who did not meet the USA volleyball age requirement. Other regions *still* do not recognize these waivers. Therefore, teams planning to play out of region in 2006 will have to participate at the age level of their grade level athletes (one age group older).

10-and-Under Teams

The number of 10-and-Under teams in the region went from 17 in 2004 to 27 in 2005. Tournament directors graciously hosted several tournaments throughout the region for the age group. We encourage clubs to grow this division. Boys are welcome to participate in the age group on a co-ed or gender-specific team. Only one club took advantage of this opportunity in 2005.

OVR Girls' Championships

We are pleased to announce some exciting changes to our convention center format for the *Ohio Valley Region Kaepa® USA Girls' Volleyball Championships* in 2006. There will be no Friday night play for 17s and 18s, and the 15-and-Under age group will no longer have extended downtime between pool play and playoffs. We have tried for years to get away from playing on Friday nights at this event. We now have the space and the courts to do it!

The event will host 60 courts on May 6, 7, and 13 and 44 courts on May 14. The 17s and 18s (and probably all 16s) will be assured they will participate on a Sunday. The format will avoid conflicts with softball and track, and lessen the impact of proms on team composition. We will be able to accept 896 teams over the two weekends. We anticipate this should increase the participation of our oldest age groups in the event. It will not alleviate the problem of trying to accept every team that wishes to participate.

There is a cost associated with this improvement. The expenses associated with hosting the event will show a marked increase! We will use more officials and have greater staffing needs. The cost of labor for placing and taking up the floors will be impacted the most: not only are we using 20 more courts than last season, 16 of the courts have to be assembled and taken up *twice*! We have no idea what the price of gasoline is going to do to shipping costs. The event has cost \$175 since its inception. The cost for participation in the event in 2006 will be \$250.

We're looking forward to a great season of competition. Tom Kohl is planning many region hosted events for both Club and Open teams. Keep checking the website for announcements on all of our programs for Junior clubs, teams, and athletes.

Ohio Valley Region Kaepa® USA Girls' Volleyball Championships

10s, 12s: April 29 · 13s-18s: May 6, May 7, May 13, May 14

www.ovr.org/girls/championships/