



Huntington Beach Open Storylines

Huntington Beach Highlights

- The 2019 Huntington Beach Open is the first stop of the tour, taking place May 3-5.
- Since 2000, Huntington Beach has hosted more events than any other location.
- 2019 marks the 20th anniversary that a pro beach volleyball tournament has been played there.
- **Field of 24 Main Draw teams per gender.**
- **TV & Live Streaming:** One of the Final competitions will air live on Sunday, May 5 on NBCSN at 8 p.m. PT. Weekend matches can be viewed on Amazon Prime Video at primevideo.com/avp.

Hometown Athletes

Huntington Beach Local Athletes

- **Jake Gibb / Olympian (Huntington Beach)** - Gibb is an AVP veteran, a 30-time AVP Champion, and a three-time Olympian. Always exciting to watch and a passionate player, Jake won the 2018 AVP Men's Team of the Year award with current pro beach partner, Taylor Crabb. He is a two-time cancer survivor (testicular and skin) and huge advocate for sun protection. At age 43, he will be going for his fourth Olympics in 2020.
- **Ed Ratledge (Huntington Beach)** - After 18 years on the tour, Ratledge won his first AVP championship with Roberto "Rafu" Rodriguez at the San Francisco Open in 2018. He had contemplated retiring and then had the best season of his career. He enjoys training at the pier and channeling his inner Karate kid. In 18 years and 145 previous AVP Tour events, the best Ed Ratledge had ever finished was third. Ratledge is extremely entertaining to watch and is usually seen with his signature Karate Kid headband.

OC-Area Local Athletes

- **Sara Hughes (Costa Mesa / Hermosa Beach)** - Hughes left an impressionable mark on the AVP in 2016 while still a student at USC. In 2017, she and then USC and AVP partner Kelly Claes made history as the youngest team to ever win an AVP event at the Championships in Chicago. In 2018, she and current partner Summer Ross became the top ranked team to beat as the youngest duo on the tour, adding two more wins to Hughes' resume with a total of three AVP championships. Hughes was the recipient of the 2018 AVP Best Defender award.
- **Kelly Claes (Placentia / Redondo Beach)** - Claes at 23 years old, has made a name for herself

alongside Sara Hughes, as the most established collegiate pair. In 2015 at the AVP New York Open, Hughes and Claes became the lowest seeded team (No. 16) to ever reach the semifinals in an AVP tournament, finishing in third place. At the AVP San Francisco event, a match against April Ross and Kerri Walsh Jennings changed everything as they solidified their status beyond just the collegiate level. In the third round of the winner's bracket, Hughes and Claes nearly knocked Ross and Walsh Jennings off the podium in a 54-minute match. To that point, the Ross and Walsh Jennings were en route to the Rio Olympics and barely pulled ahead with a 17-15 finish in the third set. Claes and Sarah Sponcil will be partnering entering the 2019 AVP season.

- **Geena Urango (Los Alamitos)** - Urango is the only Mexican-American beach volleyball players ranked in the Top 10. She finished second at the 2018 San Francisco Open and third at the 2018 Hermosa Beach Open with Caitlin Ledoux. Born and raised in Los Alamitos, the fitness model and pro beach volleyball player interned for AVP in the past and is now playing on the tour. She's proud to be half Mexican and speaks conversational Spanish. Geena won the 2018 AVP Best Server award.
- **Troy Field (Laguna Beach / San Clemente)** - Troy grew up in San Clemente playing soccer and football, then moved to Lafayette, La. to finish high school at Acadiana High. He returned to California during the 2012 Olympics and that is where Troy found his love for volleyball. He decided to pursue a career in beach volleyball in 2017 and has been a one to watch since. This year, he is partnered with Tim Bomgren who is a Main Draw athlete, making this season the first time that he will be able to skip Qualifiers and automatically gain entry into the Main Draw. Look out for his signature pink visor on the court.
- **Nicolette Martin (Anaheim Hills)** - Martin started playing indoor and beach volleyball at age 14 and decided to pursue beach full-time at USC. She continues to make strides as a professional beach volleyball athlete and had her best season last summer with two fifth place finishes with Sarah Day and Allie Wheeler. She is also an extremely talented fine arts painter, known for her beautiful work on volleyballs.
- **Ty Loomis (Laguna Beach)** has been a pro beach volleyball player for 11 years & is the co-founder of IntellectualRevolution.tv. He's a two-time AVP Champion and went to UC Irvine. In 2006, Loomis and then partner Hans Stolfus won the Australian Championships while in 2007 they became the first U.S. men's team to medal in the Pan American Games (silver medal).
- **Donald Sun (Newport Beach)** – Although not a competing athlete on the AVP, Donald is an avid volleyball player, the managing partner of AVP and he grew up in Fountain Valley. Sun played volleyball at University High School in Irvine before attending UCLA, and currently lives and works at the AVP headquarters out of Newport Beach.

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