



**Los Angeles
Sports Council**

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International Beach Volleyball Events Headed For Southern California, Home Depot Center in '03, '04 and '05

AVP, the Los Angeles Sports Council and The Home Depot Center Host First of Three Swatch-FIVB World Tour Grand Slam Olympic Qualifiers Sept. 18 – 21 in Carson, California

MANHATTAN BEACH, Calif. (July 24, 2003) – Beginning with the AVP Nissan Series Grand Slam Olympic Qualifier event at the Home Depot Center Sept. 18-21, Southern California will host a series of three major international beach volleyball tournaments over the next three years. Each event will be part of the Swatch-FIVB World Tour. The announcement was made by Leonard Armato, chairman and commissioner of the AVP, in partnership with the Los Angeles Sports Council and AEG, owners and operators of the Home Depot Center.

Additional events include a Grand Slam event in 2004 and the World Championships in 2005, also at the HDC.

This event marks the first time a tournament of this nature has been played in the U.S. since 1997. The groundbreaking agreement between the FIVB and the AVP will bring the best men's and women's teams from five continents and over 60 countries to Los Angeles to compete among the sports' elite. The event will offer \$300,000 per gender in prize money and more Olympic qualifying points than any other international event, and is the final opportunity to qualify for the world championships in Brazil in October.

"AEG and the Los Angeles Sports Council are committed to helping us grow beach volleyball in this country and that's a huge plus for us," stated Armato.

September's international event, featuring the best men's and women's doubles teams in the world, will be the final opportunity for teams to earn points towards qualifying for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. The event will also mark the first time a professional tournament will be held in an outdoor stadium designed with volleyball in mind. The 8,000-seat tennis stadium will become the tournament's "center court," with 4,000 tons of sand used to create the playing surface.

"This is a great opportunity for fans to see the premier athletes of pro beach volleyball showcase their talents," added Sports Council President David Simon. "A tournament of this magnitude with athletes coming from places as far away as Greece and China speaks highly of the Home Depot Center, the AVP and Southern California's support for Olympic sports."

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All-session passes for the tournament are priced from \$20-\$75 (for all four days) and are available at the Home Depot Center's box office, or online at www.ticketmaster.com.

The Home Depot Center, located on the campus of California State University, Dominguez Hills, was developed by AEG at a cost of \$150 million and is the largest-ever private investment in amateur athletics. The HDC has been designated an official U.S. Olympic Training Site by the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Marking its 20th Anniversary in 2003, the AVP Pro Beach Volleyball Tour is comprised of over 150 of the top men's and women's pro beach volleyball players in the U.S. The nation's marquee spectator sport combines world-class athletic competition with an unequalled environment of sun, sand and surf surrounded by an unforgettable beach party.

The L.A. Sports Council is a private, non-profit civic corporation whose purpose is to promote economic development through sports in Greater Los Angeles. On behalf of the community, the Council bids against other cities for the right to host major sporting events. Its successes include the 1993 Super Bowl, 1994 FIFA World Cup; 1997 Breeders' Cup, 1999 Women's World Cup, 2002 U.S. Figure Skating Championships and 2003 World Gymnastics Championships. For more information on the Council, visit www.lasports.org.

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