

# **2010 National Collegiate Volleyball Federation Championships**

Setting the Record Straight by Gary Colberg

Collegiate club volleyball across the nation will have the choice of attending two national tournament championships for both men and women in 2010. One tournament will be held in Dallas, Texas and the other in Louisville, Kentucky. The Louisville tournament will be the first sponsored by the National Collegiate Volleyball Federation (NCVF) which consists of present and past volunteer league and association commissioners from around the country who have for the past 25 years been the administrative leaders of collegiate club volleyball competition. I started this event in 1985 and have been at every national championship tournament since then. Consequently, I can attest to the inaccuracy of the statements that the NIRSA has printed on its web site entitled "The Truth about the NCCS National Volleyball Championships." The underlined statements are what NIRSA considers to be fallacies that the NCVF has been spreading over the past weeks. I wish to counter them for the sake of setting the record straight:

- **NIRSA has nothing to do with volleyball...**I am not sure where this statement came from, but the NCVF has never made such a statement and totally understands that the NIRSA encompasses a variety of volleyball offerings in its intramural sports and sports club programming. Whoever the NIRSA is referencing, it was not the NCVF that made such a statement.
- **NIRSA limits the number of teams that can go to nationals...**To date the NIRSA and NCCS have not limited the number of teams that have accessed the national championships, but the journey in accomplishing that goal was not their original objective. For the past three national championships, their tournament director budgeted a much lower number than what eventually was accepted and if I, as the Director of Competition, had not raised such a fuss about the lower budgeted number that they felt obliged to, teams would have been denied entrance into those past tournaments. Their reason was a very definitive one; too many teams created too much exposure from a liability standpoint. The few teams who were not behaving properly created an anxious atmosphere and with fewer teams, those occurrences would be sharply reduced. In fact, there was talk of structuring all of the NCCS national championships through a qualification format much like soccer has and reduce the size of those participating at the national championships. I continued to

resist this philosophy as the growth of volleyball would be paralyzed instead of increasing by continuing the “open” style format that is presently offered in a convention center.

- **The NIRSA Tournament won't have any officials...** Again I am not sure where such a statement came from, but PAVO (Professional Association of Volleyball Officials) will again be conducting its camp at the 2010 Louisville championships and those who are registered as national PAVO officials and USA Volleyball nationals sprinkled with regional and Junior national certified officials will be in attendance. What the NIRSA folks will recruit is a good question. While their Director of Officials, Sue Mailhot, who I have the highest regard for and recruited to work with me in a variety of roles some five years ago (not the 10 years as stated by NIRSA) when I assisted NIRSA, is an excellent volleyball official and administrator, will have her hands full attempting to recruit the same caliber of official that has been at the past 25 championship sites. I can guarantee that those officials at the Louisville event will continue the tradition of having the very best arbiters and all of the campers and regular officials will be treated equally with complimentary hotel rooms, meals for each of the three competition days and a pay rate equal to or above past championships. This group of talented folks bodes well for the 2010 teams, coaches and spectators once again.
- **The same people who used to run the NCCS tournament are now running the other event...** This is almost a truism. Jose Jones, who is the Tournament Scheduler and his staff of three assistants will be at the Louisville championships as will I along with Ric Washburn – Director of Officials and his assistant Greg Leong. Doug Hinton who has assisted the tournament desk in a variety of roles will also be handling a larger role as the Tournament Director, Anne Pufhal, long time NIRSA member and Official assigner during the NCAA women's volleyball season, will be assisting me in a variety of roles along with many other NCVF commissioners who have been conducting volleyball tournaments for many years. What NIRSA brings to their tournament from the past is Nick Todorovich and Sue Mailhot along with a variety of NIRSA professionals and student interns who will no doubt make every attempt to follow the past principles that have been established. But the necessary core of NCVF personnel who have worked the NCCS tournament, done the seeding, formatted the tournament according to the wishes of the students and assign the officials will continue on at the Louisville site.

- **NIRSA changed its name to the NIRSA Services Corporation and is now a for-profit company...**There is no doubt that this had to happen to protect the not-for-profit corporation of NIRSA and the revenue from the various championships it was conducting, principally the volleyball national championships, had to be funneled into another for profit entity for tax purposes. Whatever needed to happen at the NIRSA level is of no interest of the NCVF except when we asked for an accounting and transparency of what the revenue and expenses were of the national volleyball championships. The response from the NCCS was that it was not within their purvey to reveal such information. The NCVF felt it owed the student athletes who were contributing to this revenue stream an accounting of what was being collected and where the funds were being expended as entry fees were increasing at 3% each year. This was a major source of frustration for the volunteer commissioners and especially for me when requesting match rate increases along with paperless tournament results equipment, etc., over the many years after the NIRSA came on board (by the way, much of the publicity that NIRSA and the NCCS has been spreading has implied and in many instances is very explicit about being associated with these championships over the past 25 years). NIRSA's first year with the collegiate championships was in 1995 and it was not without much recruiting on my part to get them to become the home office for this event. To their credit, NIRSA insisted that women become a part of these championships (the first 10 years this event was strictly men as it was and still is the only major national competitive outlet that collegiate men have on the majority of colleges and universities campuses across the country) and at the Minnesota site in '95, eight women's teams entered for the first time.
- **NIRSA changed the date of its National Championship to compete against the scheduled date of the other tournament...**The truth is that the NCVF decided to not compete head to head with the dates that NIRSA held at the Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio which were April 8-10, 2010. These dates were held by NIRSA for many weeks following the Kansas City championships and it was at the KC event that the NCVF choose to split from NIRSA and conduct its own national championships on April 1-3 in 2010. It was only after the Columbus Convention Center requested that the NIRSA place a deposit on the selected dates that the NIRSA split from that venue and hooked up with Dallas over the same weekend as chosen by the NCVF which is now April 1-3. So another fabrication on the part of NIRSA and the resultant is that both administrative bodies will be conducting a national collegiate volleyball championship on the same date.

