

# Beach Volleyball Database

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## USA Volleyball Announces Athletes, Team of 2003

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.** – Danielle Scott (Baton Rouge, La.), Jeff Nygaard (Madison, Wis.) and the beach volleyball team of Misty May (Costa Mesa, Calif.) and Kerri Walsh (Saratoga, Calif.) are among the nominees for the 2003 United States Olympic Committee (USOC) SportsMan, SportsWoman and Team of the Year honors, USA Volleyball announced Wednesday.

The nominees are the 2003 Athletes and Teams of the Year representing Olympic, Pan American, Affiliated and Disabled Sport Organizations within the U.S. Olympic Movement.

Each year the USOC recognizes the top male and top female athletes and the top team as selected by their respective member organizations. The names of the athletes and teams are placed on ballots used to select the USOC SportsMan, SportsWoman and overall Team of the Year.

Members of the USOC Board of Directors and Athletes Advisory Council, along with representatives of the national media, comprise the voting panel that selects the USOC SportsMan, SportsWoman and Team of the Year.

Forty-four females and 46 males, as well as 28 teams, are being honored by the USOC for their athletic accomplishments in 2003.

Honored by the USOC last year for their accomplishments in 2002 were cyclist Lance Armstrong, figure skater Sarah Hughes and the U.S. Women's Bobsled Team.

Scott led the USA women's national volleyball team in scoring and blocking at the first Olympic qualifier of the quadrennial, the World Cup in Japan (Nov. 1-15), as Team USA finished third to reserve a ticket to the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece. Scott ranked second among all players on all teams with 40 blocks in 11 matches (3.64 per match) and finished eighth overall in scoring with 152 points (13.82 per match). On the year, Scott led the team in total blocks (89) and hitting percentage (.486) and was second on the team in total points (433) and points per set (3.38) as Team USA finished the season ranked No. 2 in the world with a record of 29-15. Along the way the United States won gold medals at the Pan American Cup and the NORCECA Zone Championships and captured bronze medals at the World Grand Prix and the World Cup.

At 6-8 and 215 pounds, Nygaard was a powerful force as he teamed with first-year partner Dain Blanton to win three tournaments on the Association of Volleyball Professionals (AVP) tour. The duo also finished second once, seventh twice and ninth once in eight tournaments en route to earning 2003 AVP Team of the Year honors. Nygaard, who led the AVP Tour with 180 blocks last season, was named the 2003 AVP Most Valuable Player in just his third season on the tour. Nygaard and Blanton also took the international sand by storm, winning in their first tournament together on the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Tour (Hellas Open, Rhodes, Greece, June 8). They also teamed to earn a bronze medal at the French Grand Slam. Overall, they finished in the top four three times in eight matches internationally to become the top American pairing on the World Tour rankings.

May and Walsh became the first team to go through an AVP season undefeated (39-0), winning all eight tournaments they entered. The dynamic duo also became the first team from the United States to claim a title at the 2003 FIVB Beach Volleyball World Championships by defeating two-time world champions Adriana Behar and Shelda Bede (21-19, 21-19) in the finals at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Oct. 12. Overall, May and Walsh won five international gold medals last season, including three of the four FIVB Grand Slam events and the World Championship. They also earned one silver medal, one bronze medal and a fourth-place finish in reaching the final four of all eight international tournaments they entered. Combining their success on both the domestic and international beach volleyball tours, May and Walsh won 13 titles at 16 events with a 90-4 match mark. The pair won their last 52 matches in a row in 2003, including 28-straight internationally. The duo was named the 2003 AVP Team of the Year. Walsh also captured AVP Best Offensive Player and Most Valuable Player honors in 2003.

The official announcement of the 2003 USOC SportsMan, SportsWoman and Team of the Year will be sometime this spring.

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