

2026 ATLANTIC UNION BANK NORTH AMERICAN SAND SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIPS

June 5-7, 2026, Virginia Beach, Virginia

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Stadium Location: Between 28th-29th Streets on the beach (2809 Atlantic Ave)

Event Map: <https://www.sandsoccer.com/fields-map/>

Volunteers: <https://www.sandsoccer.com/volunteer>

The 32nd Annual Atlantic Union Bank North American Sand Soccer Championships (NASSC) will take place June 5-7 at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. This premier event will host nearly 800 amateur and professional sand soccer teams, featuring divisions ranging from Under-8 to Over-50, making it one of the largest beach soccer tournaments in the world. Spanning from 6th Street to 34th Street—nearly two miles of oceanfront—the tournament is projected to attract approximately 100,000 attendees over three days. Notably, 77% of visitors are expected to travel from outside the Virginia Beach area, generating between 8,500 and 11,000 hotel room nights and significantly contributing to the region's tourism and hospitality sectors nearly \$15 million in economic impact annually.

Lauren Bland, NASSC Executive Director, shared: "There is so much excitement around our event as we are one of the last major soccer festivals leading up to the World Cup! We can't wait to celebrate our 32nd anniversary with thousands of families. The vibe at the oceanfront is upbeat, friendly and feels like the world's largest soccer reunion. Our participants have asked for more festival entertainment and we are excited to deliver a Vendor Village, nightly entertainment, and enhanced beverage options next to our stadium. Thank you to all of the sponsors, vendors, teams, committee members, referees, and City of Virginia Beach staff that make our event possible!"

The U.S. Open at NASSC attracts elite men's and women's beach soccer players not just from around the country, but from around the world. This year, standout athletes from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, Europe and our own local region will compete for

a cash prize and the prestigious title of U.S. Open Champion. In thrilling fashion, our newly-crowned NASSC U.S. Open Men's Champion and last year's winner—Atletcio Rio Beach Soccer Club—is returning in pursuit of glory, having won multiple international events already this year. They will be joined by the always competitive Maryzillians, Punta Hermosa and Barra de Santiago Beach Soccer Clubs. The crowd favorite, SoCal Legacy, from California will return for their 4th U.S. Open along with other local beach soccer stars.

NASSC continues to serve as a premier platform for emerging talent to gain national attention and potentially earn a spot on the U.S. National Beach Soccer Team and 2026 proves to be no different as NASSC will host a men's and women's U.S. Soccer Talent ID Center (IDC) on Wednesday, June 3 and Thursday, June 4. This is an opportunity for the top domestic talent to train and play games under the direction of U.S. Soccer Coaches & Talent Identification Managers. This is a critical element to U.S. Soccer's Talent Identification Plan and is designed to identify and evaluate potential players for U.S. Soccer's Beach National Teams, while increasing awareness of the sport and expediting elite player development.

Matt Whalen, U.S. Open Director shares: "Providing a venue for the entire domestic beach soccer community to be evaluated by our National Team Staff highlights the significance that Virginia Beach and NASSC plays within the beach soccer landscape here in the U. S. We are also extremely proud to host another edition of NASSC's flagship professional division, the U.S. Open. Both men's and women's brackets are stacked with talent, flair, and excitement and will surely showcase the best beach soccer our planet has to offer."

To honor the legacy of Dick Whalen, founder of the North American Sand Soccer Championships, the Dick Whalen Soccer Scholarship was established in 2020. This scholarship supports graduating high school seniors from the local soccer community and has awarded over \$60,000 to deserving student-athletes to date. We look forward to awarding the 2026 class.

32nd Anniversary Festival Entertainment:

- A diverse Vendor Village (26th-30th streets) with booths featuring local and national businesses with interactive displays.
- Beer Tent and Crush Bar overlooking the U.S. Open Stadium at 28th Street
 - Sandy Sidekick - the official NASSC Collaboration Beer with Pretty Ugly Distribution sold (stadium and select oceanfront restaurants)
- Sidekick sports:
 - Beach Volleyball and Beach Kickball
- U.S. Open Championships (Men's & Women's)
 - June 5-7 at 28th Street Stadium
 - U.S. Open games "under the lights" on Friday and Saturday night
- Beach Events sponsored by the City of Virginia Beach:
 - Discover an exciting lineup of vibrant festivals and unforgettable events happening along 17th and 24th streets.
 - Friday, Saturday and Sunday, concerts in 17th & 24th Street stages.

Since its debut in Virginia Beach in 1994, the North American Sand Soccer Championships (NASSC) has grown into one of the largest charitable sports festivals in the region, drawing thousands of soccer families who are captivated by the fast-paced excitement of this rapidly growing global sport. Being played 5v5 on 66+ sand fields spanning 25 blocks of oceanfront, the competition is as intense as it is entertaining. With its nonstop action, quick substitutions, and highlight-reel goals, beach soccer has often been compared to the energy and speed of ice hockey and lacrosse—only on sand. Bringing an event of this scale to life requires a tremendous community effort. Each year, NASSC relies on more than 2,400 volunteer hours from dedicated local residents to support everything from event setup and operations to breakdown. Their contributions are vital to the continued success of this extraordinary tournament.

NASSC is produced by the Hampton Roads Soccer Council (HRSC), a 501c3 non-profit organization. Proceeds from NASSC go towards continuously developing its privately operated 75-acre Hampton Roads Soccer Complex in Virginia Beach. The complex has 8 turf fields with lights and 18 Bermuda grass fields. In 2025, HRSC partnered with Landtek Group, Musco Lighting, Branham Electric Corp, Sprinturf and Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) to convert 6 of the Bermuda grass fields into new artificial turf fields with lights to deliver a world class upgrade to the complex. HRSC hosts over 30 user groups and events 324 out of 365 days a year. The complex can see 20,000 patrons in a weekend and over 750,000 per year.

NASSC is open to the public at no charge.

For more information, please visit: www.sandsoccer.com or call 757-368-4600

- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NASSC.HRSC>
- Event Photos - <https://www.sandsoccer.com/photo-gallery>

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