

Misty is A Bit More Golden?

Written by Dave Howard



The year end AVP awards are slightly bullshit. Sure, it is nice to reward single players for their work but for the most part this is a two person team sport. Misty doesn't work without Kerri and vice versa. Rogers doesn't work without Dalhauser, DeNiro, DiCaprio and Pecchi aren't as good in a Non-Scorsese flick.

But Misty took it all.

She won Best Offensive Player, Best Defensive Player (defender) and Most Valuable Player honors while also earning the title of Team of the Year with partner Kerri Walsh. Without Kerri, would she be this good? Misty has acknowledged this several times.

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Remember when the Belgium team almost beat them in the Olympics? Kerri figured it out. There was a spike by Kerri in the second and I exclaimed "Kerri just figured out how to play them!"



What's Next?

There are some distinct differences between the two. Kerri is very visible at events, Misty takes time for herself at tourneys. Misty can leave the game on the court, Kerri's sport consumes her every minute. Misty is great with the press, Kerri... not as much. Kerri is very focused on the sport and Misty likes to go do thing like "Dancing With the Stars" and throws the first pitch at Anaheim games I think the question weighed was, "Who is the face of the sport?" I think time will tell that Kerri is. Kerri keeps saying she is going to take year off to have a baby, but honestly I can't see that happening just yet.



Whitney Pavlik is Hottest Commodity at the AVP

But there are two exciting categories that the AVP awards have. They have "Most Improved" and "Rookie of the Year" this is what I pay attention too. Rookie of the Year is Whitney Pavlik,

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who has been heroic in her upsets over the year. Previous winners have included Rachel Wacholder, Nicole Branagh and April Ross all of which have been adopted by the top players and have become powerhouses in their own right. With EY, Holly and Misty most likely retiring she is a prime pick for Kerri and Nicole, unless the two pair up, don't be surprised to see the fickle Rachel Wacholder dump partner Tyra Turner. Pavlik will be a top ticket item next year, not only for the players but for the sponsors as well.

Nicole Branagh got most improved. Which without a doubt is the least arguable. Regardless of the "other" teams collapse in the Olympiics which could most likely be blamed on exhaustion (they snapped back after a week of rest), the gal from Orinda cemented her fate as a heavyweight.

So whereas I don't pay too much attention to awards, the players do. Next years awards and season will be a much more competitive one. Let the rumors begins!



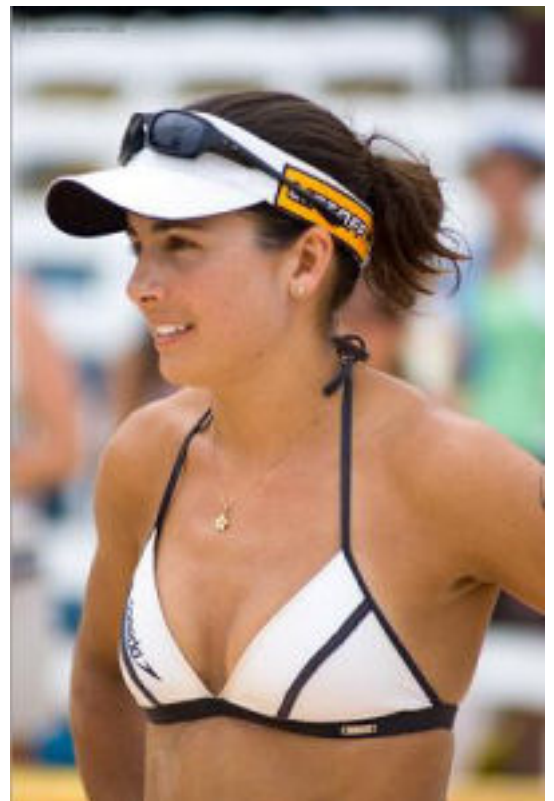
Nicole Branagh = Most Improved

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EY is hitting the rocker..or perhaps the coaches chair?



Who will Rachel Pick?