

## Interview Friedrich Hoyos

Friedrich Hoyos, Austrian citizen, who had lived for sports reason with his family for many years in South Africa and partner of the AS Monaco Volleyball club granted us an interview regarding his Beach Volleyball's perception and his opinion about the current evolution of the club and its aims.

**ASMVB – How did you hear about the AS Monaco Volley Ball Club?**

**FH –** Simply by looking down from my balcony, I had no idea about the standard, if there were high quality players or not. But, I always have been passionate about sport, and I had thought after talking to some people from the club that it would have been relevant to start practicing Beach Volleyball.

**ASMVB – Did you previously practiced in South Africa, Volleyball or Beach Volleyball?**

**FH –** In South Africa, it was very complicated to play due to the weather conditions, it was especially too windy during the summer. There were as well very few volleyball and beach volleyball courts since these disciplines are not very popular.

**ASMVB – What is the South African's opinion about Volleyball? Is it well perceived?**

**FH -** First of all, in South Africa Volleyball or Beach Volleyball are not common sports at all, it is not even taught at school. We could say nobody practices these disciplines. Due to the fact that South Africa is part of the Commonwealth, people tend to play mainly cricket, rugby and soccer.

**ASMVB – What drew your attention to the club? Which aspects did you appreciate?**

**FH –** I discerned a good potential from the different age categories, especially the young players. Regarding my integration, the toughest thing was to find people able to speak a sort of English, since much to my regret I do not speak French, but fortunately in the club's members there is as well an international community which makes me feel even more comfortable by being involved at the ASM BV as a player and also as a partner.

**ASMVB – What were your motivations to become a partner of the club?**

**FH –** Previously, I sponsored different athletes such as for instance, surfers, it provided me a certain experience of sponsoring. Concerning the club, I felt very good standards with a club evolving on a social basis. However, I did think that the beach volleyball section could achieve something else, first in local, regional, national competitions and then in international exhibitions on the long term.

Yet, to get the expected results it is necessary to spend money and invest it in the framework, especially with coaches who have to be efficient so as to teach our next beach volleyball generations.

Moreover, the Beach Volleyball Academy is a very interesting project that I did want to get involved in. I believe that the current 13-14 years old Monegasque players in 4 to 5 years would be able to reach at least the France standards. France has world-class indoor volleyball, but in Beach Volleyball Monaco can be competitive if we are really concentrating on this sport.

**ASMVB – What do you think about the current evolution of the club?**

**FH** – We have been very successful last summer, with young and seeded players, our aim now is to perform at the Games of Small States of Europe 2017 which would take place in San Marino. This is why I sponsored players, and we will make sure that they would be prepared as they should be. We will try to send our players during 7-10 days to a Beach Volleyball Camp prior the official competition. Our main aim is clearly to achieve first class results in this competition.

On the long term, in 2018, we also plan to have a 15-17 years old team, which would be potentially selected and enable to perform for an international competition in South America. Moreover we are concentrating on outstanding results at the Coup de France.

**ASMVB – According to your experience, what could be the next changes which would be beneficial for the club?**

**FH** – Ideally, we would like to get 4 Beach Volleyball courts, and at least 1 court which would be covered during the winter so as to let us train in good conditions throughout the season. We have to find a balance, because if we want to obtain the expected outcomes, we need serious practice.

Furthermore, our main priority during the following seasons would be to find other young players joining the club to develop them in competition players, and not only rely on the social basis. Currently in international competitions 99% of the competitors do not even know that Beach Volleyball in Monaco exists, and through these competitions we would create an international identity for the Monegasque Beach Volleyball.

**ASMVB – If you had to describe the club in three words?**

**FH** – UNIQUE in THE WORLD. I have never seen a country from this size with this degree of involvement in sport, with soccer, basketball and other sports have reached professional levels. I'm convinced that Volleyball or Beach Volleyball could be the next disciplines within the principality to perform up to professional standards. I sincerely believe that the sport background of H.S.H. Prince Albert is the backbone of this success.

**ASMVB**

**Adrien Lavrat**