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By Dennis Garcia
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ASHEBORO - High school sports is ever expanding and Asheboro High School is expanding with the additions of high school athletics.

AHS will feature a boys volleyball team for the first time this season, with tryouts Feb. 16 and the opener scheduled for March 18 at Page High School. Although the schedule is still being constructed, there are 10 matches firmly in place with more being added as the season draws nearer.



In a meeting to gauge interest held in November, more than 100 kids showed up with 64 officially registering after the meeting. This year will feature a varsity team with the hopes of adding a jayvee team as soon as next year.

Nicholas Neighbors, the jayvee girls volleyball coach, will be the head coach for the boys varsity team.

Having been around since 2018, boys volleyball is not yet a NCHSAA sanctioned sport, but most people expect that to change soon. The sport has grown from six teams in its first year to more than 135 in 2026.

"We are thinking beyond that it will become a sanctioned sport next year," Asheboro High School Athletic Director Wes Berrier said. "It's what we've looked at. We felt that this might be good to add to the rest of our sports programs."

The NCHSAA is well aware of the sport's popularity.



Boy's volleyball is among the fastest growing youth sports in the country.
Google image.

"The Board of Directors and staff are well aware schools are participating in boys volleyball," NCHSAA Board President Dr. Stephen Gainey said "Do I suspect in the near future sanctioning of boys volleyball will appear on our desk? Yes. Interests are changing over time. We are trying to monitor interests in different sports and act accordingly."

Boys volleyball started at the middle school level in 2017 with the first high school competition coming the following year. The Carolina Region Volleyball

Association governs boys volleyball in North Carolina. Weddington's Sarah Conklin is the Youth and Junior Boy's Representative on that Board and is one of the driving forces for boys volleyball in schools.

After coaching her daughter in volleyball, Conklin said her son wanted to play the sport, so Conklin and others started a program at the middle school level. When her son reached high school, she pushed for a program there, which started in 2018. Ever since, the sport has continued to grow and spread across the state of North Carolina.

"When I saw the impact it had on my sons' lives and it played itself over and over and over, it was an easy thing to get behind," Conklin said.

Since the sport has not yet been sanctioned by the NCHSAA, The North Carolina Boys High School Volleyball Association facilitates scheduling, rules and championships.

"I have talked to a lot of schools and some schools don't want to be in it until it becomes sanctioned," Conklin said. "They see how organized we are and say once we are sanctioned, they will join. I expect it to trickle down to middle school."

Berrier said parks around the city and the Randolph-Asheboro YMCA are filled with males playing volleyball.

"This is the fastest growing boys sport in North Carolina," said Berrier. "It's the fastest growing boys sport in the United States."

Neighbors, who has coached at AHS and South Asheboro Middle School and played club volleyball at UNCG, said he's been pushing for a men's volleyball club in Asheboro for years. He said he's excited about AHS' initial season.

"We have had nothing but support ever since," Neighbors said of the largely-attended interest meeting at AHS.

"Everyone keeps saying yes. There is huge interest in this area and it's something that will definitely start growing."

Neighbors has played volleyball for 19 years and coached for the last five. He said the biggest hurdle in beginning a new sports program is interest, but that hurdle appears to have been cleared.

The second challenge is having an administration willing to back the program and AHS appears to have that as well.

The rules for boys volleyball are the same as the girls, however, the net is eight inches higher.

"I'm excited and really expect this to take off," Neighbors said.



Blue Comets Mens Volleyball coach Nicholas Neighbors.