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**PENNWEST CLARION HOSTS FIRST CLUB VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT,  
BRINGING CAMPUSES TOGETHER THROUGH COMPETITION**



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PennWest Clarion’s club volleyball team reached a new milestone this semester, hosting its first home tournament and welcoming teams from across the region for a full day of competition and campus connection.

Seven teams took part, including PennWest Clarion, PennWest Edinboro, PennWest California, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, The College of Wooster, and two teams from Kent State University.

For the Clarion club, the tournament was the result of months of planning and steady student leadership.

“We’ll never forget hosting our first volleyball tournament,” said Zachary Miller, club president and junior sport management studies major from Baden, Pennsylvania. “This journey of creating a club like ours was built by the whole team.”

Miller credited the executive board with helping establish a strong foundation.

“My board – which includes Roman Giffin, vice president; Jace Collins, treasurer; Ben Paul, secretary, and Caden Heynes, fundraising chair – has been a huge help in making sure this club is run so smoothly and bringing a welcoming environment for everyone,” he said. “I wanted to make a team where athletes who don’t have the opportunity to play a varsity sport can still play competitively and passionately.”

The tournament also highlighted the broader PennWest community, bringing together students from all three campuses.

“Having all three PennWest schools there at our first tournament was a very special moment and a great way to promote PennWest in its entirety,” Miller said.

Support from university leadership added to the significance of the day.

“It showed us how much this club can grow, especially when President Anderson showed up to support all the teams,” he said.

Competition remained close throughout the day, with Kent State edging PennWest Edinboro in the championship match.

With each PennWest campus now fielding a men’s club volleyball team, the programs have launched a rotating tournament series, the “PennWest Showdown,” designed to build connection and healthy rivalry. Miller said he has valued working alongside fellow PennWest students Elijah Wigand, president of California club volleyball, and Hunter Rose, president of Edinboro club volleyball.

“It’s a great, fun time to be able to do something like that, to represent all of our schools in a great competitive way,” Miller said.

Clarion’s club is already planning ahead, with goals to host another home tournament and continue expanding student involvement.

“We are always looking for more players to welcome to this family that we have created,” Miller said. “We’ve accomplished so much, and we can’t wait to see what the future years and tournaments have in store.”

Long-term, the team hopes to compete on a larger stage.

“We are trying next year to go to Nationals in our league (the ECVA) to represent PennWest Clarion with pride on a national level,” Miller said. “We hope to be able to do this with possible funding and good fundraising to make sure we can make our school’s name be seen on a national level.”

Miller said hosting the tournament marked an important step forward — for both the club and the PennWest community.

“I am very proud and honored to be the president of this amazing club/family,” he said.

Opportunities like this tournament reflect the role that Campus Life plays across PennWest. Students build connections, try new interests and take on responsibilities that help them grow. Whether through club sports, student organizations or leadership roles, they find practical ways to strengthen their skills and contribute to their campuses.

