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adventures



AL-B Hannemann Wants to Take You on the Ultimate Swoop Vacation



Local boy and professional volleyball player Albert "AL-B" Harnermann does amazing stuff all the time. Aside from rocking the AVP tour, playing on the all-important Swoop team at the Six-Man Tournament and being an entrepreneur, model and movie actor (he's got a major role in Green Flash, which is set to open the Feel Good Film Festival in Hollywood on August 22nd), AL-B dedicates a lot of his time to the Dig For Kids Education Foundation, which he co-founded in 2000 with his cousin and fellow AVP pro, Eric Fonoinoana.

He explains that Eric won the gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympics and it seemed like the right time to try to start something like this to give back. "There is a huge disparity among sports programs and resources between beach city schools and the schools in underserved communities. We go in there and try to give them better opportunities to excel in school and in sports," he says. "And the best part is that I get to be a positive role model and mentor them to help them achieve their goals - focus on going to college and really give them something to go after."

"We just bring them the sport. We donate equipment and teach them how to play volleyball, as part of the overall strategy of mentoring and working with them. We've had five or six kids end up with college scholarships — after eight years of doing this, we really do have some great success stories."

Born in Redondo Beach, AL-B grew up in Torrance and still remembers how he was introduced to the sport of volleyball.

"When I was 13, I was taking the bus to the beach every day to ride my boogie board," he recalls. "And then one day a guy asked if I wanted to come and play volleyball with him. Pretty soon I started going to the beach without my board."

After winning a national championship as a freshman at UCLA, he transferred to the University of Hawaii and finished out his college career there. Shortly after graduating, he went on tour and started modeling, finding early success with a couple of huge campaigns and appearing in magazines like GQ and Italian Vogue.

A couple of years into being on the tour, AL-B came up with the idea of hosting fantasy camp volleyball get-togethers, where people could come and play and party with their favorite pros on beautiful island destinations - and his company Volleyball Vacations was born. They did one trip, their first, in 1995 and are now running a schedule of six trips a year.



Harnermann dominates during an AVP match.



AL-B and the rest of the USV pros at Halloween on Turks & Caicos last year. Photo by Allison Looder.

sports come together and just have a blast. There will be 700 people there and after working with the professionals in your sport or discipline all day long, there will be bands, DJs, theme parties, top shelf entertainment. We'll just spend the week playing all day and partying all night."

AL-B says that Swoop is the perfect kind of partner for a trip like this. "It's an unbelievable atmosphere, young professionals that want to go somewhere fun that's not cheesy. People come by themselves, in groups, in couples. It's hard to beat the experience of having top pros teaching you a sport in this kind of environment.

And it's nice now that we have a strong foundation to bring in other established companies and brands to partner with where we can all bring our individual groups together and have a great time."

Plus, AL-B adds, it's just a terrific place to visit. "It's a big, beautiful, high-end resort and they just did huge renovations. And it's all-inclusive, so you don't have to worry about a thing all week long. Everything is taken care of. You just get there, drop your stuff off - and then bring it!"



Acting in a scene from the upcoming movie *Green Flash*, which also stars Kristin Cavallari and David Charvet.
Photo by Chris Garlington.



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