

HANDBALL FUTURES FESTIVAL

Media Briefing & Interview Prep Sheet

For Athletes & Coaches • Colorado Springs, CO • July 22–25, 2026

THE STORY BEHIND THE FESTIVAL

The Handball Futures Festival began as a vision of U.S. Olympians and National Team members who saw a gap: too few pathways for talented athletes to discover and grow in Team Handball. They set out to change that — building an event that widens the pool of athletes coming into the sport, gives them real competitive experience, and connects them directly with the players who have represented the U.S. on the world's biggest stages. This festival is that vision in action: a bridge between the next generation of Team Handball athletes and the Olympic pipeline.

Handball Futures is the organization behind it all — we coordinate and run the Handball Futures Festival, working closely with USA Team Handball and our partners to bring this vision to life every year.

As a spokesperson for Handball Futures, your job in any interview is simple: be genuine, be positive, and steer the conversation toward our key messages below. You don't need to memorize answers word-for-word — just know these points well enough to talk about them naturally.

THE TUTT LEGACY: WHERE THIS ALL BEGAN

In 1978, Bill and Frankie Tutt created the National Sports Festival — later known as the U.S. Olympic Festival — to give American athletes consistent, high-level competition between Olympic cycles. The very first festival was held right here in Colorado Springs, the same year the U.S. Olympic Committee moved its headquarters to the city.

In their own words, the Tutts set out to “provide consistent, high-level competition for American athletes.” One of that original festival's biggest legacies was spotlighting lesser-known sports — Team Handball included — and giving them a stage to grow.

That's the model Handball Futures is building on. The Handball Futures Festival is our answer to the Tutts' blueprint: a dedicated event, right here in Olympic City USA, giving Team Handball the consistent, high-visibility platform it needs to grow toward LA 2028 and beyond.

KEY MESSAGES

Whatever the question, try to bring the conversation back to one of these points:

- Handball Futures is the organization coordinating the Handball Futures Festival — this festival exists because Olympians and National Team members wanted to bridge the gap and grow the pool of athletes in Team Handball.
- It's a showcase for emerging talent: athletes selected from across the country get real competitive experience while connecting with the Olympians and past National Team players who mentor them.

- We're building on a Colorado Springs legacy: the 1978 National Sports Festival, created by Bill and Frankie Tutt, first gave American athletes — and lesser-known sports like Team Handball — a consistent, high-level stage. We're carrying that torch forward.
- Colorado Springs — Olympic City USA — is a fitting home, and this event is part of the pipeline toward LA 2028 and beyond.
- Team Handball is fast, athletic, and accessible — and we want more people, especially kids, to discover it and try it for themselves.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS & SUGGESTED RESPONSES

These are talking points, not scripts. Use your own words — the goal is to sound like yourself while staying aligned with our key messages.

About the Sport of Team Handball

Q: What is Team Handball, for people who've never heard of it?

A: It's a fast-paced, Olympic sport that blends elements of soccer, basketball, and water polo — two teams of seven pass, dribble, and shoot a ball into a goal. It's high-scoring, physical, and quick, and once people see it, they usually want to know why they've never heard of it before.

Q: Why isn't Team Handball more popular in the United States?

A: It's one of the most popular sports in the world and huge in Europe, but it hasn't had the same grassroots pipeline here in the U.S. That's exactly the gap events like this festival are trying to close — building awareness and access so more American athletes get the chance to discover it.

Q: How can someone get started playing Team Handball?

A: Events like our Youth Try-It Clinic are a great entry point — no experience needed. From there, USA Team Handball and local clubs offer ways to keep developing.

Tip: If you're asked for specific club names, regions, or registration details you're not sure of, bridge to Communications rather than guessing.

About the Handball Futures Festival

Q: What is the Handball Futures Festival, and why was it created?

A: It was born from a vision of Olympians and National Team members who wanted to bridge the gap in the athlete pipeline and grow the pool of players coming into Team Handball. It's a multi-day event where selected athletes compete, train, and connect with elite players who've represented the U.S. internationally.

Q: Who runs the Handball Futures Festival?

A: Handball Futures is the organization that coordinates and runs the festival, in close partnership with USA Team Handball and our sponsors and supporters.

Q: Is there a history behind holding this in Colorado Springs?

A: There is — it goes back to 1978, when Bill and Frankie Tutt created the National Sports Festival, later the U.S. Olympic Festival, to give American athletes consistent, high-level competition between Olympic

cycles. The first one was held right here in Colorado Springs, the same year the U.S. Olympic Committee moved its headquarters to the city. That festival became known for spotlighting lesser-known sports — including Team Handball — and giving them a stage. We see the Handball Futures Festival as carrying that same torch forward.

Q: How were the athletes selected for this event?

A: Athletes were selected by Handball Futures' Players Selection Committee based on their talent and potential. It's a competitive, national process.

Tip: Avoid describing the selection as identifying the 'best' or 'top' athletes in the country, and never speculate about why a specific athlete wasn't selected — keep it general.

Q: What's the connection between this festival and the 2028 LA Olympics?

A: This event is part of the pipeline that develops athletes for the U.S. Women's National Team, with an eye toward LA 2028 and beyond. It's about building the next generation, one event at a time.

Q: What is USA Team Handball's role in the festival?

A: We're proud to work alongside USA Team Handball to grow the sport together. Athlete recruitment is a core responsibility of USATH, on top of the wide-ranging demands of running a national governing body. Handball Futures supports that work by expanding opportunities for athletes through talent identification and development camps — and the Handball Futures Festival is the capstone event of that effort. Through this partnership, Handball Futures focuses specifically on identifying, training, and developing new female athletes for the national team pathway.

Q: Will Olympians and National Team players be competing?

A: Olympians and past National Team players join us as guests — they're here for the Meet & Greet, Opening Ceremonies, and mentorship, not to compete. That said, some of the athletes who are competing in the festival are part of USA Team Handball's current national team program, so there's real elite talent on the court, too.

Tip: Keep the distinction clear: guest Olympians / past National Team players do not compete. Some competing athletes happen to already be part of the current USA Team Handball national team program — that's different from the guests.

Q: What's the difference between the Olympians attending and the national team athletes who are competing?

A: Our guest Olympians and past National Team players are here to celebrate the sport, meet fans, and mentor the next generation — they're not on the roster for festival matches. Separately, a number of the athletes selected to compete in the festival are already part of USA Team Handball's current national team program, so festival matches feature a genuine mix of rising talent and established national-team-caliber players.

Tip: If you don't know the answer, don't guess. Bridge back to something you do know ("What I can tell you is...") and offer to connect the reporter with our Communications Director for the specifics.

Q: What happens after the festival ends?

A: The relationships and momentum don't stop when the matches do — Handball Futures continues to support athletes as they move forward in the sport and the national pipeline.

Tip: If you don't know the answer, don't guess. Bridge back to something you do know ("What I can tell you is...") and offer to connect the reporter with our Communications Director for the specifics.

About You

Q: Why do you play Team Handball?

A: Speak from your own experience — what drew you in, what keeps you playing, what makes the sport exciting. Authentic and specific beats generic every time.

Q: What does this event mean to you?

A: Talk about the chance to compete at a high level, meet athletes you've looked up to, and be part of something bigger than one weekend — the growth of the sport in the U.S.

Q: What's your path been like getting to this level?

A: Share your own journey — how you started, challenges you've worked through, and what you're aiming for next. Keep it positive and forward-looking, even when discussing setbacks.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER

It's completely fine not to have every answer — reporters expect that. Use this simple approach:

- Acknowledge the question honestly (“That's a great question...” / “I don't have that number in front of me...”).
- Bridge to something you do know and that reinforces a key message (“What I can tell you is...”).
- Offer to follow up: “Let me connect you with our Communications Director — they'll have the exact details.”

Never guess at numbers, dates, sponsor details, or organizational facts. It's always better to follow up with the correct information than to get it wrong in print.