



NFHS Volleyball Points of Emphasis 2010

1. Conduct of head coach while standing – The head coach may stand only in the replacement zone, not behind the bench, and not closer than six feet to the sideline, to coach his/her players during play according to Rule 12-2-6. During the set, the coach should not enter the substitution zone, either during play or during a dead ball. If the coach needs a clarification of a rule or referee decision, a lineup check, a time-out or substitution, or has a scorekeeping concern, those items should be addressed to the second referee while the coach remains outside the substitution zone and in the replacement zone. The head coach is not at liberty to address the line judge or comment directly/indirectly regarding a call or judgment of the line judge. The second referee must intervene if the coach oversteps his/her boundary in comments to the line judge. The head coach would be allowed in the substitution zone between sets when submitting a new written lineup for the subsequent set, while changing benches and to tend to an injured player during a dead ball. If a team member (coaches, substitutes, managers, trainer, etc.) receives a card (yellow or red) for unsporting conduct, the head coach shall remain seated during the remainder of the match except to stand and request a time-out or substitution, to confer with officials during specifically requested time-outs, or as provided in Rule 12-2-5. On the first action in conflict with the rules, if minor, a verbal warning from the second referee should suffice through preventative officiating, but subsequent violations warrant issuing a card.

2. Libero – The libero is a defensive specialist who may only play in the back row and may serve in one rotation, according to Rule 10-4. The player must be designated both on the roster (with L preceding his/her number if it is different from the regular jersey number) and on the written lineup. If the lineup has been submitted by the deadline and entered into the official scorebook, the libero number may not be added and the first set will be played without a libero. The libero may take a position on the court after the original lineup is checked and may only be replaced by the player whom he/she replaced. One libero replacement may be exercised per rally/dead ball, unless the libero is replacing the right back position and will serve the next rally. Libero replacements do not count as substitutions and they are unlimited. The libero tracker should record all substitutions, libero replacements and should notify the second referee if there is an illegal replacement. The replacement must occur during a dead ball prior to the whistle/signal for serve. If the libero is injured or ill and cannot continue play, the head coach may redesignate a new libero player at any time during the rest of the set/match. Redesignation does not need to occur immediately and is at the discretion of the coach. The new libero must wear a libero jersey with a unique number not worn by any other player (see Rule 10-4-3(3)) and will remain the libero for the rest of the set. The original libero may not re-enter the set as a libero or regular player. One of the duties of the second referee is to monitor the libero replacements. For an illegal libero replacement prior to the whistle/signal for serve, an unnecessary delay is charged. After the whistle/signal and/or contact of serve, an illegal alignment is charged to the team and a loss of rally/point is awarded.

3. Timer's responsibility for all time-outs – As listed in Rule 5-7, the official timer shall report to the first referee no less than 20 minutes before the scheduled match starting time. The duties of the timer include testing the timing device prior to the match and timing the prematch warm-ups. He/she should be seated at the official table beside the official scorer. During the sets, the timer should time the interval for team time-outs (60 seconds), giving an audio signal at the end of 45 seconds and 60 seconds if the teams have not returned to the court prior to the end of the 60 seconds. The timer must also time injury time-outs (30 seconds), beginning with the referee's signal and giving an audio signal at the end of the 30 seconds, unless the referees have indicated otherwise or play has resumed. The time between sets is three minutes, beginning with the first referee's signal for the teams to report to their benches. An audio signal should be given at 2:45 and again at 3:00 if the teams have not returned

to the court. For a deciding set (#5 of best 3/5 and #3 in best 2/3), the timer should wait to start the 3 minutes until the coin toss is completed and the second referee instructs the timer to start the clock.

4. Informal Signals – The informal signals that the second referee uses to communicate with the first referee are listed in the NFHS Volleyball Case Book and Website, www.nfhs.org. Use of informal signals should be decided in the prematch discussion between the referees. One signal has been modified and one has been added for 2010. As a quick review, the informal signals are listed below:

- a. Set/match point is indicated by placing the index finger flat against the shoulder closest to the team that has set point.
- b. Four hits - Discreetly give four-hit signal in front of chest.
- c. Identifying possible back-row player violation - Discreetly show back-row attack signal in front of chest.
- d. Position of setter prior to serve - Several ways to do this: 2 fingers means back-row setter; 1 finger means front row; thumb means front row, little finger means back-row; may also discreetly show back row attack signal at chest. These signals may be used in leg, mid-section or chest area and are not necessary every play.
- e. Illegal hit - The second referee should assist the first referee in making illegal hit judgments by giving a discreet signal in front of the chest. Only when the R1's view is blocked does the R2 blow the whistle. In the prematch conference between officials, this is an area that needs to be discussed.
- f. Ready to Play - The second referee signals ready to play to the first referee after an R2 interruption (injury, substitution, time-out or scorekeeping clarification) by extending arm, open hand perpendicular to the floor with the outside hand on the receiving team's side. The R2 should be in position on the receiving team's side, whistle in mouth, when the Ready to Play signal is given.
- g. Communication of numbers to first referee - When the second referee initiates an interruption of play for a center line or net violation, the number of the player is indicated to the first referee. The R1 repeats the number using the following method: Right hand is base hand for numbers 0-9, show appropriate fingers using right hand first (nine would be 5 fingers on right hand, 4 on left hand simultaneously); "ten" is closed fist with right hand, 11-19, combine above signals, giving right closed fist for ten first and then right/right-left combination for second digit; numbers 20 and above, show first digit with right hand and second digit with left or both hands successively. (23 would be two on right hand and 3 on left hand; 26 would be two on right hand, and then five on right hand and one on left hand at same time).

5. Court management – Court management for the referee can be broken down into three parts: prematch, during the match, and post-match. Prematch includes arriving on time at the site, good communication with your partner on how you expect to work together and communication with host management and other officials. Your prematch conference with the teams and introduction to the coaches sets the tone of how things will progress. Be professional and courteous. Reminders to coaches for key deadlines, legal uniforms, rosters and meeting with the line judges are a part of the official's management style. As a second referee, it is important to establish a rapport with the scorer, timer and libero tracker. Establishing the types of informal communication to take place between the referees is important to maintain the flow of play. During the match, the referees need to make decisive, consistent decisions using proper signals to improve confidence and reduce controversy. Centering with good eye contact between the R1 and R2 keeps the officiating team together. The referees should be aware of their choice of words and body language when communicating with coaches and players. Follow the proper procedures for substitutions and keep the sub zone clear of coaches. Assist coaches by not allowing them to abuse their opportunity to stand and coach. There should be no arguing on a call. If necessary, use a yellow card to bring a coach back in line before he/she becomes unsporting. Addressing unruly spectators should be delegated to host management. Post-match, complete the functions with the scoresheet and exit the court area immediately as a pair. A post-match honest debriefing between partners about each other's performance is important for improvement. Continue to improve by establishing a positive officiating environment. Know the rules to keep the game of volleyball fair and safe. Know how to administer those rules not only black and white but the grey areas as well. Practice and develop good communication skills with the entire officiating crew.

6. Second referee responsibilities – The R2 has the responsibility to make many critical checks before the match begins. The second referee will check the scorer's table, the scoreboard, placement of the team benches and meet with the scorer, libero tracker and timer. During the prematch conference, the second referee is present and assists the first referee with review of rules, local ground rules and several other items to be certain the match is conducted fairly and with good communication. During play the R2 works closely with the crew at the officials table. The R2 handles a scoring discrepancy or problems with libero replacements. The second referee has the responsibility to check the receiving team players' positions against the lineup card and then move to the serving team side to do the same. Once the lineup is checked, the R2 rolls the ball to the first server and assumes the proper position on the receiving team's side of the court. Prior to each signal for serve, the R1 and R2 should make eye contact to ensure readiness. The second referee has primary responsibility for the net area. The R2 must focus on the center line and net with a down, up, down pattern. The R2 should continually transition to be positioned on the blocking side of the net and must do this quickly and without losing visibility of the court. The second referee is responsible for expedient and efficient substitution of players to keep the flow of the set moving. The R2 is responsible for assuring all time-outs are administered properly and smoothly with all parties involved. There may be times when the R1 is unable to observe the player's contact with the ball because it is out of his/her view. In these cases, which are not frequent, the R2 will step in to assist with the call. The R2 mirrors the first referee's signals as outlined in Rule 5-4-3 and checks the scoresheet for accuracy during time-outs and at the end of each set. The R1 and R2 work together as a team and good communication is essential. The R2's role includes good communication with the table officials and with the coaches at appropriate times. Proper mechanics aid in communication not only with the teams but the fans as well.

7. Line judges – Line judges duties are vitally important to the expediency of the match. Their duties are listed in detail under Rule 5-8. Signals are illustrated in the back of the NFHS Volleyball Rules Book. It is imperative that line judges be trained, either by the host school or the officials organizations. It is preferred for varsity matches that adults be used as line judges. Line judges should be trained prior to the beginning of the season and they should be trained with theoretical and practical training on scrimmage matches. Professionalism and impartiality are vital parts of their duties in addition to those specifically listed in the rules. During the match, their only communication should be with the officiating crew. In the unlikely event that any team member makes inappropriate comments to a line judge, that action should be reported to the first or second referee on the next dead ball. Flags are an option for line judges and the referees would inform the line judges prior to the match if flags are to be used and the specific duties and mechanics in regard to using them. Prior to the match, line judges are assigned their positions and should review the duties with the first referee. If each team provides a line judge, they should begin opposite their "team" and maintain that position throughout the match. In the case of injury/illness when a line judge cannot complete his/her duties, the LJ should be replaced.

8. Judging height of the ball on completed attack by the libero – One of the duties of the R1 is to judge the legality of the attack by the libero. The rule specifically states that the libero may not return a ball that is completely above the height of the net from anywhere on the court. The key words in the rule are "completely" and "anywhere". The back-row attack rule does not apply to the libero so where the takeoff is executed is irrelevant. In judging the legality of the libero attack, one must look at the path of the ball after contact. If the ball travels in only a downward motion after the contact over the net, the attack was definitely illegal. If the ball rises and then falls before crossing the net, it is likely a legal attack. The farther back in the court the libero is positioned, the more difficult the decision for the referee as to whether or not the ball was completely above the net at the point of contact. If the libero was in front of the attack line, judging the height of the ball in relation to the net would be much easier. One might consider the height of the player in the libero position, whether or not he/she jumps before or during the attack and the arm motion used. It really does not matter what method the libero uses to contact the ball, but whether or not the ball is completely above the height of the net at the contact and results in a completed attack. Another factor to consider might be the frequency of sets to the libero to execute attacks. If the setter is setting the libero with regularity and it appears that she is scoring several "kills" with the attack, the libero might be more of an offensive player and the referee should look closely at the ball and its relationship to the height of the net. Another thing to consider is if the libero is being set with regularity during warm ups and if the team is depending on the libero to score several kills or points with her attacking motion during play. Keep in mind also that to whistle a violation of any rule, the referee must see a violation. When in doubt, err to the side of the libero and give him/her the benefit of the doubt.