

# 2022-2023 Rules Interpretations Newsletter #1

## February 10, 2023

We hope everyone is having a great start to the New Year as we start this USA Volleyball season. I know for many of us, it has already been a busy season.

### MATCH CONTROL

As a reminder, USA Volleyball has made a commitment to reducing bad behavior by fans and coaches. Some regions have implemented procedures that can penalize the playing teams for spectators with unacceptable behavior. We have always had our cards to deal with bad behavior by coaches and players. You will be amazed how far a smile can go. A coach may be upset. A player may be angry. But if we stay calm and avoid making it confrontational, we can de-escalate the situation much faster. They may still be a little angry, but yelling at someone makes them think they need to yell back. We need to remain professional and be the calm one. The coach or player may still need a card for their behavior, but it should never be personal. Kindness will go a long way.

### JERSEY NUMBERS

USAV 4.3.3: The players' jerseys must be numbered in a permanent manner from 1 to 99 using Arabic numerals. The USA Volleyball interpretation of an Arabic number is the number should be in the form we normally write our numbers. Fonts that have spaces in places where we would not put a space are not considered Arabic. For example, we do not write with double lines. These numbers are difficult to read, and sometimes a number can be mistaken for another number. This is considered a graphic representation of a number and is not a legal number.



### NUMBER PLACEMENT

USAV 4.3.3.1: a. Uniform numbers must be clearly visible and centered (both horizontally and vertically) on the player's chest and upper back. We rarely have issues with the number on the back of the jersey. The number on the front of the jersey is sometimes too low. A club logo above the number sometimes pushes the number lower than it should be. If the number is marginally low, there may not be a concern; however, if the number is so low that it becomes partially hidden near the waist, then the uniform is illegal.

### CONTRAST

One of the definitions of contrast is: "Photography. The relative difference between light and dark areas of a print or negative." A simple definition is light and dark.

#### USAV 4.3.3.2

c. The color and brightness of the numbers must contrast with the color and brightness of the jersey. Color combinations including but not limited to purple/black, dark green/black, navy/black, white/light yellow or navy/maroon are not distinctive enough to comply with the rules.

d. The color of the number must clearly contrast with the color of the jersey irrespective of any border around the number.

The stripe that forms the number must contrast to the jersey. The number can have a border, but if the border were removed, the number must still contrast with the jersey.

Regarding jersey numbers, we need to make clubs aware of the rules, but if the number can be clearly seen, we should not be making this a big deal. The bottom line is, can we read the number? If a referee runs into a situation where the number truly cannot be seen, please refer the team to the USAV Indoor Rules Interpreter, Bill Stanley. In most cases, they should be allowed to play.

The same guidelines apply to contrast for the Libero uniform. Ideally, if the team is wearing a dark-colored jersey, the Libero should be wearing a light-colored jersey or vice versa. If a team has marginal contrast, the referee can ask the coach if the Libero has another option. If the referee can clearly identify the Libero, this does not need to be a big deal.

## JEWELRY

Some questions have been asked about jewelry and what is allowed. For those who work collegiate volleyball, the NCAA recently started allowing jewelry, but they limited jewelry to above the neck and stud/post earrings only. The NCAA does not allow hoops of any kind. USA Volleyball does not specifically restrict the type of jewelry a player can wear. USAV 4.5.1 Jewelry may be worn provided its nature does not present a concern for safety, such as extremely long necklaces and/or necklaces with large medallions, or large hoop earrings. We say, “extremely long necklaces” or “large hoop earrings,” but there are no specific guidelines to what is considered “long” or “large.” We all have our opinion, and some guidelines to consider were included in this year’s Critical Rules and Points of Emphasis module. If you feel something is a concern for safety, you can ask the coach to have them remove the jewelry. If they cannot remove the jewelry, find a solution that makes it safe, such as tape or padding. Once the jewelry becomes safe, the player is allowed to play. As a reminder, watches are jewelry and may be worn. Jewelry is considered the same as any other personal equipment. If jewelry falls off during a rally and we have to stop playing due to safety, a delay sanction is issued, and the rally is replayed.

## OFFICIALS’ HEADSETS

In the last couple of years, there has been a large increase in the use of headsets by officials to communicate with each other. Headsets have proven to be a valuable tool for officials. We also see these being used for training purposes, as trainers can provide immediate feedback while the trainee is working a match. As noted in this year’s Critical Rules and Points of Emphasis module, headsets MAY NOT be used with junior players or work team coaches who are officiating. **Headsets should only be used with other certified officials or in a situation where someone is being trained as a certified official.**

## WRONG EQUIPMENT OR COURT SET-UP

When a court is discovered to be set up incorrectly or a match is being played with the wrong volleyball, this is not grounds for a protest or to start the set/match over. The situation is corrected, and the match continues from where it stopped when the situation was brought to the attention of the official or tournament director.

## Q-COLLAR

The Q-Collar has been questioned about whether it is legal or not. This device is approved for competition and is considered personal equipment. If it falls off during play and the rally is stopped for safety concerns, the team is charged with a delay sanction and the rally is replayed.



## LIBERO BLOCKING/ATTEMPTING TO BLOCK/COLLECTIVE BLOCK

We have received some questions regarding what constitutes an illegal block/block attempt by a Libero. As a reminder, before you can have an illegal block, the player must first be considered a blocker (as defined in Rule 14.1.1). The Casebook has a couple of scenarios that address scenarios involving the Libero and potential illegal blocking situations.

<b>14.07</b> The Libero, who is standing next to R3, has hands extended above head height but not higher than the top of the net. S2 attacks the ball into the block of R3, who is reaching higher than the top of the net.	<b>Ruling:</b> Legal play. The Libero is not attempting to block nor part of a collective block because the Libero is not reaching higher than the top of the net.	<b>Reference:</b> 14.1.1 14.6.2 19.3.1.3
<b>14.08</b> The Libero, who is near the net, jumps and reaches higher than the net to attempt to block an attack-hit by S4 but does not touch the ball.	<b>Ruling:</b> Blocking fault. A Libero may not block or attempt to block. Reaching higher than the top of the net while near the net constitutes an attempt to block.	<b>Reference:</b> 14.1.2 14.6.6 19.3.1.3