



2024 Indoor & Beach Rules Interpretations

Newsletter #4 ~ April 15, 2024

USA VOLLEYBALL INDOOR RULES INTERPRETATIONS

PROTOCOL FOR SWITCHING SIDES (When Playing Matches Where Teams Are Switching Sides)

For many of us, 2020 was not much of a season...but the Rules Commission did change the technique for switching sides that year. When a set ends, the teams may go to their bench, collect their belongings, and change sides in front of the scorer table. Teams do NOT have to go around the net. This was announced in the 2020 Rules Interpretation Newsletter #2. Since the season was shut down, many never had the chance to use this new protocol.

Now that the default protocol is that teams do not switch sides, this is rarely used. However, if you do have a match where teams switch sides, teams do not have to go around the net when switching sides between sets. They can switch sides in front of the scorer table.

The only time teams must go around the net (or under the net outside the court) is when switching sides at 8 points in the deciding set. When switching at 8, the teams must get right back on the court to continue the match.

BALL ON THE COURT – IS IT A REPLAY?

Many times, in facilities where we have multiple courts going at the same time, we have instances where a ball from another court comes onto our court. As a reminder, here is the rule regarding external interference:

17.2 External Interference: If there is any external interference during the game, the play has to be stopped and the rally is replayed. (see also 6.1.3; diagram 11-Signal 23)

Many times, the “extra” ball is away from the play, passes through the court quickly, or a player is quick enough to kick or throw the ball off the court, and play continues. This usually means the ball did not interfere with play.

BUT, in my experience, the team that loses the rally will often argue that a replay should have been called. They will say things such as, “It distracted our players,” or “One of my players stopped.” This may or may not be true. If we blow our whistle right away and stop play, we never get to the end of the rally, and no one can argue that there should have been a replay.

We can always defend stopping play for player safety. A replay should be the normal; allowing play to continue should be the exception. No one can argue, “We should have won that rally” if we stop play...well, they can argue, but we would never know for sure. Remember, this is a **judgment call**. The 1st referee CAN use the officiating team to help make the decision, but this is NOT something a team can protest. This is a 100% judgment call. You should deny any protest where a team tries to argue that you should have called a replay—and remind the captain that if the team insists on protesting, the coach will likely receive a red card for protesting judgment.

R2 WHISTLE FOR A TIMEOUT AFTER SERVICE BECKON

A request for timeout should be whistled and signaled prior to the authorization for serve. Occasionally a request comes just before the 1st referee whistles for serve. When working as the 2nd referee, if we hear the timeout request prior to the whistle for serve, we should still whistle to recognize the timeout request—even though the 1st referee may have just beckoned for serve. If the 2nd referee believes the request was after the whistle for serve, the request is ignored, and an improper request is assessed at the end of the rally.

When working with a coach or junior 2nd referee, we sometimes encounter a situation where a team argues that their timeout was recognized after the 1st referee whistled. If this happens, the 1st referee must ask the 2nd referee if they whistled any time **after** the 1st referee whistled for serve. If the 2nd referee says they whistled (or they think they whistled) after the 1st referee's whistle, the 1st referee should award a replay and grant the timeout.

FILMING AND RECORDING OF MATCHES

USA Volleyball sanctioned events have seen an increase in matches being filmed with coaches or players wearing lapel microphones to record audio. **This is not allowed**. If the referee(s) discover anyone on the bench or on the court wearing a microphone, the match is stopped, and the coach and/or player are asked to take off the microphone. The offending team is issued a delay warning due to unauthorized equipment. If this is a team's second delay sanction, it is a delay penalty (loss of rally and point to the opponent).

In the event a microphone and/or filming is not caught during the match and the audio and/or video is used in social media accounts with the intent of making fun of or mocking the officials, the opponent, or the tournament, the club will be penalized. Always report illegal use of audio recording devices during a match.

USA VOLLEYBALL BEACH RULES INTERPRETATION

COACHING BETWEEN POINTS

SCENARIO: The match official states to the team and their personnel that coaches are allowed to briefly coach between points, including providing instructional content.

RULING: The match official's statement is incorrect and is a misinterpretation of the guidelines governing permissible beach coaching.

USAV Rule 4.1.4.5 states: Coaches *"during the match may give instruction only during timeouts, court switches, and between sets."*

NCAA Beach Volleyball Rules Modification 4.1.4.5: Coaches *"...may not give instructions during play, may give instruction only during time outs, technical time-outs, side changes, and between sets..."*

Coaches, when present, may "cheer an exceptional play" between rallies without sanction, but they may only provide instruction during timeouts, side-changes (also referred to as the "walk-and-talk"), and between sets.