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USA Volleyball has officially approved the modifications presented in this document in order to promote the sport and encourage continuity of play at the various organizational, local and recreational levels across the country.

For the official international rules of the game, which are used worldwide and developed and approved by the FIVB, please visit [www.fivb.org](http://www.fivb.org) or our website at [www.usavolleyball.org](http://www.usavolleyball.org).

USA Volleyball embraces this view, joining with all of its global partners to enable pleasurable participation from the broadest base of recreational play to the highest levels of international competition.

Volleyball can enrich the lives of all who play and watch it. It should be fun.

**WE COMMIT THE RULES TO THIS END.**



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## SECTION I

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# PREFACE



## MODIFICATIONS

For all designated international competitions, the FIVB rules will be fully in effect. In addition, FIVB rules are used at the highest levels of USAV competition (such as Adult Open Divisions and the All-Star Championship) unless otherwise noted in the specific competition regulations. When a USAV modification is fully in effect and supersedes the corresponding FIVB rule, only the USAV modification is listed. For example, USAV 4.3.3 supersedes FIVB Rule 4.3.3:

### USAV RULE EXAMPLE:

**USAV 4.3.3:** The players' jerseys must be numbered in a permanent manner from 1 to 99 using Arabic numerals. Duplicate numbers are not allowed. (see also USAV 4.3.3.2)

### USAV RULE MODIFICATION EXAMPLE:

#### **USAV 4.3.3.1:**

- a. Uniform numbers must be clearly visible and centered side to side on the front and back of the jersey. Numbers are recommended to be placed on the upper half of the jersey. Numbers may not extend below the player's waist and may not be tucked into the uniform bottom.

### NEW RULE EXAMPLE:

New 12.5.3: Any player of the serving team is forbidden to raise their hands above the head during service, until the ball has passed beyond the net. The 1st referee may warn a team through the game captain, if he/ she suspects that the team is deliberately screening

USA Volleyball recognizes that there are circumstances where grassroots development, sport development, safety, or insurance requirements would indicate a need for a temporary rule modification (e.g., the number of substitutions might be expanded to include more participants at a school or recreational level).

Acknowledging that a rule may not be changed, in instances where the USAV member organizations feel that the promotion of the sport would be enhanced by temporary adjustments, they are encouraged to promote the advancement of the sport.



## SIGNIFICANT RULES CHANGES AND CLARIFICATIONS

9.2.3.2: at the first hit of the team, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action. At the second hit of the team, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action, and the ball is next touched by a teammate.

### 9.3 Faults in Playing the Ball

**DOUBLE CONTACT:** a player hits the ball twice in succession or the ball contacts various parts of his/her body in succession on the third team hit or on the second team hit and the ball is not next touched by a teammate. (see also 9.2.3)

**New 12.5.3:** Any player of the serving team is forbidden to raise their hands above the head during service, until the ball has passed beyond the net. The 1st referee may warn a team through the game captain, if he/ she suspects that the team is deliberately screening.

**USAV 15.1:** Each team may request a maximum of two time-outs and 15 substitutions per set.

**USAV 15.6a:** Fifteen substitutions are the maximum permitted per team per set. Substitution of one or more players is permitted at the same time.

**USAV 15.6d:** Unlimited individual entries by a substitute within the team's allowable 15 substitutions are permitted.

**USAV 19.1.1:** Each team has the right to designate from the list of players on the score sheet (roster) up to two specialized defensive players called Liberos. A team may designate zero, one, or two Liberos for each set. If the team chooses to designate two Liberos at the start of the match, they are designated as Liberos for the entire match. If the team chooses to designate only one Libero (or no Libero) at the start of the match, the team may choose to change the player designated as Libero for each set, including playing any set with no Libero, but may not designate a second Libero for any subsequent set in the match.

### **New USAV 20.3:** Filming and Recording of Matches

20.3.1 Athletes, Coaches, and team members on the bench are permitted to record audio and video for team use. However, these recordings must not be used to intimidate, demoralize, or bully other teams, officials, the work team, support staff, or spectators. Additionally, teams may not record a conversation with a referee or the work team. If a team is found to have recorded these groups and used the audio or video to engage in such behavior, USA Volleyball will enforce regional and national policies accordingly, and content will be evaluated through the Code of Conduct lens and other protection-focused programs such as HIROS.



20.3.2 Players on the court are not permitted to wear microphones. If the referee(s) discover a player on the court wearing a microphone, the match is stopped, and the player is asked to remove the microphone. The offending team is issued a delay warning due to unauthorized equipment.

20.3.3 Teams may not post any audio and/or video in a public forum (including social media accounts) with the intent of making fun of, criticizing, or mocking the officials, the work team, the opponent, or the tournament. Discovery of such audio and/or video will result in penalties as determined by USA Volleyball.

**USAV 24.2.7a:** He/she controls the number of time-outs and substitutions used by each team and reports the second time-out and substitutions 12, 13, 14, and 15 to the appropriate coach or game captain. (see also 15.1, 25.2.2.3)

**USAV 24.2.7b:** He/she notifies the 1st referee of a team's second time-out and 15th substitution.

## SUMMARY OF EDITORIAL UPDATES

**USAV 4.3.3.1c:** adds clarification on the requirement for numbers to contrast with the body of the jersey

Rule 9.2.3.2: removes the double contact fault on a team's second hit if the ball is next touched by a teammate

Rule 9.3: removes the double contact fault on a team's second hit if the ball is next touched by a teammate

Rule 12.5.3: adds to the screening rule that players on the serving team may not raise their hands above their head until the ball crosses the net

**USAV 15.1:** increases the number of team substitutions from 12 to 15 substitutions

**USAV 15.6a:** increases the number of team substitutions from 12 to 15 substitutions

**USAV 15.6d:** increases the number of team substitutions from 12 to 15 substitutions

**USAV 19.1.1:** allows teams to designate zero, one, or two Liberos for each set

**USAV 19.2a:** adds clarification on Libero jersey contrast requirements

**USAV 20.3:** adds specific parameters regarding the recording and use of audio and video during and after matches

**USAV 24.2.7a and USAV 24.2.7b:** clarifies 2nd referee responsibilities for notifying coaches of team substitutions

Referee Techniques #16 – clarifies 2nd referee responsibilities for notifying coaches and the 1st referee of team substitutions





## BALL HANDLING GUIDELINES

In accordance with the spirit of the rules and to encourage longer rallies and spectacular actions, only the most obvious violations will be whistled. The first team contact may be freely made except if the player catches or throws the ball. The second team contact may be freely made if the next contact is made by a teammate except if the player catches or throws the ball. The third contact must be free from visible double contact and may not be caught or thrown.

## SPECTATOR/PARENT CONDUCT GUIDELINES AT USA VOLLEYBALL EVENTS

The following guidelines are intended to encourage positive spectating experiences in an enthusiastic, supportive environment for athletes, coaches, officials, and fellow spectators.

1. USAV Volleyball has a “zero tolerance” policy for unsporting conduct at local, regional, and national events.
2. Harassment, intimidation, or unsporting words or actions directed towards other spectators, match participants, tournament staff, officials, including line judges and scorers, may result in removal from the event. Attendance at future events may also be impacted.
3. A current membership with USA Volleyball is required to participate in any game or game-like activities.
4. Law enforcement, security personnel, and USA Volleyball Event Arbitrators (the “Green Shirts”) play an important role in ensuring a safe, fair environment for our young athletes and should be considered important members of the tournament staff.
5. Generate goodwill and good sportsmanship by being polite and respectful to others attending the event.
6. The Event Director and/or Program Administrator must be notified when any illegal activity is witnessed.
7. Spectator seating around the courts is for the primary use of those watching the match in progress. Spectators may rightfully choose to remain in a seat for an entire match without switching sides of the court.
8. Alcohol may not be consumed courtside at any USA Volleyball Youth/Junior volleyball event.

Club directors and coaches have a responsibility to address unsporting conduct, words, or actions, by spectators or parents associated with their club.

**WARNING!** Injury from flying objects incidental to the sport of volleyball may occur. Attend at your own risk. Please pay close attention to your surroundings and be alert at all times, especially during active play.





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## SECTION II

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# THE GAME



## CHAPTER 1 FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

### RULE 1. PLAYING AREA

The playing area includes the playing court and the free zone. It shall be rectangular and symmetrical. (see also 1.1; diagrams 1a, 1b)

#### 1.1 Dimensions (diagram 2)

##### USAV 1.1.1:

- a. The playing court is a rectangle measuring 18 x 9 m (59' x 29'6") surrounded by a free zone, which may be a minimum of 2 m (6'6 3/4"). It is not required that the free zone be symmetrical.
- b. For developmental purposes, the size of the playing court for 10 years & under may be reduced to 16m X 9m (52' 6" X 29' 6").
- c. For developmental purposes, the size of the playing court for 8/9 years & under may be reduced to 14m X 9m (46' X 29' 6").
- d. The free playing space is the space above the playing area which is free from any obstructions. For USA Volleyball nationally sanctioned competition and recommended for all other competitions, 7 m (23') is the minimum free playing space (ceiling height).

#### 1.2 Playing Surface

- 1.2.1: The surface must be flat, horizontal and uniform. It must not present any danger of injury to the players. It is forbidden to play on rough or slippery surfaces.

##### USAV 1.2.1:

- a. Players may mop the floor provided the 1st referee does not judge the action to be a delay.
- b. For nationally sanctioned competition, USA Volleyball must approve the surface.

USAV 1.2.2: It is recommended when using a portable playing surface that the color of the playing court be contrasting to that of the free zone.

- 1.2.3: On outdoor courts a slope of 5 mm per meter is allowed for drainage. Court lines made of solid materials are forbidden. (see also 1.3)



### 1.3 Lines on the Court (diagram 2)

**USAV 1.3.1:** All lines 5 cm (2") wide. Lines must contrast with the color of the floor. (see also 1.2.2)

#### 1.3.2: Boundary Lines

Two sidelines and two end lines mark the playing court. Both sidelines and end lines are drawn inside the dimensions of the playing court. (see also 1.1)

#### 1.3.3: Center Line

The axis of the center line divides the playing court into two equal courts measuring 9 x 9 m (29'6" x 29'6") each; however, the entire width of the line is considered to belong to both courts equally.

This line extends beneath the net from sideline to sideline. (see also diagram 2)

#### **USAV 1.3.4:** Attack line

On each court, an attack line, whose rear edge is drawn 3 m (9'10") back from the axis of the center line, marks the front zone. (see also 1.3.3, 1.4.1)

For USA Volleyball nationally sanctioned competitions, the attack lines are extended by the addition of broken lines from the sidelines, with five 15 cm (6") short lines 5 cm (2") wide, drawn 20 cm (8") from each other to a total length of 1.75 m (70"). These extensions are optional for all other events. (see also diagram 2)

### 1.4 Zones and Areas (diagrams 1b & 2)

#### 1.4.1: Front Zone

On each court the front zone is limited by the axis of the center line and the rear edge of the attack line. (see also 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 19.3.1.4, 23.3.2.3e; diagram 2)

The front zone is considered to extend beyond the sidelines to the end of the free zone. (see also 1.1, 1.3.2)

#### 1.4.2: Service Zone

The service zone is a 9 m (29'6") wide area behind each end line.

It is laterally limited by two short lines, each 15 cm (6") long, drawn 20 cm (8") behind the end line as an extension of the sidelines. Both short lines are included in the width of the service zone. (see also 1.3.2, 12; diagram 1b)



**USAV 1.4.2:** In depth, the service zone extends to the end of the free zone and shall have a minimum depth of 2m (6' 6 3/4"). If this zone is less than 2m, a line shall be marked on the court to provide the minimum depth. After the service, the line is ignored and becomes part of the court. (see also 1.1)

**1.4.3: Substitution Zone**

The substitution zone is limited by the extension of both attack lines up to the scorer's table. (see also 1.3.4, 15.10.1; diagram 1b)

**1.4.4: Libero Replacement Zone**

The Libero Replacement Zone is part of the free zone on the side of the team benches, limited by the extension of the attack line up to the end line. (see also 19.3.2.7; diagram 1b)

**USAV 1.4.5: Warm-Up Area**

The warm-up area is outside the free zone at the end of each bench or bench area, and not nearer the court than the front of the team bench. Substitutes must not interfere with play or the officials' duties. (see also 24.2.5; diagrams 1a, 1b)

**1.5 Temperature**

The minimum temperature shall not be below 10° C (50° F).

**1.6 Lighting**

**USAV 1.6:**

For nationally sanctioned USA Volleyball competition, the lighting on the playing area should be 300 lux (27.9 foot candles) measured at 1 m (39") above the playing surface.

**RULE 2. NET AND POSTS**

**2.1 Height of the Net**

**USAV 2.1.1:** Placed vertically over the center line there is a net whose top is set at the height of 2.43 m (7'11 5/8") for men and 2.24 m (7'4 1/8") for women. (see also 1.3.3, 2.1.2)



For specific age groups, the height of the net may vary as follows:

AGE GROUPS	FEMALE / REVERSE CO-ED	MALE/CO-ED
70 years and above	2.19 m (7'2 1/8")	2.29 m (7'6")
55 years and above	2.19 m (7'2 1/8")	2.38 m (7'9 5/8")
45 years and above	2.19 m (7'2 1/8")	2.43 m (7'11 5/8")
15/18 years and under	2.24 m (7'4 1/8")	2.43 m (7'11 5/8")
13/14 years and under	2.24 m (7'4 1/8")	2.24 m (7'4 1/8")
11/12 years and under	2.13 m (7'0")	2.13 m (7'0")
10 years and under	1.98 m (6'6")	2.13 m (7'0")

- 2.1.2: Its height is measured from the center of the playing court. The net height (over the two sidelines) must be exactly the same and must not exceed the official height by more than 2 cm (3/4"). (see also 1.1, 1.3.2, 2.1.1)

## 2.2 Structure

The net is 1 m (39") wide and 9.50 to 10 m (31'6"-33') long (with 25 to 50 cm [10"-19 1/2"] on each side of the side bands), made of 10 cm (4") square black mesh. (see also diagram 3)

At its top a horizontal band, 7 cm (2 3/4") wide, made of two-fold white canvas, is sewn along its full length. Each extreme end of the band has a hole, through which passes a cord, fastening the band to the posts for keeping its top taut.

Within the band, a flexible cable fastens the net to the posts and keeps its top taut.

At the bottom of the net there is another horizontal band, 5 cm (2") wide, similar to the top band, through which is threaded a rope. This rope fastens the net to the posts and keeps its lower part taut.

### **USAV 2.2:**

For USA Volleyball competition, the horizontal band described above may be 5 to 7 cm (2 to 2 3/4") wide, made of two-fold white canvas, and sewn along the full length of the net.



## **2.3 Side Bands (diagram 3)**

### **USAV 2.3:**

The side bands are optional. When used:

Two white bands are fastened vertically to the net and placed directly above each sideline.

They are 5cm (2") wide and 1m (39") long and are considered as part of the net. (see also 1.3.2)

## **2.4 Antennae**

An antenna is a flexible rod, 1.80 m (5'11") long and 10 mm (3/8") in diameter, made of fiberglass or similar material.

An antenna is fastened at the outer edge of each side band. The antennae are placed on opposite sides of the net. (see 2.3, diagram 3)

The top 80 cm (32") of each antenna extends above the net and is marked with 10 cm (4") stripes of contrasting color, preferably red and white.

The antennae are considered as part of the net and laterally delimit the crossing space. (see 10.1.1, diagrams 3, 5a, 5b)

## **2.5 Posts**

### **USAV 2.5:**

In addition to the systems described below, ceiling mounted net systems are allowed.

- 2.5.1: The posts supporting the net are placed at a distance of 0.50-1.00 m (20"-39") outside the sidelines. They are 2.55 m (8'4") high and preferably adjustable. (see diagram 3)
- 2.5.2: The posts are rounded and smooth, fixed to the ground without wires. There shall be no dangerous or obstructing devices.

## **2.6 Additional Equipment**

### **USAV 2.6**

- a. If the posts are secured by barrels or other supporting apparatus, there must be some means of clearly identifying the barrels or supporting apparatus. All other dangerous or obstructing devices must be eliminated. Metal cables, tensioning devices and other exposed wires may need to be covered if the referees determine these items may cause injury to players.
- b. All wires that support posts from the floor will be eliminated, or if that is not possible, then all exposed wires must be padded with at least 1.25 cm (1/2") thick, resilient, shock-absorbing material throughout the entire length. The padding must be clearly recognizable.
- c. Posts shall be padded to a minimum height of 1.7 m (5'6") with at least 1.25 cm (1/2") thick, resilient, shock-absorbing material throughout the entire length. The padding must be clearly recognizable.





- d. Basic equipment includes a referee stand, which should be adjustable to allow the referee's eye position to be approximately 50 cm (19") above the top of the net. It should be constructed so that it presents the least potential hazard for participants. Step ladders, jump boxes and other devices not specifically designed as referee stands shall not be used. If an appropriate referee stand cannot be provided, the 1st referee performs his/her functions from the floor.
- e. The front and sides of the referee's stand must be padded in the same manner as the posts to a height of 1.7 m (5'6").
- f. The scoreboard must be divided into two separate parts with numbers that provide the score for each team. The score displayed on the scoreboard is not official and may not be used as a basis for protest.

## **RULE 3. BALLS**

### **3.1 Standards**

The ball shall be spherical, made of a flexible leather or synthetic leather case with a bladder inside, made of rubber or a similar material.

Its color may be a uniform light color or a combination of colors. Synthetic leather material and color combinations of balls used in international official competitions should comply with FIVB standards.

Its circumference is 65-67 cm (25.6" to 26.4") and its weight is 260-280 g (9 to 10 oz).

Its inside pressure shall be 0.30 to 0.325 kg/cm<sup>2</sup> (4.26 to 4.61 psi) (294.3 to 318.82 mbar or hPa).

#### **USAV 3.1:**

12 & Under competition at the USA Volleyball Junior National Championships will be conducted using a ball with the same circumference and inside pressure as listed in Rule 3.1, but with a weight of 198 to 227 g (7 to 8 oz).

### **3.2 Uniformity of Balls**

All balls used in a match must have the same standards regarding circumference, weight, pressure, type, color, etc. (see also 3.1)

#### **USAV 3.2**

For nationally sanctioned USA Volleyball competitions, USA Volleyball must approve the game balls.

### **3.3 Ball Retrieval System**

#### **USAV 3.3**

For nationally sanctioned USA Volleyball competitions, a three-ball system is recommended.



## CHAPTER 2 PARTICIPANTS

### RULE 4. TEAMS

#### 4.1 Team Composition

##### **USAV 4.1.1:**

- a. Players are the team members on the team court. Substitutes are team members in uniform who are not in the starting line-up of a set.
- b. A team may consist of a maximum of 15 players and five coaches/team personnel, unless modified by the Specific Competition Regulations. An American Sign Language interpreter may be included among the coaching staff or team personnel; see ASL Interpreter Guidelines.
- c. A complete junior team consists of a minimum of six players and a USAV certified juniors' coach.

4.1.2: One of the players is the team captain, who shall be indicated on the score sheet. (see also 5.1)

##### **USAV 4.1.3:**

- a. Unless modified by specific competition regulations, at least 10 minutes before the start of each match, including tournament play, each team shall submit a roster listing the names and uniform numbers of players eligible to participate in the match. Only the players listed on the team roster may enter the court and play in a match. The coach or team captain must sign the roster. A roster may be changed at any time during the match, but only to correct a uniform number. However, if the coach or game captain requests such a number change, that team will be charged with a penalty point. A roster may not be changed to add a player at any time after having been signed by the coach or team captain. (see also USAV 4.1.1, USAV 5.1.1, 5.2.2, USAV 5.2.2)
- b. The coach and captain do not need to sign the score sheet before the match.

#### 4.2 Location of the Team

4.2.1: The players not in play should either sit on their team bench or be in their warm-up area. The coach and other team members sit on the bench but may temporarily leave it. (see also USAV 1.4.5, 5.2.3, 7.3.3)

The benches for the teams are located beside the scorer's table, outside the free zone. (see diagrams 1a, 1b)



**USAV 4.2.1:** In conjunction with Rule 4.2.1 above, any team member may occupy any available seat on their team's bench, including the first chair reserved for the coach.

4.2.2: Only the team composition members are permitted to enter the playing area, to sit on the bench during the match and to participate in the official warm-up session. (see also 4.1.1, USAV 7.2)

4.2.3: Players not in play may warm up without balls as follows:

4.2.3.1: during play: in the warm-up areas (see also 1.4.5, diagrams 1a, 1b)

4.2.3.2: during time-outs (and technical time-outs, USAV 15.4.3): in the free zone behind their court. (see also 1.3.3, 5.4)

**USAV 4.2.4:** During set intervals, players may warm up using balls on their court or within their own free zone. During the extended interval between sets 2 and 3 (if used), players may use their own court as well. (see also USAV 18.1)

### 4.3 Equipment

#### **USAV 4.3:**

- a. A player's uniform consists of a jersey and shorts or athletic/sports pants. If undergarments, including but not limited to T-shirts, boxer shorts, tights, leotards, body suits, bicycle shorts, sports bras, etc., are worn in such a manner that they are exposed, they will be considered a part of the uniform. In that case, they must be similar and the same color for any team members (except the Libero) who wear such an undergarment. Socks, sport shoes, knee pads, and compression pads are not part of the uniform.
- b. The legality of a team's uniform(s) is not grounds for a protest by their opponent. The determination of a team's uniform legality is the responsibility of the match referee(s), head referee(s), and/or tournament staff.

**USAV 4.3.1:** The color and design for the jerseys and shorts or athletic/sports pants must be uniform for the team (except for the Libero). (see also 4.1, USAV 19.2)

4.3.2: The shoes must be light and pliable with rubber or composite soles without heels.

**USAV 4.3.3:** The players' jerseys must be numbered in a permanent manner from 1 to 99 using Arabic numerals. Duplicate numbers are not allowed. (see also USAV 4.3.3.2)

#### **USAV 4.3.3.1:**

- a. Uniform numbers must be clearly visible and centered side to side on the front and back of the jersey. Numbers are recommended to be placed on the upper half of the jersey. Numbers may not extend below the player's waist and may not be tucked into the uniform bottom.



- b. Each jersey must use the same color and number height for all players, except the Libero's jersey, which may have different colored and sized numbers, provided it still meets the minimum criteria stated in 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, royal blue/black, white/light yellow or navy/maroon are not distinctive enough to comply with the rules. Dark-colored jerseys must have a light-colored number; light-colored jerseys must have a dark-colored number.
- d. The color of the number must clearly contrast with the color of the jersey irrespective of any border around the number.

**USAV 4.3.3.2:** The numbers must be a minimum of 10 cm (4") in height on the chest and a minimum of 15 cm (6") in height on the back. It is recommended that the numbers be a minimum of 15 cm (6") in height on the chest and a minimum of 20 cm (8") on the back. The stripe forming the numbers shall be a minimum of 2cm (3/4") in width.

**USAV 4.3.4:** It is recommended that the captain have a stripe on his/her jersey, 8cm X 2cm (3.15" X .78"), underlining the number on the chest. (see also 5.1)

4.3.5: It is forbidden to wear uniforms of a color different from that of the other players (except for the Liberos), and/or without official numbers. (see also 19.2)

**USAV 4.3.5:** For nationally sanctioned competition, uniforms must be identical except for sleeve length and the Libero players. An exception will also be made for a single manufacturer's logo or trademark on the outside of the jerseys or shorts, provided that the logo or trademark does not exceed 14.6 square cm (2 1/4 square inches). Sponsor logos are permitted provided they are identical on each uniform and do not obstruct the view of the uniform number.

#### **4.4 Change of Equipment**

The 1st referee may authorize one or more players:

- 4.4.1: to play barefoot;
- 4.4.2: to change wet or damaged uniforms between sets or after substitution, provided that the color, design and number of the new uniform(s) are the same (see also USAV 4.3, 15.5);
- 4.4.3: to play in training suits in cold weather, provided that they are of the same color and design for the whole team (except for the Liberos) and numbered according to Rule 4.3.3. (see also 4.1.1, USAV 19.2)



## 4.5 Personal Equipment and Prohibited Items

**USAV 4.5.1:** It is prohibited to wear a cast, even if padded. Objects or equipment that may cause an injury or give an artificial advantage to the player must not be worn. A head covering made from cloth or soft, non-abrasive fabric may be worn; no waiver is required.

Hats of any style are not permitted. A guard or brace, or headgear, are permitted; padding or a covering may be necessary. A prosthetic limb(s) is permitted; sharp edges may need to be wrapped or padded to ensure safety.

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.

When a player's equipment falls to the floor and creates a safety hazard, play is stopped, and a delay sanction may be assessed.

4.5.2: Players may wear glasses or lenses at their own risk.

**USAV 4.5.3:** Compression pads (padded injury protection devices) may be worn for protection or support. The color of the compression pads does not need to be the same for team members wearing this equipment, nor does the color need to match the predominant color(s) of the team uniform.

## RULE 5. TEAM LEADERS

Both the team captain and the coach are responsible for the conduct and discipline of their team members. (see also Rule 20)

The Liberos can be the team or game captain.

### 5.1 Captain

**USAV 5.1.1: PRIOR TO THE MATCH**, the team captain represents his/ her team at the coin toss. The captain does not sign the score sheet before or after the match except in the Open Division of the USA Volleyball Open National Championships. (see also 7.1, USAV 25.2.1.1)

5.1.2 **DURING THE MATCH** and while on the court, the team captain is the game captain. When the team captain is not on the court, the coach or the team captain must assign another player on the court to assume the role of game captain. This game captain maintains his/her responsibilities until he/she is substituted, or the team captain returns to play, or the set ends. (see also 15.2.1)

When the ball is out of play, only the game captain is authorized to speak to the referees:

**USAV 5.1.2.1:** to ask for an explanation on the application or interpretation of the rules, and also to submit the requests or questions of his/her teammates. (see also USAV 5.2)



If an explanation of an application or interpretation of a rule is not satisfactory to the game captain, he/she must immediately indicate his/her disagreement and file an official protest prior to the authorization of the next service. If the disagreement with the referee's explanation involves the last point of the set, the official protest must occur within the first 60 seconds of the timed interval between sets. (The protest is ruled upon by the Protest Committee immediately, prior to the start of the next set.)

If the final point of the match is disputed, the protest must occur within the first 60 seconds after the final point of the match is scored. It is advisable to have an assigned Protest Committee to rule upon a protest as soon as possible prior to the first service following the protest. Such action should preclude replaying the match from the point of protest if the protest is upheld.

Protests to be considered by the 1st referee (Protest or Tournament Committee) include: 1) misinterpretation of a playing rule, 2) failure of the 1st referee to apply the correct rule to a given situation, 3) failure to charge the correct penalty-sanction for a given fault, or 4) a scoring discrepancy.

Judgment decisions are not subject to protest. A protest related to a judgment decision may result in a penalty (red card) being assessed to the coach.

Protest facts recorded on the score sheet at the time of the protest include: 1) the score of the set; 2) players and their positions; 3) player and team substitutions; 4) team time-outs taken; 5) situation that resulted in the protest; and 6) signatures of the scorer, captains and 1st referee, indicating the facts are correct. (see also USAV 5.2, 23.2.4; Protest Procedures in Basic Match Procedures for Referees)

5.1.2.2: to ask authorization:

- to change all or part of the equipment (see also 4.3, 4.4.2);
- to verify the positions of the teams (see also 7.4, 7.6);
- to check the floor, the net, the ball, etc. (see also 1.2, 2, 3);

**USAV 5.1.2.3:** to request time-outs and substitutions. (see also 5.2, 5.3, 15.3.1, 15.4.1, 15.5.2)

**USAV 5.1.3: AT THE END OF THE MATCH**, the team captain thanks the referees but does not sign the score sheet.



## 5.2 Coach

### **USAV 5.2**

For nationally sanctioned USA Volleyball competition, the coach may act in place of the game captain to perform the functions stated in USAV 5.2.2.1 and 5.1.2.2. The coach is not permitted to cross the court to speak with the 1st referee. The 1st referee may leave the stand to address a coach near the team bench, if necessary, when a certified professional 2nd referee is not assigned to the match.

- 5.2.1: Throughout the match, the coach conducts the play of his/her team from outside the playing court. He/she selects the starting line-ups, the substitutes, and takes time-outs. In these functions his/ her contacting official is the 2nd referee. (see also 1.1, 7.3.2, 15.4.1, 15.5.2)

**USAV 5.2.2: PRIOR TO THE MATCH**, the coach records or checks the names and numbers of his/her players on the (score sheet) team roster. The coach does not sign the score sheet before the match except in the Open Division of the USA Volleyball Open National Championships.

- 5.2.3: **DURING THE MATCH**, the coach:

5.2.3.1: prior to each set, gives the 2nd referee or the scorer the line-up sheet(s) duly filled in and signed (see also USAV 7.3.2, 7.4, 7.6);

**USAV 5.2.3.2**: may sit anywhere on the team bench and may also stand or walk in the team bench area as described in USAV 5.2.3.4. (see also 4.2);

**USAV 5.2.3.3**: requests time-outs and substitutions (see also 15.4, 15.5), and is authorized to speak to the referees to verify the positions of the teams;

**USAV 5.2.3.4**: may give instructions to players on the court while standing or walking within the free zone in front of his/her team's bench from the extension of the attack line up to and including the warm-up area, without disturbing or delaying the match. The coach must not obstruct the view of the line judges (see also USAV 1.3.4, USAV 1.4.5; diagrams 1a, 1b, 2).



### 5.3 Assistant Coach

**USAV 5.3.1:** One assistant coach at a time may give instructions to players on the court but has no right to intervene in the match. During play, the assistant coach may give these instructions while standing or walking within the free zone in front of his/her team's bench from the extension of the attack line up to and including the warm-up area, without disturbing or delaying the match. The coach must not obstruct the view of the line judges. (see also USAV 4.2.1)

5.3.2: Should the coach have to leave his/her team for any reason including sanction, but excluding entering the court as a player, an assistant coach may assume the coach's functions for the duration of the absence, once confirmed to the referee by the game captain. (see also 5.1.2, 5.2)





## CHAPTER 3 PLAYING FORMAT



### RULE 6. TO SCORE A POINT, TO WIN A SET AND THE MATCH

#### 6.1 To Score a Point

##### 6.1.1: Point

A team scores a point:

6.1.1.1: by successfully landing the ball on the opponent's court (see also 8.3);

6.1.1.2: when the opponent team commits a fault (see also 6.1.2);

6.1.1.3: when the opponent team receives a penalty (see also 16.2.3, 21.3.1).

##### 6.1.2: Fault

A team commits a fault by making a playing action contrary to the rules (or by violating them in some other way). The referees judge the faults and determine the consequences according to the Rules:

6.1.2.1: If two or more faults are committed successively, only the first one is counted.

6.1.2.2: If two or more faults are committed by opponents simultaneously, a **DOUBLE FAULT** is called and the rally is replayed. (see also diagram 11-Signal 23)

##### 6.1.3: Rally And Completed Rally

A rally is the sequence of playing actions from the moment of the service hit by the server until the ball is out of play. A completed rally is the sequence of playing actions which results in the award of a point. (see also 8.1, 8.2, 12.2.2.1, 15.2.3, 15.11.1.3, 19.3.2.1, 19.3.2.9)

This includes:

- the award of a penalty (see also 21.3.1)
- loss of service for service hit made after the time limit. (see also USAV 12.4.4)

6.1.3.1: If the serving team wins a rally, it scores a point and continues to serve.

6.1.3.2: If the receiving team wins a rally, it scores a point and it must serve next.



## 6.2 To Win a Set

A set (except the deciding 5th set) is won by the team which first scores 25 points with a minimum lead of two points. In the case of a 24-24 tie, play is continued until a two-point lead is achieved (26-24; 27-25; etc.). (see also 6.3.2; diagram 11-Signal 9)

## 6.3 To Win the Match

**USAV 6.3.1:** The match is won by the team that wins two sets out of three (or three sets out of five).

**USAV 6.3.2:** In the case of a 1-1 (or 2-2) tie, the deciding 3rd (or 5th) set is played to 15 points with a minimum lead of two points. (see also 6.2, 7.1; diagram 11-Signal 9). If teams will change courts in the deciding set, the court change occurs when the leading team has scored 8 points.

**USAV 6.3.3:** A playoff set is considered a match and only one set will be played. The match is won by the team that scores either 15 or 25 points (as specified in the tournament guidelines) with a two-point advantage. If teams will change courts, the court change occurs when the leading team has scored 8 or 13 points, respectively.

## 6.4 Default and Incomplete Team

6.4.1: If a team refuses to play after being summoned to do so, it is declared in default and forfeits the match with the result 0-3 for the match and 0-25 for each set. (see also 6.2, 6.3)

**USAV 6.4.1:** Matches that are two sets out of three will have a match result of 0-2 or 1-2 depending on when the default occurs.

6.4.2: A team that, without justifiable reason, does not appear on the playing court on time is declared in default with the same result as in Rule 6.4.1.

**USAV 6.4.2:** If failure to adhere to Rule 6.4.2 is due to insufficient players on a team to begin a match, the team forfeits the first set at match time. After a team forfeits the first set of a match, an interval of up to 10 minutes shall be allowed for the team to produce sufficient players to play the next set. If the team is complete (per USAV 4.1.1c) prior to the expiration of this interval, the late team will be permitted use of the full court for a four-minute warm-up before play begins. If, after the 10-minute interval the team is not complete, the second set shall be declared a forfeit. If the match consists of the best three out of five sets, an additional 10-minute interval shall be allowed before the match is declared a forfeit.

6.4.3: A team that is declared INCOMPLETE for the set or for the match, loses the set or the match. The opponent team is given the points, or the points and the sets, needed to win the set or the match. The incomplete team keeps its points and sets. (see also 6.2, 6.3, 7.3.1)



## RULE 7. STRUCTURE OF PLAY

### 7.1 The Toss

Before the match, the 1st referee carries out a toss to decide upon the first service and the sides of the court in the first set. (see also 12.1.1)

If a deciding set is to be played, a new toss will be carried out. (see also USAV 6.3.2)

**USAV 7.1.1:** The toss is taken in the presence of the two team captains.

Multiple team representatives may attend the captains' meeting with the team captain. The 1st referee will confirm which player will represent the team for the toss. (see also 5.1)

7.1.2: The winner of the toss chooses: **EITHER**

7.1.2.1: the right to serve or to receive the service, (see also 12.1.1) OR

7.1.2.2: the side of the court.

The loser takes the remaining choice.

### 7.2 Official Warm-Up Session

**USAV 7.2.1:** The teams will have 10 minutes during the official warm-up session. The warm-up session may be extended by the event organizer.

**USAV 7.2.2:** For adult competition, if both team captains agree, the teams will warm up together at the net for 10 minutes; otherwise, each team will have five minutes separately. For consecutive warm-ups, the team with the first service has the court first.

**USAV 7.2.3:** For junior competition, teams will have two minutes of shared court time (balls may not cross the net), and four minutes of individual court time, e.g., 2-4-4. The team with the first service has the court first.

When one team has exclusive use of the court, the other team must either be at its team bench or out of the playing area, or may assist with ball retrieving. Warming up with balls at the team bench or in the spectator walkways is not permitted.

### 7.3 Team Starting Line-Up

7.3.1: There must always be six players per team in play. (see also 6.4.3)

The team's starting line-up indicates the rotational order of the players on the court. This order must be maintained throughout the set. (see also 7.6)

**USAV 7.3.2:** At least two minutes before the end of the timed warm-up period and 30 seconds prior to the expiration of the interval

between sets, a coach or game captain submits the team's starting line-up on a signed line-up sheet to the 2nd referee or scorer. (see also 5.2.3.1, 24.3.1, 25.2.1.2)



7.3.3: The players who are not in the starting line-up of a set are the substitutes for that set (except the Liberos). (see also 15.5)

**USAV 7.3.4:** Once the line-up sheet has been delivered to the 2nd referee or scorer, no change in line-up may be authorized without a regular substitution. (see also 15.2.2, 15.5; diagram 11-Signal 5)

**EXCEPTIONS:**

If a team submits a line-up sheet that lists a player's number as both a Libero and as a starting player, the coach or captain shall immediately decide whether that player will be a Libero or a starting player, as follows:

- a. If the duplicate number will be a Libero, the coach must correct the line-up but only in the starting position where the Libero's number was recorded. The team will not be charged a substitution.
- b. If the duplicate number will be a starting player, another player may immediately be designated as Libero.

7.3.5: Discrepancies between players' position on court and on the line-up sheet are dealt with as follows (see also 24.3.1):

7.3.5.1: when such a discrepancy is discovered before the start of the set, players' positions must be rectified according to those on the line-up sheet—there will be no sanction;

**USAV 7.3.5.1:** when a discrepancy involves a non-existent uniform number, the line-up sheet is corrected for that position only; no sanction or substitution is charged.

7.3.5.2: when, before the start of the set, any player on court is found not to be registered on the line-up sheet of that set, this player must be changed to conform to the line-up sheet—there will be no sanction;

**USAV 7.3.5.3:** however, if the coach wishes to keep such non-recorded player(s) on the court, he/she has to request regular substitution(s), which will then be recorded on the score sheet. (see also 15.2.2; diagram 11-Signal 5)

- a. If a discrepancy between player positions and the line-up sheet is discovered after play has begun, and the team at fault is serving, all points scored during that term of service, as well as all time-outs taken by the opponent, and substitutions and delay sanctions charged to either team, are canceled. The players' positions are corrected. The opponent's points remain valid. Individual misconduct sanctions assessed to either team and time-outs taken by the team at fault, are not canceled. (see also USAV 12)



- b. If a discrepancy between player positions and the line-up sheet is discovered during the opponent's term of service, the player positions of the team at fault are corrected; no additional penalty or sanction is assessed. However, if the opponent lost the rally immediately before discovery of the positional fault, a loss of rally is awarded to the opponent, and they continue serving. (see also USAV 12)

7.3.5.4: Where a player is found to be on court, but he/she is not registered on the team roster, the opponent's points remain valid, and in addition they gain a point and service. The team at fault will lose all points and/or sets (0:25, if necessary) gained from the moment the non-registered player entered the court, and will have to submit a revised line-up sheet and send a new registered player into the court, in the position of the non-registered player. (see also 6.1.2)

## **7.4 Positions (diagram 4)**

At the moment the ball is hit by the server, each team must be positioned within its own court.

**USAV 7.4:** At the moment the ball is hit by the server, each team must be positioned in the rotational order (except the server). (see also 7.6.1, 8.1, 12.4)

7.4.1: The positions of the players are numbered as follows:

7.4.1.1: The three players along the net are front-row players and occupy positions 4 (front-left), 3 (front-center) and 2 (front-right);

7.4.1.2: The other three are back-row players occupying positions 5 (back-left), 6 (back-center) and 1 (back-right).

7.4.2: Relative positions between players:

7.4.2.1: Each back-row player must be positioned further back from the center line than the corresponding front-row player;

7.4.2.2: The front-row players and the back-row players, respectively, must be positioned laterally in the order indicated in Rule 7.4.1.

**USAV 7.4.3:** Players' positions are judged according to the foot/feet last in contact with the floor at the moment the ball is contacted for service, as follows:

7.4.3.1: each front-row player must have at least a part of one foot closer to the center line than the feet of the corresponding back-row player;

7.4.3.2: each right- (left-) side player must have at least a part of one foot closer to the right (left) sideline than the closest foot of the center player in that row.

7.4.4: After the service hit, the players may move around and occupy any position on their court and the free zone.



## 7.5 Positional Fault (diagram 4)

**USAV 7.5.1:** The team commits a positional fault if any player is not in his/her correct position at the moment the ball is hit by the server. When a player is on court through illegal substitution, and play restarts, this is counted as a positional fault. (see also 7.3, 7.4, 15.9; diagram 11-Signal 13)

If the positional fault is discovered while the team at fault is serving, all points scored subsequent to the fault must be cancelled. In addition, all time-outs taken by the team not at fault, as well as substitutions and team sanctions charged to either team subsequent to the commission of the positional fault, must be cancelled. Individual misconduct sanctions assessed to either team and time-outs taken by the team at fault, are not cancelled. If the points scored while the player was out of position cannot be determined or the opponents have served, then a loss of rally is the only penalty charged, and the players' positions are corrected. The opponents retain any points scored.

- 7.5.2: If the server commits a serving fault at the moment of the service hit, the server's fault is counted before a positional fault. (see also 12.4, 12.7.1)
- 7.5.3: If the service becomes faulty after the service hit, it is the positional fault that will be counted. (see also 12.7.2)
- 7.5.4: A positional fault leads to the following consequences:
  - 7.5.4.1: the team is sanctioned with a point and service to the opponent; see also 6.1.3)
  - 7.5.4.2: players' positions must be rectified. (see also 7.3, 7.4)

## 7.6 Rotation

- 7.6.1: The rotational order is determined by the team's starting line-up and controlled with the service order and players' positions throughout the set. (see also 7.3.1, 7.4.1, 12.2)
- 7.6.2: When the receiving team has gained the right to serve, its players rotate one position clockwise: the player in position 2 rotates to position 1 to serve, the player in position 1 rotates to position 6, etc. (see also 12.2.2.2)

## 7.7 Rotational Fault

**USAV 7.7.1:** A rotational fault is committed when the SERVICE is not made according to the rotational order, including a Libero serving in a second rotation position in the same set. It leads to the following consequences in order (see also 7.6.1, 12, USAV 12):



- 7.7.1.1: the scorer stops play by the buzzer (or by whistle or verbal notification to the 2nd referee, USAV 22.2.1.3); the opponent gains a point and next service (see also 6.1.3);

If the rotational fault is determined only after the completion of the rally which started with a rotational fault, only a single point is awarded to the opponent, regardless of the result of the rally played.

- 7.7.1.2: the rotational order of the faulty team must be rectified; (see also 7.6.1)

**USAV 7.7.2:** If the rotational fault is discovered while the team at fault is serving or before the opponent serves, all points scored subsequent to the fault must be cancelled. In addition, all time-outs taken by the team not at fault, as well as substitutions and team sanctions charged to either team subsequent to the commission of the rotational fault, must be cancelled. Individual misconduct sanctions assessed to either team and time-outs taken by the team at fault, are not cancelled. If the points scored while the player was out of rotation cannot be determined or the opponents have served, then a point and service to the opponents is the only penalty charged. The opponents retain any points scored.



## **C 4** CHAPTER 4 PLAYING ACTIONS

### **RULE 8. STATES OF PLAY**

#### **8.1 Ball In Play**

The ball is in play from the moment of the hit of the service authorized by the 1st referee. (see also 12, 12.3)

#### **8.2 Ball Out of Play**

The ball is out of play at the moment of the fault which is whistled by one of the referees; in the absence of a fault, at the moment of the whistle.

#### **USAV 8.2:**

In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the rally is ended. The 1st referee must make a ruling that will not penalize either team.

#### **8.3 Ball “In”**

The ball is “in” if at any moment of its contact with the floor, some part of the ball touches the court, including the boundary lines. (see also 1.1, 1.3.2; diagram 11-Signal 14, diagram 12-Signal 1)

#### **8.4 Ball “Out”**

The ball is “out” when:

- 8.4.1: all parts of the ball which contact the floor are completely outside the boundary lines (see also 1.3.2; diagram 11-Signal 15; diagram 12-Signal 2);

**USAV 8.4.2:** it touches an object outside the court or a person out of play (see also diagram 11-Signal 15, diagram 12-Signal 4);

A ball, other than a served ball, shall remain in play if it contacts the ceiling or other overhead objects 4.6 m (15') or more above the playing area.

- a. If benches, bleachers, low-hanging baskets or other floor obstructions are less than 2 m (6'6 3/4") from the court and interfere with play of the ball, the ball becomes out of play and a replay may be directed at the 1st referee's discretion.
- b. The ball is out of play when:
  - i. Rule 10.1.2 is not in effect, and the ball makes contact with the ceiling or obstruction above the opponent's playing area.
  - ii. Rule 10.1.2 is in effect, and a ball that cannot be legally retrieved from the opponent's free zone contacts the ceiling or obstruction over the opponent's playing area.





- iii. The ball contacts the ceiling or obstruction above the team's playing area and crosses the plane of the net into the opponent's court.
  - iv. The ball contacts the ceiling or any obstruction after the team's third hit.
  - c. A ball, other than a served ball, is out of play and a replay directed if it contacts overhead object(s) or the supports (e.g., basketball backboard) less than 4.6 m (15') above the playing area and would have remained playable if the object had not been present.
  - d. A ball is out of play if it contacts the ceiling or overhead objects, regardless of height, over non-playing areas.
  - e. A ball is out of play and a replay is directed if the ball comes to rest on an overhead object above the team's playing area and is still a playable ball.
  - f. If an official, media equipment or personnel or spectator interferes with a player's legal attempt to play the ball over the playing area, a replay shall be directed.
- 8.4.3: it touches the antennae, ropes, posts or the net itself outside the side bands (see also 2.3; diagrams 3, 5a, 11-Signal 15, 12-Signal 4);
- 8.4.4: it crosses the vertical plane of the net either partially or totally outside the crossing space, except in the case of Rule 10.1.2 (see also 2.3; diagrams 5a, 5b, 11-Signal 15, 12-Signal 4);i
- 8.4.5: it crosses completely the lower space under the net. (see also 23.3.2.3f; diagrams 5a, 11-Signal 22)

## **RULE 9. PLAYING THE BALL**

Each team must play within its own playing area and space (except Rule 10.1.2). The ball may, however, be retrieved from beyond its own free zone and over the scoring table in its complete extension. (see also diagram 1b)

### **USAV 9:**

Each team must play within its own playing area and space (except Rule 10.1.2). The ball may be retrieved from beyond the free zone when the surface change is 1.25 cm (1/2") or less, the secondary surface is lower than the free zone and the area is free of obstructions. If obstructions or other safety concerns prohibit retrieval from beyond the free zone, the player retrieving a ball over a non-playing area must be in contact with the playing surface when contact with the ball is made.

Non-playing areas are defined as the: (1) walls, bleachers or other spectator seating areas; (2) team benches and any area behind the team benches; (3) area between the scorer's table and the team benches; (4) any other area outlined in the pre-match conference by the 1st referee. (see also 23.2.5)



- a. If nets or dividers are separating courts, only the player attempting to play the ball may move the net or divider to play the ball.
- b. When competition is scheduled or is occurring on an adjacent court(s), it is a fault for a player to enter the adjacent court(s) to play the ball or after playing the ball. The free zone, including the service zone on an adjacent court, is a playing area. Adjacent courts may not share the same service zone.

## 9.1 Team Hits

A hit is any contact with the ball by a player in play.

The team is entitled to a maximum of three hits (in addition to blocking), for returning the ball. If more are used, the team commits the fault of “FOUR HITS.” (see also 14.4.1)

### 9.1.1: Consecutive Contacts

A player may not hit the ball two times consecutively (except Rules 9.2.3, 14.2 and 14.4.2). (see also 9.2.3, 14.2, 14.4.2)

### 9.1.2: Simultaneous Contacts

Two or three players may touch the ball at the same moment.

**USAV 9.1.2.1:** When two or more teammates touch the ball simultaneously, it is counted as one hit. Any player may play the ball next if the simultaneous hit is not the third team hit. A collision of players does not constitute a fault.

9.1.2.2: When two opponents touch the ball simultaneously over the net and the ball remains in play, the team receiving the ball is entitled to another three hits. If such a ball goes “out,” it is the fault of the team on the opposite side.

9.1.2.3: If simultaneous hits by two opponents over the net lead to an extended contact with the ball, play continues.

### 9.1.3: Assisted Hit

Within the playing area, a player is not permitted to take support from a teammate or any structure/object in order to hit the ball.

However, a player who is about to commit a fault (touch the net or cross the center line, etc.) may be stopped or held back by a teammate.

## 9.2 Characteristics of the Hit

9.2.1: The ball may touch any part of the body.

9.2.2: The ball must not be caught and/or thrown. It can rebound in any direction. (see also 9.3.3; diagram 11-Signal 6)

9.2.3: The ball may touch various parts of the body, provided that the contacts take place simultaneously.



#### Exceptions:

- 9.2.3.1: at blocking, consecutive contacts may be made by one or more player(s), provided that the contacts occur during one action;
- 9.2.3.2: at the first hit of the team, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action. At the second hit of the team, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action, and the ball is next touched by a teammate. (see also 14.1.1, 14.2)

### 9.3 Faults in Playing the Ball

- 9.3.1: **FOUR HITS:** a team hits the ball four times before returning it. (see also 9.1, diagram 11-Signal 18)
- 9.3.2: **ASSISTED HIT:** a player takes support from a teammate or any structure/object in order to hit the ball within the playing area. (see also 9.1.3)
- 9.3.3: **CATCH:** the ball is caught and/or thrown; it does not rebound from the hit. (see also 9.2.2, diagram 11-Signal 16)
- 9.3.4: **DOUBLE CONTACT:** a player hits the ball twice in succession or the ball contacts various parts of his/her body in succession on the third team hit or on the second team hit and the ball is not next touched by a teammate. (see also 9.2.3; diagram 11-Signal 17)

## RULE 10. BALL AT THE NET

### 10.1 Ball Crossing the Net

- 10.1.1: The ball sent to the opponent's court must go over the net within the crossing space. The crossing space is the part of the vertical plane of the net limited as follows (see also 2.4, 10.2; diagram 5a):
  - 10.1.1.1: below, by the top of the net (see also 2.2);
  - 10.1.1.2: at the sides, by the antennae, and their imaginary extension (see also 2.4);
  - 10.1.1.3: above, by the ceiling.
- 10.1.2: The ball that has crossed the net plane to the opponent's free zone, totally or partly through the external space, may be played back within the team's hits, provided that (see also 9.1; diagram 5b):
  - 10.1.2.1: the opponent's court is not touched by the player (see also 11.2.2); 10.1.2.2: the ball, when played back, crosses the net plane again totally or
  - 10.1.2.2: partly through the external space on the same side of the court. The opponent team may not prevent such action. (see also 11.4.4; diagram 5b)



**USAV 10.1.2:** In addition to the above, a minimum of 2 m (6'6 3/4") clearance beyond the court equipment at both ends of the net is required.

- 10.1.3: The ball that is heading toward the opponent's court through the lower space is in play until the moment it has completely crossed the vertical plane of the net. (see also 23.3.2.3f; diagrams 5a, 11-Signal 22)

## **10.2 Ball Touching the Net**

While crossing the net, the ball may touch it. (see also 10.1.1)

## **10.3 Ball in the Net**

- 10.3.1: A ball driven into the net may be recovered within the limits of the three team hits. (see also 9.1)
- 10.3.2: If the ball rips the mesh of the net or tears it down, the rally is cancelled and replayed.

# **RULE 11. PLAYER AT THE NET**

## **11.1 Reaching Beyond the Net**

- 11.1.1: In blocking, a player may touch the ball beyond the net, provided that he/she does not interfere with the opponent's play before the latter's attack hit. (see also 14.1, 14.3)
- 11.1.2: After an attack hit, a player is permitted to pass his/her hand beyond the net, provided that the contact has been made within his/her own playing space.

## **11.2 Penetration Under the Net**

- 11.2.1: It is permitted to penetrate into the opponent's space under the net, provided that this does not interfere with the opponent's play.
- 11.2.2: Penetration into the opponent's court, beyond the center line:
- 11.2.2.1: to touch the opponent's court with a foot (feet) is permitted, provided that some part of the penetrating foot (feet) remains either in contact with or directly above the center line (see also 1.3.3; Diagram 11-Signal 22);

**USAV 11.2.2.2:** to touch the opponent's court with any part(s) of the body is permitted, provided some part of the body remains either in contact with or directly above the center line, and there is no interference with opponents. In addition, completely crossing the center line with the foot, feet, or hands, or encroachment with other body parts, must not present a safety hazard to opponents. (see also 1.3.3; Diagram 11-Signal 22)

- 11.2.3: A player may enter the opponent's court after the ball goes out of play. (see also 8.2)



- 11.2.4: Players may penetrate into the opponent's free zone provided that they do not interfere with the opponent's play.

### **11.3 Contact with the Net**

- 11.3.1: Contact with the net by a player between the antennae, during the action of playing the ball, is a fault. The action of playing the ball includes (among others) take-off, hit (or attempt) and landing safely, ready for a new action. (see also 11.4.4, 23.3.2.3c, 24.3.2.3; diagram 3)
- 11.3.2: Players may touch the post, ropes, or any other object outside the antennae, including the net itself, provided that it does not interfere with play. (see also diagram 3)
- 11.3.3: When the ball is driven into the net, causing it to touch an opponent, no fault is committed.

### **11.4 Player's Faults at the Net**

- 11.4.1: A player touches the ball or an opponent in the opponent's space before the opponent's attack hit. (see also 11.1.1; diagram 11-Signal 20)
- 11.4.2: A player interferes with the opponent's play while penetrating into the opponent's space under the net. (see also 11.2.1)
- 11.4.3: A player's foot (feet) penetrates completely into the opponent's court. (see also USAV 11.2.2.2; diagram 11-Signal 22))
- 11.4.4: A player interferes with play by, amongst others (see also diagram 11-Signal 19):
- touching the net between the antennae or the antenna itself during his/her action of playing the ball (see also 11.3.1),
  - using the net between the antennae as a support or stabilizing aid,
  - creating an unfair advantage over the opponent by touching the net,
  - making actions which hinder an opponent's legitimate attempt to play the ball,
  - catching/holding onto the net.

Any player close to the ball as it is played, and who is him/herself trying to play it, is considered in the action of playing the ball, even if no contact is made with it. However, touching the net outside the antenna is not to be considered a fault (except for Rule 9.1.3).



## **RULE 12. SERVICE**

The service is the act of putting the ball into play, by the back-right player, placed in the service zone. (see also 1.4.2, 8.1, 12.4.1)

### **USAV 12**

A team's term of service continues until that team commits a fault or receives a misconduct or delay penalty. A serving player may be replaced by substitution or a Libero at any time. (see also USAV 19.3.1.3b)

#### **12.1 First Service in a Set**

- 12.1.1: The first service of the first set, as well as that of the deciding 5th set, is executed by the team determined by the toss. (see also 6.3.2, 7.1)
- 12.1.2: The other sets will be started with the service of the team that did not serve first in the previous set.

#### **12.2 Service Order**

- 12.2.1: The players must follow the service order recorded on the line-up sheet. (see also 7.3.1, 7.3.2)
- 12.2.2: After the first service in a set, the player to serve is determined as follows (see also 12.1):
  - 12.2.2.1: when the serving team wins the rally, the player (or his/her substitute) who served before, serves again (see also 6.1.3, 15.5);
  - 12.2.2.2: when the receiving team wins the rally, it gains the right to serve and rotates before actually serving. The player who moves from the front-right position to the back-right position will serve. (see also 6.1.3, 7.6.2)

#### **12.3 Authorization of the Service**

The 1st referee authorizes the service, after having checked that the two teams are ready to play and that the server is in possession of the ball. (see also diagram 11-Signal 1)

### **USAV 12.3**

In addition to the above, when playing on a portable playing surface, the server shall have at least part of both feet in contact with the playing surface before the 1st referee authorizes the service. After the 1st referee authorizes the service, if the server steps entirely off the playing surface with one or both feet, it is a service fault. (see also USAV 12.4.3; diagram 11-Signal 22)

#### **12.4 Execution of the Service**

- 12.4.1: The ball shall be hit with one hand or any part of the arm after being tossed or released from the hand(s). (see also diagram 11-Signal 10)



12.4.2: Only one toss or release of the ball is allowed. Dribbling or moving the ball in the hands is permitted.

**USAV 12.4.3:** The service hit must take place on the playing area.

At the moment of the service hit or take-off for a jump service, the server must not touch the court (the end line included) or the floor outside the service zone. (see also 1.4.2, 27.2.1.4; diagram 11-Signal 22, diagram 12-Signal 4)

After the hit, he/she may step or land outside the service zone, or inside the court.

**USAV 12.4.4:** The server must hit the ball within 8 seconds after the 1st referee whistles for service. (see also 12.3; diagram 11-Signal 11)

For 14-and-under age groups:

- a. Once the serving action is initiated, including an underhand serve, if the server tosses the ball and then catches it or allows it to fall to the floor, this is considered a service tossing error, including a ball that touches the server as it falls.
- b. After a service tossing error, the referee must authorize the service again (re-serve) and the server must execute it within the next 8 seconds.
- c. One service tossing error is permitted for each service.

**USAV 12.4.5:** A service executed before the referee's whistle is cancelled and repeated. (see also 12.3)

After the whistle for the service, requests for game interruption, i.e., time-out or substitution, or a request for a line-up check, may not be considered until after the ball has been served and the rally completed, including a re-serve. A re-serve is part of a single effort to serve, and no requests will be honored during a re-serve. A request for line-up check is permitted when the result of a rally is a replay.

## 12.5 Screening (diagram 6)

12.5.1: The players of the serving team must not prevent their opponent, through individual or collective screening, from seeing the service hit and the flight path of the ball. Should either be visible to the receiving team, this is not a screen.

**USAV 12.5.2:** A player or group of players of the serving team make(s) a screen by waving arms, jumping or moving sideways, during the execution of the service, or by standing grouped, and in so doing hides both the service hit and the flight path of the ball until the ball reaches the vertical plane of the net. (see also diagram 11-Signal 12)



The factors to be weighed when judging whether a screen has occurred are: (a) the relative positions of the players on the serving team; (b) the path of the serve; (c) the speed of the serve; and (d) the trajectory of the serve. If the players of the serving team are positioned close to each other, and the serve passes over these players at a fast, low trajectory, the probability is greater that a screen has occurred. This probability is lower if: (a) the players of the serving team are not positioned close to each other or are attempting to prevent a screen (i.e., bending over); (b) the path of the serve is not over the players; (c) the speed of the serve is slow; or (d) the trajectory of the serve is high.

**12.5.3:** Any player of the serving team is forbidden to raise their hands above the head during service, until the ball has passed beyond the net. The 1st referee may warn a team through the game captain, if he/ she suspects that the team is deliberately screening.

## 12.6 Faults Made During the Service

### 12.6.1: Serving faults.

The following faults lead to a change of service even if the opponent is out of position. (see also 12.2.2.2, 12.7.1) The server:

12.6.1.1: violates the service order (see also 12.2);

**USAV 12.6.1.2:** does not execute the service properly, including a service toss that touches an obstruction before the service contact. (see also 12.4)

### 12.6.2: Faults after the service hit.

After the ball has been correctly hit, the service becomes a fault (unless a player is out of position) if the ball: (see also 12.4, 12.7.2)

**USAV 12.6.2.1:** touches a player of the serving team, fails to cross the vertical plane of the net completely through the crossing space, or touches any overhead obstruction. (see also 8.4.4, 8.4.5, 10.1.1, diagram 11-Signal 19)

12.6.2.2: goes “out” (see also 8.4; diagram 11-Signal 15);

12.6.2.3: passes over a screen. (see also 12.5; diagram 11-Signal 12)

## 12.7 Serving Faults and Positional Faults

12.7.1: If the server makes a fault at the moment of the service hit (improper execution, wrong rotational order, etc.) and the opponent is out of position, it is the serving fault which is sanctioned. (see also 7.5.1, 7.5.2, 12.6.1)





- 12.7.2: Instead, if the execution of the service has been correct, but the service subsequently becomes faulty (goes out, goes over a screen, etc.), the positional fault has taken place first and is sanctioned. (see also 7.5.3, 12.6.2)

## **RULE 13. ATTACK HIT**

### **13.1 Characteristics of the Attack Hit**

- 13.1.1: All actions which direct the ball toward the opponent, with the exception of service and block, are considered as attack hits. (see also 12, 14.1.1)
- 13.1.2: During an attack hit, tipping is permitted only if the ball is cleanly hit, and not caught or thrown. (see also 9.2.2)
- 13.1.3: An attack hit is completed at the moment the ball completely crosses the vertical plane of the net or is touched by an opponent.

### **13.2 Restrictions of the Attack Hit**

- 13.2.1: A front-row player may complete an attack hit at any height, provided that the contact with the ball has been made within the player's own playing space (except Rules 13.2.4 and 13.3.6). (see also 7.4.1.1)
- 13.2.2: A back-row player may complete an attack hit at any height from behind the front zone (see also 1.4.1, 7.4.1.2, 19.3.1.2; diagram 8)
- 13.2.2.1: at his/her take-off, the player's foot (feet) must neither have touched nor crossed over the attack line (see also 1.3.4);
- 13.2.2.2: after his/her hit, the player may land within the front zone.
- 13.2.3: A back-row player may also complete an attack hit from the front zone, if at the moment of the contact a part of the ball is lower than the top of the net.
- 13.2.4: No player is permitted to complete an attack hit on the OPPOSING service, when the ball is in the front zone and entirely higher than the top of the net.

### **13.3 Faults of the Attack Hit**

- 13.3.1: A player hits the ball within the playing space of the opposing team. (see also diagram 11-Signal 20)
- 13.3.2: A player hits the ball "out." (see also 8.4; diagram 11-Signal 15)
- 13.3.3: A back-row player completes an attack hit from the front zone, if at the moment of the hit the ball is entirely higher than the top of the net. (see also 1.4.1, 7.4.1.2; diagram 11-Signal 21)
- 13.3.4: A player completes an attack hit on the opponent's service, when the ball is in the front zone and entirely higher than the top of the net. (see also 1.4.1, 13.2.4; diagram 11-Signal 21)



- 13.3.5: A Libero completes an attack hit if at the moment of the hit the ball is entirely higher than the top of the net. (see also 19.3.1.2, 23.3.2.3d; diagram 11-Signal 21)
- 13.3.6: A player completes an attack hit from higher than the top of the net when the ball is coming from an overhand finger pass by a Libero in his/her front zone. (see also 19.3.1.4, 23.3.2.3e; diagram 11-Signal 21)
- USAV 13.3.7:** If an attack-hit fault occurs simultaneously with a blocking fault by the opponents, a double fault is committed, and the rally is replayed. (see also 22.2.3.4)

## **RULE 14. BLOCK**

### **14.1 Blocking**

- 14.1.1: Blocking is the action of players close to the net to intercept the ball coming from the opponent by reaching higher than the top of the net, regardless of the height of the ball contact. Only front-row players are permitted to complete a block, but at the moment of the contact with the ball, a part of the body must be higher than the top of the net. (see also 7.4.1.1)
- 14.1.2: Block Attempt  
A block attempt is the action of blocking without touching the ball.
- 14.1.3: Completed Block  
A block is completed whenever the ball is touched by a blocker. (see diagram 7)
- 14.1.4: Collective Block  
A collective block is executed by two or three players close to each other and is completed when one of them touches the ball.

### **14.2 Block Contact**

Consecutive (quick and continuous) contacts with the ball may occur by one or more blockers, provided that the contacts are made during one action. (see also 9.1.1, 9.2.3)

### **14.3 Blocking Within the Opponent's Space**

In blocking, the player may place his/her hands and arms beyond the net, provided that this action does not interfere with the opponent's play. Thus, it is not permitted to touch the ball beyond the net before an opponent has executed an attack hit. (see also 13.1.1; diagram 11-Signal 20)



### **USAV 14.3:**

Blocking the ball beyond the net above the opponent's team area shall be permitted, provided:

- a. the block is made after the opponents have hit the ball in such a manner that the ball would, in the 1st referee's judgment, clearly cross the net if not touched by a player, and no member of the attacking team is in a position to make a play on the ball.
- b. the ball is falling near the net, and no member of the attacking team could, in the 1st referee's judgment, make a play on the ball.

### **14.4 Block and Team Hits**

- 14.4.1: A block contact is not counted as a team hit. Consequently, after a block contact, a team is entitled to three hits to return the ball. (see also 9.1)
- 14.4.2: The first hit after the block may be executed by any player, including the one who has touched the ball during the block.

### **14.5 Blocking the Service**

To block an opponent's service is forbidden. (see also 12; diagram 11-Signal 12)

### **14.6 Blocking Faults**

- 14.6.1: The blocker touches the ball in the OPPONENT'S space before the opponent's attack hit. (see also 14.3; diagram 11-Signal 20)
- 14.6.2: A back-row player or a Libero completes a block or participates in a completed block. (see also 14.1, 14.5, 19.3.1.3; diagram 11-Signal 12)
- 14.6.3: Blocking the opponent's service. (see also 14.5; diagram 11-Signal 12)
- 14.6.4: The ball is sent "out" off the block. (see also 8.4)
- 14.6.5: Blocking the ball in the opponent's space from outside the antenna.
- 14.6.6: A Libero attempts an individual or collective block. (see also 14.1.1, 19.3.1.3; diagram 11-Signal 12)

**USAV 14.6.7:** If a blocking fault is committed simultaneously with an attack-hit fault by the opponent, a double fault is committed, and the rally shall be replayed. (see also 22.2.3.4)

**USAV 14.6.8:** A block is the interception of a ball coming from the opponent. During the execution of the second or third team hit, it is a double contact fault if a player has successive contacts while using a blocking action to direct a ball toward the opponent. (see also 14.1.1, 19.3.1.3)



## CHAPTER 5 INTERRUPTIONS, DELAYS AND INTERVALS

### RULE 15. INTERRUPTIONS

An interruption is the time between one completed rally and the 1st referee's whistle for the next service. (see also 6.1.3, 8.1, 8.2, 15.4, 15.5, 24.2.6)

The only regular game interruptions are TIME-OUTS and SUBSTITUTIONS.

#### **USAV 15:**

After the 1st referee whistles to authorize the service, a request for a regular game interruption or a request for a line-up check will not be honored. (see also 6.1.3, USAV 12.4.5, 15.11.1.1)

#### **15.1 Number of Regular Game Interruptions**

##### **USAV 15.1:**

Each team may request a maximum of two time-outs and **15** substitutions per set. (see also 6.2, 15.4, 15.5, USAV 15.6)

The number of substitutions may be reduced to six per set with one entry per player when necessitated by the competition format. (see also USAV 15.6)

#### **15.2 Sequence of Regular Game Interruptions**

- 15.2.1: Request for one or two time-outs, and one request for substitution by either team may follow one another, within the same interruption. (see also 15.4, 15.5)
- 15.2.2: However, a team is not authorized to make consecutive requests for substitution during the same interruption. Two or more players may be substituted at the same time within the same request. (see also 15.5, 15.11.1.3)
- 15.2.3: There must be a completed rally between two separate substitution requests by the same team. Exception: a forced substitution due to injury or expulsion/disqualification (15.5.2, 15.7, 15.8). (see also 6.1.3, 15.5)

#### **15.3 Request for Regular Game Interruptions**

**USAV 15.3.1:** Regular game interruptions may be requested by either the coach or the game captain, and only by them. (see also 5.1.2, USAV 5.2.3.3, 5.3.2, USAV 15.10.3.1)

**USAV 15.3.2:** Substitutions before the start of a set is permitted and should be recorded as a regular substitution in that set. (see also 7.3.4)  
Time-outs before the start of a set are permitted. (see also 15.4)



## 15.4 Time-Outs

15.4.1: Time-out requests must be made by showing the corresponding hand signal, when the ball is out of play and before the whistle for service. All requested time-outs last for 30 seconds. (see also 6.1.3, 8.2, 12.3; diagram 11-Signal 4)

**USAV 15.4.2:** During time-outs, the players may remain on the court or go to the free zone near their team bench. Any member of the team listed on the roster may participate in the time-out. Coaches and non-playing team members may not enter the court. Referees may direct teams to move to the free zone near their team bench for administrative purposes. Teams may return to the court when permitted by the referees. (see also diagram 1a)

**USAV 15.4.3:** The use of media (technical) time-outs, and their duration, is at the discretion of the event organizer.

## 15.5 Substitution

15.5.1: A substitution is the act by which a player, other than the Libero or his/her replacement player, after being recorded by the scorer, enters the game to occupy the position of another player, who must leave the court at that moment. (see also 19.3.2.1; diagram 11-Signal 5)

15.5.2: When the substitution is enforced through injury to a player in play this may be accompanied by the coach (or game captain) showing the corresponding hand signal. (see also 5.1.2.3, 5.2.3.3, 6.1.3, 8.2, 12.3; diagram 11-Signal 5)

## 15.6 Limitation of Substitutions

### **USAV 15.6:**

- a. Fifteen substitutions are the maximum permitted per team per set. Substitution of one or more players is permitted at the same time.
- b. A player in the starting line-up may leave the set and re-enter, but only in his/her previous position in the line-up (Exception 15.7).
- c. A substitute may enter a set in the position of a teammate in the starting line-up.
- d. Unlimited individual entries by a substitute within the team's allowable 15 substitutions are permitted. Each entry must be in the same position in the line-up.
- e. More than one substitute may enter the set in each position.
- f. When the competition format utilizes six substitutions per set, a player in the starting line-up may leave the game, but only once in a set, and re-enter, but only once in a set, and only to his/her previous position in the line-up. A substitute player may enter the game in place of a player in the starting line-up, but only once per set, and he/she can only be substituted by the same starting player.



## 15.7 Exceptional Substitution

### **USAV 15.7:**

A player (except the Libero) who cannot continue playing due to injury/illness, or expulsion/disqualification, should be substituted legally. If this is not possible, the team is entitled to make an EXCEPTIONAL substitution, beyond the limits of Rule 15.6. (see also USAV 15.6, 19.4.3, 21.3.2, 21.3.3)

An exceptional substitution means that any player who is not on the court at the time of the injury/illness/expulsion/disqualification, except a Libero's replacement player, may be substituted into the game for the injured/ill/expelled/disqualified player. The injured/ill/expelled/disqualified player substituted via exceptional substitution is not allowed to re-enter the match.

- a. An exceptional substitution is not counted as an individual entry or as part of the total team substitutions, but is recorded on the score sheet.
- b. Priority for an exceptional substitution:
  - i. by the starter or a substitute who has played in the position of the injured player, or by any substitute who has not already participated in the set;
  - ii. by any substitute on the bench, regardless of position previously played;
  - iii. by the Libero.

## 15.8 Substitution for Expulsion or Disqualification

An EXPELLED or DISQUALIFIED player must be substituted immediately through a legal substitution. If this is not possible, the team has the right to do an exceptional substitution. If this is not possible, the team is declared INCOMPLETE. (see also 6.4.3, 7.3.1, 15.6, 15.7, 21.3.2, 21.3.3; diagram 11-Signal 5)

## 15.9 Illegal Substitution

**USAV 15.9.1:** A substitution is illegal when it exceeds the limitations indicated in USAV 15.6 (except in the case of USAV 15.7). The following substitutes are illegal:

- a. player not on the roster;
  - b. player with illegal number or uniform;
  - c. exceeds the number of total team substitutions;
  - d. player replaced by exceptional substitution.
- 15.9.2: When a team has made an illegal substitution and play has been resumed, the following procedure shall apply, in sequence (see also 8.1, 15.6):



15.9.2.1 the team is penalized with a point and service to the opponent (see also 6.1.3);

15.9.2.2 the substitution must be rectified;

**USAV 15.9.2.3:**

- a. if the team at fault is serving, all points scored while the illegal substitute was on the court are canceled.
- b. if the team at fault is receiving and discovery is after the opponents have served, all points previously scored by the team at fault shall be retained. The serving team will be awarded a point unless the error is discovered after the serving team has scored a point. In this case, no additional point is awarded.
- c. if it is not possible to determine when the error first occurred and the team at fault is serving, only the last point in that term of service will be removed; the opponent's points remain valid.

**USAV 15.9.2.4:** No substitution will be charged to the team or player(s), even if required to correct the wrong entry. In addition, any player or team substitutions charged at the time of the wrong entry

shall be removed from the score sheet as though they had never occurred.

## **15.10 Substitution Procedure**

15.10.1: Substitution must be carried out within the substitution zone. (see also 1.4.3; diagram 1b)

15.10.2: A substitution shall only last the time needed for recording the substitution on the score sheet and allowing entry and exit of the players. (see also 24.2.6, 25.2.2.3)

**USAV 15.10.3.1:** The actual request for substitution starts at the moment of the entrance of the substitute player(s) into the substitution zone, ready to play, during an interruption. A verbal request for substitution is not acknowledged by the referees. The substitute must enter the substitution zone for the request to be acknowledged, except when the substitution is for an injury or before the start of a set.

15.10.3.2: If the player is not ready, the substitution is not granted and the team is sanctioned for a delay. (see also 16.2; diagram 9)

15.10.3.3: The request for substitution is acknowledged and announced by the scorer or 2nd referee, by use of the buzzer or whistle respectively. The 2nd referee authorizes the substitution. (see also 24.2.6)



**USAV 15.10.4:** If a team intends to make simultaneously more than one substitution, all substitute players must approach the substitution zone at the same time to be considered in the same request. In this case, substitutions must be made in succession, one pair of players after another. If one is illegal, the legal one(s) is/are granted and the illegal is rejected and subject to a delay sanction. Any significant delay between substitutes entering the substitution zone results in the team's subsequent substitution request(s) being denied. (see also 1.4.3, 15.2.2)

## **15.11 Improper Requests**

15.11.1: It is improper to request any regular game interruption (see also 15):

15.11.1.1: during a rally or at the moment of or after the whistle to serve (see also 12.3);

15.11.1.2: by a non-authorized team member (see also 5.1.2.3, 5.2.3.3);

15.11.1.3: for a second substitution by the same team during the same interruption (i.e., before the end of next completed rally), except in the case of injury/illness/expulsion/disqualification of a player in play (see also 15.2.2, 15.2.3, 15.8, 16.1, 25.2.2.6);

15.11.1.4: after having exhausted the authorized number of time-outs and substitutions. (see also USAV 15.1)

**USAV 15.11.2:** The first improper request by a team in the match that does not affect or delay the game shall be rejected, but it must be recorded on the score sheet without any other consequences. (see also 16.1, 25.2.2.6)

If a change in request is due to a referee's mind change, the request will be honored, and no sanction assessed.

15.11.3: Any further improper request in the match by the same team constitutes a delay. (see also 16.1.4; diagram 11-Signal 25)

**USAV 15.11.4:** A request for first or second time-out may be honored immediately subsequent to an improper request for substitution. A proper request for substitution may be honored immediately subsequent to an improper request for time-out.

## **RULE 16. GAME DELAYS**

### **16.1 Types of Delays**

An improper action of a team that defers resumption of the game is a delay and includes, among others:

16.1.1: delaying regular game interruptions (see also 15.10.2);

16.1.2: prolonging interruptions, after having been instructed to resume the game (see also 15);





- 16.1.3: requesting an illegal substitution (see also 15.9);
- 16.1.4: repeating an improper request (see also 15.11.3);
- 16.1.5: delaying the game by a team member.

**USAV 16.1:**

If a request for an illegal substitution or excessive time-out is acknowledged (i.e., whistled) by the referees, a delay sanction shall result. No additional request for game interruption from that team may be made until the next completed rally. Any substitution request that is improper or causes a delay is denied.

**16.2 Delay Sanctions (diagram 9)**

- 16.2.1: “Delay warning” and “delay penalty” are team sanctions.
  - 16.2.1.1: Delay sanctions remain in force for the entire match. (see also 6.3)
  - 16.2.1.2: All delay sanctions are recorded on the score sheet. (see also 25.2.2.6)
- 16.2.2: The first delay in the match by a team member is sanctioned with a “DELAY WARNING.” (see also diagram 11-Signal 25)
- 16.2.3: The second and subsequent delays of any type by any member of the same team in the same match constitute a fault and are sanctioned with a “DELAY PENALTY”: a point and service to the opponent. (see also 6.1.3; diagram 11-Signal 25)
- 16.2.4: Delay sanctions imposed before or between sets are applied in the following set. (see also 18.1)

**RULE 17. EXCEPTIONAL GAME INTERRUPTIONS**

**17.1 Injury/Illness**

- USAV 17.1.1:** Should a serious accident occur while the ball is in play, the referee must stop the game immediately and permit medical assistance to enter the court. The rally is then replayed. If the injured player cannot continue playing within a reasonable amount of time, the player must be replaced by substitution, a legal Libero replacement (if the Libero is not on the court at the time of the injury), or the team must take a legal time-out. (see also Guidelines for Dealing with Blood, Concussion Guidelines)
- a. If the referees are informed that a substitute will replace the injured player, no time-out will be charged regardless of the time required to safely remove the player from the playing area.
  - b. No substitution requests may be made by the injured player’s team until the injury situation is resolved.



**USAV 17.1.2:** If an injured player is unable to play and a legal or exceptional substitution cannot be made, the referee must grant a special time-out of up to three minutes. Play will be resumed as soon as the injured player is able to continue. (see also 15.6, 15.7, 24.2.8) In no case shall the special injury time-out exceed three minutes. After the special time-out, a team may request a legal time-out. If, after three minutes, or at the expiration of time-outs granted subsequent to the special time-out, the injured player cannot continue to play, the team is declared incomplete for the set.

No player may be granted more than one three-minute injury time-out during any match. If a player becomes injured to the extent that a second injury time-out would be required, the team is declared incomplete for the match. (see also 6.4.3, 7.3.1)

## **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)

## **17.3 Prolonged Interruptions**

17.3.1: If unforeseen circumstances interrupt the match, the 1st referee, the organizer and the Control Committee, if there is one, shall decide the measures to be taken to re-establish normal conditions. (see also 23.2.3)

17.3.2: Should one or several interruptions occur, not exceeding 4 hours in total:

17.3.2.1: if the match is resumed on the same playing court, the interrupted set shall continue normally with the same score, players (except expelled or disqualified ones) and positions. The sets already played will keep their scores (see also 7.3);

**USAV 17.3.2.2:** if the match is resumed on another playing court, the interrupted set shall continue normally with the same score, players (except expelled or disqualified ones), and positions. The sets already played will keep their scores. (see also 7.3, 21.4.1; diagram 9)

17.3.3: Should one or several interruptions occur, exceeding 4 hours in total, the whole match shall be replayed.



## **RULE 18. INTERVALS AND CHANGE OF COURTS**

### **18.1 Intervals**

#### **USAV 18.1:**

An interval is the time between sets. All intervals last 3 minutes. (see also 4.2.4)

During this time, team line-ups are submitted and recorded on the score sheet. If teams will change courts between sets during the match, the change of courts takes place during the interval. (see also 7.3.2, 18.2, 25.2.1.2)

The interval between the second and the third set can be extended up to 10 minutes by the organizer.

### **18.2 Change of Courts**

**USAV 18.2.1:** The default protocol is for each team to remain on their respective side of the court throughout the match, including the deciding set.

EXCEPTIONS:

**USAV 18.2.1.1:** The event organizer determines there is a clear disadvantage on only one side of the court.

**USAV 18.2.1.1.1:** In the case of a clear disadvantage, the decision to change courts will remain in effect for the duration of the match but may change for a subsequent match.

**USAV 18.2.1.2:** The event organizer may determine that a change of courts will take place between sets and during a deciding set for all matches.

NOTE: The decision to change or not change courts is not grounds for a protest.

**USAV 18.2.2:** If the teams will change courts during the deciding set in accordance with USAV 18.2.1.1 or USAV 18.2.1.2, the change of courts takes place when the leading team reaches 8 points. If the change is not made once the leading team reaches 8 points, it will take place as soon as the error is noticed. The score at the time the change is made remains the same. (see also 6.3.2, 7.4.1, 25.2.2.5)



## CHAPTER 6 THE LIBERO PLAYER

### RULE 19. THE LIBERO PLAYER

#### 19.1 Designation of the Libero

**USAV 19.1.1:** Each team has the right to designate from the list of players on the score sheet (roster) up to two specialized defensive players called Liberos. A team may designate zero, one, or two Liberos for each set.

19.1.2: All Liberos must be recorded on the score sheet in the special lines reserved for this. (see also 5.2.2, 25.2.1.1, 26.2.1.1)

19.1.3: The Libero on court is the Acting Libero. If there is another Libero, he/she is the second Libero for the team. Only one Libero may be on court at any time.

#### 19.2 Equipment

##### **USAV 19.2 (see also 4.3):**

- a. The Libero must wear a jersey that clearly contrasts with, and has a different dominant color from, the jersey of their teammates. If the team is wearing dark-colored jerseys, the Libero must wear a light-colored jersey; if the team is wearing light-colored jerseys, the Libero must wear a dark-colored jersey.
- b. A jacket or bib can only be worn by the re-designated Libero. If a jacket or bib is worn by the re-designated Libero, the uniform number must still be visible.
- c. Numbers shall be a contrasting color to the uniform top and meet all other specifications in USAV 4.3.3.1. Color combinations including but not limited to purple/black, dark green/black, royal blue/black, navy/maroon, and white/light yellow are not distinctive enough to comply with the rules.

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

- d. When two Liberos are used, both Liberos can be in uniforms different from each other and from the rest of the team.

#### 19.3 Actions Involving the Libero

19.3.1: The playing actions:

19.3.1.1: The Libero is allowed to replace any player in a back-row position (see also 7.4.1.2);

19.3.1.2: He/she is restricted to perform as a back-row player and is not allowed to complete an attack hit from anywhere (including



playing court and free zone) if at the moment of the contact the ball is entirely higher than the top of the net (see also 13.2.2, 13.2.3, 13.3.5);

**USAV 19.3.1.3:**

- a. The Libero may not block or attempt to block. (see also 14.6.2, 14.6.6; diagram 11-Signal 12)
- b. In one position a Libero may serve after replacing the player in position 1. (see also 12.4.1, USAV 19.3.2.1c)

19.3.1.4: A player (teammate) may not complete an attack hit when the ball is entirely higher than the top of the net, if the ball is coming from an overhand finger pass by a Libero in his/her front zone. The ball may be freely attacked if the Libero makes the same action from outside his/her front zone. (see also 1.4.1, 13.3.6, 23.3.2.3d/e; diagram 1b)

**19.3.2: Libero Replacements**

**USAV 19.3.2.1:** Libero replacements are not counted as substitutions. They are unlimited, but there must be a completed rally between two Libero replacements. (see also 6.1.3, 15.5)

**EXCEPTIONS:**

- a. A penalty causes the team to rotate and the Libero to move to position four;
- b. The Acting Libero becomes unable to play making the rally incomplete; or,
- c. In one rotation, a Libero can replace the player in position 1 and serve the next rally, even if he/she is already on the court in replacement of another player. In this situation, the Libero does not have to exit the court before replacing the player in position 1, and there does not need to be a completed rally between Libero replacements. (see also USAV 19.3.1.3a)

19.3.2.2: The regular replacement player may replace and be replaced by either Libero. The Acting Libero can only be replaced by the regular replacement player for that position or by the second Libero.

19.3.2.3: At the start of each set, the Libero cannot enter the court until the 2nd referee has checked the line-up and authorized a Libero replacement with a starting player. (see also 7.3.2, 12.1)



- 19.3.2.4: Other Libero replacements must only take place while the ball is out of play and before the whistle for service. (see also 8.2, 12.3)
- 19.3.2.5: A Libero replacement made after the whistle for service but before the service hit should not be rejected; however, at the end of the rally, the game captain must be informed that this is not a permitted procedure, and that repetition will be subject to delay sanctions. (see also 12.3, 12.4; diagram 9)
- 19.3.2.6: Subsequent late Libero replacements shall result in the play being interrupted immediately, and the imposition of a delay sanction. The team to serve next will be determined by the level of the delay sanction. (see also 16.2; diagram 9)
- 19.3.2.7: The Libero and the replacing player may only enter or leave the court through the Libero Replacement Zone. (see also 1.4.4; diagram 1b)
- 19.3.2.8: Libero replacements must be recorded on the Libero Control Sheet (if one is used) or on the electronic score sheet. (see also 26.2.2.1, 26.2.2.2)
- 19.3.2.9: An illegal Libero replacement can involve (amongst others): no completed rally between Libero replacements (see also 6.1.3); the Libero being replaced by a player other than the second Libero or the regular replacement player. (see also 15.9)

An illegal Libero replacement should be considered in the same way as an illegal substitution (see also 15.9; diagram 9): i.e., should the illegal Libero replacement be noticed before the start of the next rally, then this is corrected by the referees, and the team is sanctioned for delay; should the illegal Libero replacement be noticed after the service hit, the consequences are the same as for an illegal substitution.

## **19.4 Re-Designation of a New Libero**

- 19.4.1: The Libero becomes unable to play if injured, ill, expelled or disqualified. (see also 21.3.2, 21.3.3; diagram 9)

The Libero can be declared unable to play for any reason by the coach or, in the absence of a coach, by the game captain. (see also 5.1.2, 5.2.1)

- 19.4.2: Team with One Libero

- 19.4.2.1: When only one Libero is available for a team according to Rule 19.4.1, or the team has only one registered, and this Libero becomes or is declared unable to play, the coach (or game



captain if no coach is present) may re-designate as Libero for the remainder of the set any other player (replacement player excepted) not on the court at the moment of the re-designation. (see also 19.4, 19.4.1)

- 19.4.2.2: If the Acting Libero becomes unable to play, he/she may be replaced by the regular replacement player or immediately and directly to court by a re-designated Libero. However, a Libero who is the subject of a re-designation may not play for the remainder of the match. If the Libero is not on court when declared unable to play, he/she may also be the subject of a re-designation. The Libero declared unable to play may not play for the remainder of the match.
- 19.4.2.3: The coach, or game captain if no coach is present, contacts the 2nd referee informing him/her about the re-designation. (see also 5.1.2, 5.2.1)
- 19.4.2.4: Should a re-designated Libero become or be declared unable to play, further re-designations are permitted. (see also 19.4.1)
- 19.4.2.5: If the coach requests the team captain to be re-designated as the new Libero, this will be permitted. (see also 5.1.2, 19.4.1)
- 19.4.2.6: In the case of a re-designated Libero, the number of the player re-designated as Libero must be recorded on the score sheet remarks section and on the Libero control sheet (or electronic score sheet if one is used). (see also 25.2.2.7, 26.2.2.1)

#### 19.4.3: Team with Two Liberos

- 19.4.3.1: Where a team has registered on the score sheet two Liberos, but one becomes unable to play the team has the right to play with only one Libero. (see also 4.1.1, 19.1.1)  
  
No re-designation will be allowed, however, unless the remaining Libero is unable to continue playing for the match.

### 19.5 Summary

If the Libero is expelled or disqualified, he/she may be replaced immediately by the team's second Libero. Should the team have only one Libero, then it has the right to make a re-designation. (see also 19.4, 21.3.2, 21.3.3)



## CHAPTER 7 PARTICIPANTS' CONDUCT

### RULE 20. REQUIREMENTS OF CONDUCT

#### 20.1 Sportsmanlike Conduct

- 20.1.1: Participants must know the "Official Volleyball Rules" and abide by them.
- 20.1.2: Participants must accept referees' decisions with sportsmanlike conduct, without disputing them.  
In case of doubt, clarification may be requested only through the game captain. (see also USAV 5.1.2.1)
- 20.1.3: Participants must refrain from actions or attitudes aimed at influencing the decisions of the referees or covering up faults committed by their team.

#### 20.2 Fair Play

- 20.2.1: Participants must behave respectfully and courteously in the spirit of FAIR PLAY, not only toward the referees, but also toward other officials, the opponent, teammates and spectators.
- 20.2.2: Communication between team members during the match is permitted.

#### **New USAV 20.3:** Filming and Recording of Matches

20.3.1 Players on the court are not permitted to wear microphones. If the referee(s) discover a player on the court wearing a microphone, the match is stopped, and the player is 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, the team receives a delay penalty (loss of rally and point to the opponent).

20.3.2 Coaches and team members on the bench are allowed to record audio and video for use by the team. Audio or video recordings may NOT be used as a way to intimidate, demoralize, or bully other teams, officials, or spectators. Additionally, teams may not record a conversation with a referee or the work team. If a team is found recording the officials or the work team, the team is issued a delay sanction.

20.3.3 Teams may not post any audio and/or video in a public forum (including social media accounts) with the intent of making fun of, criticizing, or mocking the officials, the opponent, or the tournament. Discovery of such audio and/or video will result in penalties as determined by USA Volleyball.





## **RULE 21. Misconduct and Its Sanctions**

### **21.1 Minor Misconduct**

Minor misconduct offenses are not subject to sanctions. It is the 1st referee's duty to prevent the teams from approaching the sanctioning level. This is done in two stages (see also 5.1.2, 21.3):

**Stage 1:** by issuing a verbal warning through the game captain;

**Stage 2:** by use of a YELLOW CARD to the team member(s) concerned.

This formal warning is not in itself a sanction but a symbol that the team member (and by extension, the team) has reached the sanctioning level for the match. It is recorded on the score sheet but has no immediate consequences. (see also diagram 11-Signal 6a)

### **USAV 21.1**

NOTE: Yellow card warnings are assessed to individuals but are in force for the entire team. This means each team may receive only one yellow card per match.

### **21.2 Misconduct Leading to Sanctions**

Incorrect conduct by a team member toward officials, opponents, teammates or spectators is classified in three categories according to the seriousness of the offense.

- 21.2.1: Rude conduct: action contrary to good manners or moral principles.
- 21.2.2: Offensive conduct: defamatory or insulting words or gestures or any action expressing contempt.
- 21.2.3: Aggression: actual physical attack or aggressive or threatening behavior.

### **21.3 Sanction Scale (diagram 9)**

According to the judgment of the 1st referee and depending on the seriousness of the offense, the sanctions to be applied and recorded on the score sheet are: Penalty, Expulsion or Disqualification. (see also 21.2, 25.2.2.6)

- 21.3.1: Penalty (diagram 11-Signal 6b)

The first rude conduct in the match by any team member is penalized with a point and service to the opponent. (see also 4.1.1, 21.2.1)



### 21.3.2: Expulsion (diagram 11-Signal 7)

**USAV 21.3.2.1:** A player or substitute who is sanctioned by expulsion shall not play for the rest of the set and must remain seated on the team's bench for the remainder of that set. If on court, the player must be immediately substituted legally/exceptionally. Any other team member sanctioned by expulsion must leave the playing area, bench, and warm-up area for the remainder of the set and loses his/ her right to intervene in the set. (see also 4.1.1, 5.2.1, 5.3.2)

21.3.2.2: The first offensive conduct by a team member is sanctioned by expulsion with no other consequences. (see also 4.1.1, 21.2.2)

21.3.2.3: The second rude conduct in the same match by the same team member is sanctioned by expulsion with no other consequences. (see also 4.1.1, 21.2.1)

### 21.3.3: Disqualification (diagram 11-Signal 8)

**USAV 21.3.3.1:** A team member who is sanctioned by disqualification must be substituted legally/exceptionally and immediately if on court and must leave the Competition Control Area for the rest of the match with no other consequences. For the purposes of a disqualification, the Competition Control Area described above includes, at a minimum, the playing area, bench, warm-up area and spectator area. (see also 4.1.1; diagram 1a)

21.3.3.2: The first physical attack or implied or threatened aggression is sanctioned by disqualification with no other consequences. (see also 21.2.3)

21.3.3.3: The second offensive conduct in the same match by the same team member is sanctioned by disqualification with no other consequences. (see also 4.1.1, 21.2.2)

21.3.3.4: The third rude conduct in the same match by the same team member is sanctioned by disqualification with no other consequences. (see also 4.1.1, 21.2.1)

## 21.4 Application of Misconduct Sanctions

21.4.1: All misconduct sanctions are individual sanctions, remain in force for the entire match and are recorded on the score sheet. (see also 21.3, 25.2.2.6)

21.4.2: The repetition of misconduct by the same team member in the same match is sanctioned progressively (the team member receives a heavier sanction for each successive offense). (see also 4.1.1, 21.2, 21.3; diagram 9)

21.4.3: Expulsion or disqualification due to offensive conduct or aggression does not require a previous sanction. (see also 21.2, 21.3)



## **21.5 Misconduct Before and Between Sets**

Any misconduct occurring before or between sets is sanctioned according to Rule 21.3 and sanctions apply in the following set. (see also 18.1, 21.2, 21.3)

## **21.6 Summary of Misconduct and Cards Used**

Warning: no sanction

**Stage 1:** verbal warning

**Stage 2:** symbol Yellow card (see also 21.1; diagram 11-Signal 6a)

Penalty: sanction – symbol Red card (see also 21.3.1; diagram 11-Signal 6b)

Expulsion: sanction – symbol Red + Yellow cards jointly (see also 21.3.2; diagram 11-Signal 7)

Disqualification: sanction – symbol Red + Yellow card separately (see also 21.3.3; diagram 11-Signal 8)





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## SECTION III

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# THE GAME OFFICIALS



## CHAPTER 8 REFEREES

### RULE 22. REFEREEING CORPS AND PROCEDURES

#### 22.1 Composition

The refereeing corps for a match is composed of the following officials:

- the 1st referee (see also 23);
- the 2nd referee (see also 24);
- the scorer (see also 25);
- the assistant scorer (see also 26);
- two (four) line judges (see also 27).

#### 22.2 Procedures

22.2.1: Only the 1st and 2nd referees may blow a whistle during the match:

22.2.1.1: the 1st referee gives the signal for the service that begins the rally (see also 6.1.3, 12.3; diagram 11-Signal 1);

22.2.1.2: the 1st or 2nd referee signals the end of the rally, provided that they are sure that a fault has been committed and they have identified its nature.

**USAV 22.2.1.3:** The scorer may use an audible device, including a whistle, to notify the referees of a rotational fault.

22.2.2: They may blow the whistle when the ball is out of play to indicate that they authorize or reject a team request. (see also 5.1.2, 8.2)

22.2.3: Immediately after the referee's whistle to signal the completion of the rally, they have to indicate with the official hand signals (see also 28.1):

22.2.3.1: If the fault is whistled by the 1st referee, he/she will indicate in order:

- a. the team to serve (see also diagram 11-Signal 2);
- b. the nature of the fault;
- c. the player(s) at fault (if necessary).

**USAV 22.2.3.1:** The 2nd referee will repeat the 1st referee's hand signals.

22.2.3.2: If the fault is whistled by the 2nd referee, he/she will indicate:

- a. the nature of the fault;
- b. the player at fault (if necessary);
- c. the team to serve following the hand signal of the 1st referee.

In this case, the 1st referee does not show either the nature of the fault or the player at fault, but only the team to serve.



- 22.2.3.3: In the case of an attack hit fault or blocking fault by back-row or Libero players, both referees indicate according to 22.2.3.1 and 22.2.3.2 above. (see also 13.3.3, 13.3.5, 19.3.1.2; diagram 11-Signals 12 & 21)
- 22.2.3.4: In the case of a double fault (see diagram 11-Signal 23) both referees indicate in order:
- a. the nature of the fault;
  - b. the players at fault (if necessary).
- The team to serve next is then indicated by the 1st referee.

## **RULE 23. 1ST REFEREE**

### **23.1 Location**

The 1st referee carries out his/her functions standing on a referee's stand located at one end of the net on the opposite side to the scorer. His/her view must be approximately 50 cm (19½") above the net. (see also diagrams 1a, 1b, 10)

### **23.2 Authority**

- 23.2.1: The 1st referee directs the match from the start until the end. He/she has authority over all members of the refereeing corps and the members of the teams. (see also 4.1.1, 6.3)
- During the match his/her decisions are final. He/she is authorized to overrule the decisions of other members of the refereeing corps, if it is noticed that they are mistaken.
- He/she may even replace a member of the refereeing corps who is not performing his/her functions properly.
- 23.2.2: He/she also controls the work of the ball retrievers, floor wipers and moppers. (see also 3.3)
- 23.2.3: He/she has the power to decide any matters involving the game, including those not provided for in the rules.
- 23.2.4: He/she shall not permit any discussion about his/her decisions. (see also 20.1.2)
- However, at the request of the game captain, the 1st referee will give an explanation on the application or interpretation of the rules upon which he/she has based the decision.
- If the game captain does not agree with this explanation and chooses to protest against such decision, he/she must immediately reserve the right to file a protest before the match resumes. The 1st referee must authorize this right of the game captain. (see USAV 5.1.2.1 for Protest Procedures)
- 23.2.5: The 1st referee is responsible for determining before and during the match whether the playing area equipment and the conditions meet playing requirements.



## 23.3 Responsibilities

23.3.1: Prior to the match, the 1st referee:

- 23.3.1.1: inspects the conditions of the playing area, the balls and other equipment (see also Chapter 1);
- 23.3.1.2: performs the toss with the team captains (see also 7.1);
- 23.3.1.3: controls the teams' warming up. (see also 7.2)

23.3.2: During the match, he/she is authorized:

- 23.3.2.1: to issue warnings to the teams (see also 21.1);
- 23.3.2.2: to sanction misconduct and delays (see also 16.2, 21.2; diagram 9, diagram 11-Signals 6a, 6b, 7, 8, 25);

23.3.2.3: to decide upon:

- a. the faults of the server and of the positions of the serving team, including the screen (see also 7.5, 12.4, 12.5, 12.7.1, diagrams 4 & 6, diagram 11-Signals 12, 13, 22);
- b. the faults in playing the ball (see also 9.3; diagram 11-Signals 16, 17, 18);
- c. the faults above the net, and the faulty contact of the player with the net, primarily (but not exclusively) on the attacker's side (see also 11.3.1, 11.4.1, 11.4.4; diagram 11-Signals 19 & 20); the attack hit faults of the Libero and back-row players (see also 13.3.3, 13.3.5, 24.3.2.4; diagram 8 & diagram 11-Signal 21);
- d. the completed attack hits made by a player on a ball above net height coming from an overhand pass with fingers by the Libero in his/her front zone (see also 13.3.6, 24.3.2.4; diagram 11-Signal 21);
- e. the ball crossing completely the lower space under the net (see also 8.4.5, 24.3.2.7; diagram 5a, diagram 11-Signal 22);
- f. the completed block by back-row players or the attempted block by the Libero (see also 14.6.2, 14.6.6; diagram 11-Signal 12);
- g. the ball that crosses the net totally or partly outside of the crossing space to the opponent's court or contacts the antenna on his/her side of the playing court (see also diagram 11-Signal 15);
- h. the served ball and the third hit passing over or outside the antenna on his/her side of the court (see also diagram 11-Signal 15).

23.3.3: At the end of the match, he/she checks the score sheet and signs it. (see also 24.3.3, 25.2.3.3)





## **RULE 24. 2ND REFEREE**

### **24.1 Location**

The 2nd referee performs his/her functions standing outside the playing court near the post, on the opposite side of and facing the 1st referee. (see also diagrams 1a, 1b, 10)

### **24.2 Authority**

- 24.2.1: The 2nd referee is the assistant of the 1st referee, but has also his/her own range of jurisdiction. (see 24.3)
- Should the 1st referee become unable to continue his/her work, the 2nd referee may replace him/her.
- 24.2.2: He/she may, without whistling, also signal faults outside his/her range of jurisdiction, but may not insist on them to the 1st referee.
- 24.2.3: He/she controls the work of the scorer(s). (see also 25.2, 26.2)
- 24.2.4: He/she supervises the team members on the team bench and reports their misconduct to the 1st referee. (see also 4.2.1)
- 24.2.5: He/she controls the players in the warm-up areas. (see also 4.2.3)

**USAV 24.2.6:** He/she authorizes the regular game interruptions, controls their duration, including Technical Time-outs, and rejects improper requests. (see also 15, 15.11, 25.2.2.3)

#### **USAV 24.2.7:**

- a. He/she controls the number of time-outs and substitutions used by each team and reports the second time-out and substitutions 12, 13, 14, and 15 to the appropriate coach or game captain. (see also 15.1, 25.2.2.3)
- b. He/she notifies the 1st referee of a team's second time-out and 15th substitution.
- c. Failure to report team substitutions or time-outs to the coach or captain is not grounds for a protest.
- d. During the match, the coach or captain may request verification of the number of team substitutions or time-outs. If incorrect information is provided by the 2nd referee and the team acts directly upon this misinformation resulting in an illegal substitution (per USAV 15.9.1) or an excessive time-out, the referee's error will be corrected with no penalty or sanction assessed to the team. If an illegal (excessive) substitution does not result, the substitution may still be withdrawn prior to the next serve without sanction or penalty.
- e. When a referee incorrectly informs a coach or captain that the team has used all time-outs or team substitutions, but later discovers the information is inaccurate and corrects it, the team has no basis for a protest since teams also have a responsibility to maintain records of their team substitutions and time-outs.



- 24.2.8: In the case of an injury of a player, he/she authorizes an exceptional substitution or grants a 3-minute recovery time. (see also 15.7, 17.1.2)
- 24.2.9: He/she checks the floor condition, mainly in the front zone. He/ she also checks, during the match, that the balls still fulfill the regulations. (see also 1.2.1, 3)

### 24.3 Responsibilities

**USAV 24.3.1:** At the start of each set, at the change of courts in the deciding set (if teams will change courts) and whenever necessary, the 2nd referee checks that the actual positions of the players on the court correspond to those on the line-up sheets. (see also 5.2.3.1, USAV 7.3.2, 7.3.5, USAV 18.2.2)

- a. The 2nd referee's line-up check prior to the start of any set is a courtesy. It is the responsibility of the captain and/or coach to ensure the players maintain the correct service order once the 2nd referee has completed this line-up check.
  - b. During the match, the coach or captain may request verification of player positions or may confirm the correct server. If incorrect information is provided by the 2nd referee, and the team acts directly upon this misinformation resulting in a rotational fault (wrong server), the referee's error will be corrected. The point(s) scored by the wrong server will be canceled. The team will be placed in the correct order and will resume serving from the moment the incorrect information was provided. However, if the referee's error is discovered after the opponent has served, the team at fault will retain any points scored and will be placed in the correct order. No additional point will be awarded to the opponent.
- 24.3.2: During the match, he/she decides, whistles and signals:
- 24.3.2.1: penetration into the opponent's court, and the space under the net (see also 11.2; diagram 5a, 11-Signal 22);
  - 24.3.2.2: positional faults of the receiving team (see also 7.5; diagram 4, diagram 11-Signal 13);
  - 24.3.2.3: the faulty contact of the player with the net primarily (but not exclusively) on the blocker's side and with the antenna on his/ her side of the court (see also 11.3.1);
  - 24.3.2.4: the completed block by back-row players or the attempted block by the Libero; or the attack hit fault by back-row players or by the Libero (see also 13.3.3, 14.6.2, 14.6.6, 23.3.2.3d, e, g; diagram 8, diagram 11-Signal 12 & 21);
  - 24.3.2.5: the contact of the ball with an outside object (see also USAV 8.4.2, 8.4.3; diagram 11-Signal 15);



- 24.3.2.6: the contact of the ball with the floor when the 1st referee is not in position to see the contact (see also 8.3);
- 24.3.2.7: the ball that crosses the net plane totally or partly outside the crossing space to the opponent's court or contacts the antenna on his/her side of the court; (see also 8.4.3, 8.4.4; diagram 5a, diagram 11-Signal 15);
- 24.3.2.8: the served ball and the 3rd hit passing over or outside the antenna on his/her side of the court. (see also diagram 11-Signal 15)

**USAV 24.3.3:** At the end of the match, he/she checks the score sheet for accuracy but is not required to sign it. (see also 23.3.3, 25.3.3)

## **RULE 25. SCORER**

### **25.1 Location**

The scorer performs his/her functions seated at the scorer's table on the opposite side of the court from and facing the 1st referee. (see also diagrams 1a, 1b, 10)

### **25.2 Responsibilities**

He/she fills in the score sheet or electronic scoring device according to the rules, cooperating with the 2nd referee.

He/she uses a buzzer or other sound device to notify irregularities or give signals to the referees on the basis of his/her responsibilities. (see also USAV 22.2.1.3)

25.2.1: Prior to the match and set, the scorer:

**USAV 25.2.1.1:** registers the data of the match and teams, including the names and numbers of the Liberos, according to the procedures in force. The captains and coaches do not sign the score sheet before the match. (see also 4.1, 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 7.3.2, 19.1.2, 19.4.2.6)

25.2.1.2 records the starting line-up of each team from the line-up sheet (or checks the data submitted electronically). (see also 5.2.3.1, If he/she fails to receive the line-up sheets on time, he/she immediately notifies this fact to the 2nd referee.

25.2.2: During the match, the scorer:

- 25.2.2.1: records the points scored (see also 6.1);
- 25.2.2.2: controls the serving order of each team and indicates any error to the referees immediately after the service hit (see also 12.2);
- 25.2.2.3: is empowered to acknowledge and announce requests for player substitutions by use of the buzzer, controlling their number, and records the substitutions and time-outs, informing the 2nd referee (see also 15.1, 15.4.1, 15.10.3.3, 24.2.6, 24.2.7);



- 25.2.2.4: notifies the referees of a request for regular game interruption that is out of order (see also 15.11);
- 25.2.2.5: announces to the referees the ends of the sets, and the scoring of the 8th point in the deciding set (if a change of courts will take place);
- 25.2.2.6: records misconduct warnings, sanctions and improper requests (see also 15.11.3, 16.2, 21.3);
- 25.2.2.7: records all other events as instructed by the 2nd referee, i.e. exceptional substitutions, recovery time, prolonged interruptions, external interference, re-designation, etc. (see also 15.7, 17.1.2, 17.2, 17.3, 19.4);

**USAV 25.2.2.8:** The interval between sets is controlled by the referees. (see also 18.1)

25.2.3: At the end of the match, the scorer:

- 25.2.3.1: records the final result (see also 6.3);
- 25.2.3.2: in the case of protest, with the previous authorization of the 1st referee, writes or permits the team/game captain to write on the score sheet a statement on the incident being protested (see also USAV 5.1.2.1, 5.1.3.2, 23.2.4);

**USAV 25.2.3.3:** signs the score sheet him/herself, before obtaining the 1st referee's signature. (see also 5.1.3.1, 23.3.3)

## **RULE 26. ASSISTANT SCORER**

### **26.1 Location**

The assistant scorer performs his/her functions seated beside the scorer at the scorer's table. (see also 22.1; diagram 1a, 1b, 10)

### **26.2 Responsibilities**

He/she records the replacements involving the Libero. He/she assists with the administrative duties of the scorer's work. (see also 19.3)

Should the scorer become unable to continue his/her work, the assistant scorer substitutes for the scorer.

26.2.1: Prior to the match and set, the assistant scorer:

- 26.2.1.1: prepares the Libero control sheet;
- 26.2.1.2: prepares the reserve score sheet.

26.2.2: During the match, the assistant scorer:

**USAV 26.2.2.1:** records the details of the Libero replacements/ redesignations and all substitutions, and assists the scorer by announcing substitutions. (see also 19.3.1.1, 19.4)

26.2.2.2: notifies the referees of any fault of the Libero replacement;



**USAV 26.2.2.3:** upon request, may assist the 2nd referee with starting and ending Technical Time-outs. (see also USAV 24.2.6);

**USAV 26.2.2.4:** upon request, may assist with operating the visual scoreboard; however, it is recommended that someone other than the assistant scorer operates the visual scoreboard.

26.2.2.5: checks that the scoreboards agree;

26.2.2.6: if necessary, updates the reserve score sheet and gives it to the scorer.

**USAV 26.2.3:** does not sign the Libero control sheet or the score sheet at the end of the match. (see also 23.3.3, 25.2.3.3)

## **RULE 27. LINE JUDGES**

### **27.1 Location**

#### **USAV 27.1:**

When two line judges are used, they stand at the corners of the court closest to the right hand of each referee. Each one controls both the end line and sideline of his/her side.

When four line judges are used, they stand at 1m to 3m (3'3" to 9'10") from each corner of the court, on the imaginary extension of the line that they control. (see also diagram 1a, 1b, 10)

### **27.2 Responsibilities**

**USAV 27.2.1:** The line judges perform their functions by using flags, 40 X 40 cm (16" X 16"); see also diagram 12. When flags are not used, the line judges will perform their functions with hand signals as shown in diagram 11-Signals 9, 14, 15, 22, and 24, to signal:

27.2.1.1: the ball "in" and "out" whenever the ball lands near their line(s) (see also 8.3, 8.4, diagram 12-Signals 1 & 2);

**USAV 27.2.1.2:** the touches of "out" balls by either team (see also 8.4; diagram 12-Signal 3);

27.2.1.3: the ball touching the antenna, the served ball and the third hit of the team crossing the net outside the crossing space, etc. (see also 8.4.3, 8.4.4, 10.1.1; diagram 5a, diagram 12-Signal 4);

27.2.1.4: any player (except the server) stepping outside of his/her court at the moment of the service hit (see also 7.4, 12.4.3; diagram 12-Signal 4);

27.2.1.5: the foot faults of the server (see also 12.4.3.);

**USAV 27.2.1.6:** any contact with the top 80cm (32") of either antenna by any player during his/her action of playing the ball or interfering with the play (see also 11.3.1, 11.4.4; diagram 3, diagram 12-Signal 4);



27.2.1.7: the ball crossing the net outside the crossing space into the opponent's court or touching the antenna on his/her side of the court. (see also 10.1.1; diagram 5a, diagram 12-Signal 4)

27.2.2: At the 1st referee's request, a line judge must repeat his/her signal.

## **RULE 28. OFFICIAL SIGNALS**

### **28.1 Referees' Hand Signals (diagram 11)**

The referees must indicate with the official hand signal the reason for their whistle (the nature of the fault whistled or the purpose of the interruption authorized). The signal has to be maintained for a moment and, if it is indicated with one hand, the hand corresponds to the side of the team which has made the fault or the request.

### **28.2 Line Judges' Flag Signals (diagram 12)**

The line judges must indicate with the official flag signal the nature of the fault called and maintain the signal for a moment.



## GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH BLOOD

If a player incurs an injury that causes bleeding, the 1st or 2nd referee shall immediately stop play in accordance with USAV 17.1.1. The player shall leave the court for evaluation/treatment. If the player cannot continue play and must be replaced, this should be done within the guidelines of USAV 15.6 or USAV 15.7. If substitution cannot be made, refer to USAV 17.1.2. If a player's uniform becomes saturated with blood, a change of uniform will be authorized. This change should be accomplished as quickly as possible to cause no additional delay to the resumption of play. The replacement uniform should be of a similar color and style. Though duplicate numbers will not be allowed, no sanction will be assessed if the player's replacement uniform number is different than the original number. If a replacement uniform is not available, the player must be replaced by a legal substitution. If the referee observes blood on the playing surface or equipment, play shall be stopped immediately and measures taken to clean any contaminated area or equipment using universal precautions.

## CONCUSSION GUIDELINES

The following guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) are offered to assist coaches, parents, tournament staff and officials in identifying concussion symptoms.

### HOW CAN A SPORTS OFFICIAL, COACH OR PARENT SPOT A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION?

Athletes who show or report one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below—or simply say they just “don’t feel right” after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body—may have a concussion or other serious brain injury.

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the game, score, or opponent.
- Moves clumsily.
- Answers questions slowly.
- Loses consciousness (even briefly).
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes.
- Can’t recall events prior to or after a hit or fall.



## **SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETES**

- Headache or “pressure” in head.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision.
- Bothered by light or noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.
- Confusion, or concentration or memory problems.
- Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down.”

## **AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL) INTERPRETER GUIDELINES**

- An ASL interpreter who meets all requirements of an assistant coach is afforded the rights and responsibilities of an assistant coach.
- An ASL interpreter, who is not a coach, may sit on the team bench during the match and may participate in any team activities afforded other rostered team members.
- Per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the requirement of “effective communication” between coach and athlete can be achieved one of two ways: (a) the ASL interpreter who meets all requirements of an assistant coach is allowed to go anywhere, during the play, that the coach goes, or (b) the coach needs to adjust her/his coaching style to ensure that she/he is always within sufficient distance of the interpreter to facilitate interpreting.
- In all cases, anyone serving in the role of ASL interpreter will have frequent contact with and/or authority and control over junior athletes, and therefore, must be a USAV member with a clear background screen and must have completed SafeSport training.





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