

**2011-2013 DOMESTIC COMPETITION  
REGULATIONS (INDOOR)  
TECHNIQUES, MECHANICS & PROCEDURES**

**Referee Techniques**

**1. Roster verification:**

Rosters, if used, are verified pre-match by the scorer, assisted by the second referee. Both referees visually review uniforms for legality.

**2. Coin toss procedures:**

USA Volleyball does not designate “home” or “visitor” teams, so the first referee will designate one team as “heads” and the other team as “tails” for the pre-match and deciding set coin tosses. The coin should be tossed and caught and the result immediately revealed without turning the coin onto the back of the opposite hand. If the coin is dropped, it shall be re-tossed. Captains have the options of: serve or receive the serve, or the side of the court to occupy.

**3. Pre-set line-up check by second referee:**

When checking line-ups at the start of each set, the second referee should stand at the sideline of each team’s court with both teams’ line-up sheets in hand to verify player positions. The second referee should not enter the court. The game ball should remain at the scorer’s table until line-ups have been verified and Libero replacements authorized. Once the line-up sheets have been returned to the scorer, the game ball should be tossed or rolled to the first server.

**4. Referee signal sequence:**

**a.** If the fault is whistled by the first referee, the first referee indicates which team wins the rally by extending the arm in the direction of the team that will serve next (palm perpendicular to floor), then the nature of the fault and the player at fault, if necessary.

All signals are repeated by the second referee except the service beckon (Rule 22.2.3.1).

**b.** If the fault is whistled by the second referee, the second referee indicates the nature of the fault and the player at fault, if necessary. The first referee then indicates the next team to serve and the second referee repeats that signal. The first referee does not signal the fault or player at fault (Rule 22.2.3.2).

**5. Second referee position at end of rally:**

**a.** When the second referee's whistle ends a rally, he/she steps to the offending team's side of the net before signaling the fault.

**b.** When the first referee's whistle ends the rally, the second referee should attempt to step to the offending team's side of the net and repeat the signals of the first referee. When facilities do not present enough space for the second referee to accomplish this easily, the second referee should simply step laterally away from the post and repeat the first referee's signal sequence. NOTE: When the second referee has relevant playing-ending information or is offering discreet assistance, he/she must avoid transitioning and signaling simultaneously, which will result in the information or signal being obstructed by the net post or equipment.

**6. Illegal attack signal (Signal 21):**

Completely extend the arm straight up, above the shoulder, hand open, and then bending at the elbow, make a downward motion toward the opposing team. The final position of the arm should not obstruct the referee's view.

**7. Illegal block/screening signal (Signal 12):**

Completely extend both arms straight up from the shoulders (elbows are not bent), palms facing away from the body.

**8. Improper request signal & technique:**

An improper request is signaled with a "wave off" – a sweeping motion with the arm extended, open hand,

palm facing away from the body, on the offending team's side of the court. The second referee communicates this to the coach (or first referee to the captain) at earliest opportunity, without delaying the match. The improper request is recorded on the scoresheet at the end of the rally.

- 9. Same player makes third and fourth team hits:**  
Signal "double hit" (Signal 17).
- 10. Indication of which player(s) contacted the net:**  
Indicate the player at fault by pointing toward the player with an open hand.
- 11. Completed attack-hit from an overhand set by Libero in the front zone:**  
Signal illegal attack (Signal 21), and then indicate the Libero by pointing toward the Libero with an open hand.
- 12. Identification of game captain:**  
During pre-match line-up checks, the second referee indicates the game captain to the first referee by placing the arm in the chest area, hand open and palm facing the floor, and then pointing, open hand, toward this player. This technique should also be used when the captain is replaced by substitution or the Libero. The captain should acknowledge this designation by raising a hand. It is not necessary for the second referee to repeat this procedure at the start of each set unless the game captain changes or the first referee requests the information.
- 13. Second referee "ready" signal:**  
Indicated by holding both hands in front of body, just above head height, palms toward first referee. Used by a second referee after any regular game interruption or a delay to the resumption of play. Also used by the scorer upon completion of recording a substitution(s), or at the end of a time-out. "Ready" means that the scorer has recorded all necessary information, the second referee is

in proper position, all players have taken their positions on the court, and that the second referee is ready for play. The first referee is still obligated to complete a court scan, check that the server has the ball, and ensure team readiness before authorizing the next serve.

#### **14. Time-out administration:**

**a.** Second (or first) referee whistles to acknowledge time-out request. Both referees make the time-out signal (Signal 4) with the vertical hand of the signal on the side of the requesting team, and point toward the requesting team's bench with an open hand; second referee may informally display each team's time-out status to first referee at the beginning of the time-out.

**b.** Players are not required to leave the court and go to the bench area. Team personnel and substitutes may not enter the court.

**c.** Second referee whistles at end of 30 seconds and ensures both teams re-take the court.

**d.** Upon conclusion of each team's second time-out, the second referee will notify the coach (or captain, if necessary) by visually displaying the time-out signal (Signal 4) and then showing two fingers. The second referee will then notify the first referee in the same manner after getting into position for the resumption of play before signaling "ready."

**e.** It is not necessary to notify teams after their first time-out unless requested to do so by the coach/captain. Similarly, the referees do not visually display each team's time-out status at the end of any time-outs unless necessary for clarification.

**f.** Teams may re-take the court prior to expiration of time-out, unless necessary for the court to remain clear.

#### **15. Substitution notification:**

With the ninth, 10th, 11th and 12th team substitutions, the second referee will notify the coach by display-

ing the substitution signal (Signal 5), followed by the number of team substitutions used during the set (10 – clenched right fist, 11 – clenched right fist plus index finger of left hand, 12 – clenched right fist plus index and middle finger of left hand). The second referee will notify the first referee of a team's 12th substitution in the same manner after getting into position for the resumption of play before signaling "ready." If requested by the first referee, the second referee will also inform the first referee of the ninth, 10th and 11th substitutions in this manner.

**16. Multiple substitutions by one team:**

Only one incoming player may be in the substitution zone at a time awaiting authorization to enter. Subsequent substitutes must wait outside the substitution zone until the first pair of players has been authorized to enter by the second referee. For multiple substitutions by a team during the same dead ball, there can be no significant delay between substitutions.

**17. Substitution request procedure:**

A request for substitution requires that the incoming substitute has entered the substitution zone before the request is acknowledged (whistled). Verbal or hand-signal requests for substitution by the coach or captain do not constitute a formal request and will not be acknowledged (whistled). NOTE: Referees must facilitate this procedure and ensure that teams are educated in its use.

**18. Requests for game interruption by opponents during same dead ball:**

When opponents request a game interruption (time-out, substitution, etc.) during the same dead-ball period, the second referee will acknowledge each team's request with a separate whistle. Multiple substitutions by the same team require only one whistle.

### **19. First/second referee duties:**

**a.** First referee controls player conduct during the pre-match warm-ups. First referee also times the warm-ups but may request the second referee to assist while first referee instructs line judges or attends to other pre-match duties.

**b.** Either referee may whistle net faults, and (back row) attack-hit or blocking faults.

**c.** Second referee calls (whistles) antenna faults on his/her side of the court.

**d.** First referee checks the scoresheet for accuracy, and then signs it at the end of the match.

### **20. Second referee discreet assistance techniques:**

Discreet assistance from the second referee should only be offered when, from the second referee's view, a fault has occurred. Discreet assistance should not be used for possible faults, e.g., to indicate that no opposing player touched the ball after a team's third contact. Expectations regarding these techniques should be the subject of referees' pre-match briefings. NOTE: When possible, discreet signals which are indicated using only one hand (ex: 2-hits, 4-hits, attack-hit fault, etc.) should be signaled with the hand corresponding to the team at fault. If the view of the second referee is obstructed, the discreet signal may be made with the more visible hand.

**a.** 2-hits vs 4-hits: The second referee should use the appropriate discreet assistance only after the same player has hit the ball twice in succession ("2-hits") or after a team has touched the ball four times and the third and fourth hits were not by the same player ("4-hits"). NOTE: "4-hits" should not be used to indicate "no touch" by the blocking team.

**b.** Attack-hit fault: The attack fault signal (Signal 21) should be shown in the chest area, and the second referee should allow the first referee the opportunity to

whistle the fault or to communicate that the play was legal before whistling this fault (USAV 24.3.2.4).

**c.** Blocking fault: The second referee may whistle this fault immediately, or a discreet illegal block signal (Signal 12) may be shown in the chest area with hands only shoulder-height.

**d.** Requesting an individual sanction: The second referee should whistle, step to the offending team's side of the court, and verbalize the sanction and offending team member. Other hand signals are not necessary to request an individual sanction.

**e.** Requesting a delay sanction: Display the delay sanction signal, without a card in chest area.

**f.** Ball in/pancake play: Step to the side of the court where the ball hit the floor, maintain a position visible to the first referee, and give the "ball in" signal. If the first referee does not see this assistance, the signal should be made more visible. If the first referee does not quickly recognize the assistance, the second referee should whistle this fault.

**g.** Ball handling opinions: The second referee should not offer ball handling opinions during a match. Only if the first referee has requested such assistance during unusual plays (i.e., the first referee is screened from viewing the play) should the second referee offer an opinion.

**h.** Touch information: At the end of a rally in which the second referee has observed a player touching the ball before it lands out of bounds, the second referee should offer a visible "touch" signal (Signal 24). If the first referee does not notice this assistance, the signal should quickly be made more visible and the second referee should step laterally, away from the post.

## **21. Deciding set coin toss:**

For the deciding set coin toss, the first referee may conduct the coin toss near the scorer's table or may request

the second referee to do so. During this time, teams are released to their benches while each team's game captain attends the toss. The coin toss takes place during the three-minute interval between sets. The first referee should blow a whistle to direct teams to change courts or to remain at their current benches for the start of the deciding set. After the toss, the scorer should be immediately notified of the result in order to prepare the deciding set scoresheet, and the first referee should return to the stand (if he/she conducted the toss).

**22. Change of courts during deciding set:**

The first referee signals for teams to change courts immediately after the eighth point has been scored by a team. Teams are not directed to the end lines during this court change but teams should change sides by going counter-clockwise around the post to their respective right side (or under the net near the sideline if space does not permit the players to pass outside the posts). To prevent teams from crossing under the net in the middle of the court, the second referee should enter the court to his/her right and direct the team on the right to change sides as described above. The second referee should also ensure the team on the left changes side accordingly. The second referee will return to the scorer's table after the court change to ensure the scorer is ready to resume, and he/she may need to confirm each team's court positions before continuing.

**23. Set/Match point:**

The second referee will verbally/visually confirm set or match point with the scorer and then place an index finger against the shoulder corresponding to that team. For example, if the team to the second referee's left has earned set/match point, the index finger of the right hand will be placed against the left shoulder (or vice versa for the team on the right).



#### **24. Ball hitting an antenna:**

When the ball is hit into an antenna, the referee will whistle and signal “out,” and if necessary, will indicate with an open hand the player who hit the ball into the antenna. The referee does not point toward the antenna before or after signaling “out” for the antenna fault.

#### **25. First referee whistling positional faults on receiving team:**

The first referee should normally check position faults for the serving team only; the second referee is authorized to check position faults for receiving team only. If the second referee does not call a blatant positional fault after ample communication/notification by the first referee, the first referee may whistle this fault. This should occur only on very rare occasions.

#### **26. Sanction procedures:**

**a.** For a player on court: The player being sanctioned must approach the first referee’s stand to acknowledge the sanction. The first referee awards the loss of rally if necessary, displays the appropriate card(s) to this player, and then verbalizes, “This penalty (or expulsion or disqualification) is for you for unsporting conduct.”

**b.** For a team member on the bench: The first referee will call the game captain to the stand, award the loss of rally if necessary, display the appropriate card(s), and verbalize “This penalty (or expulsion or disqualification) is for player (or coach) ‘X’. Please inform him/her of the sanction.” The captain should go immediately to the bench to inform the team member, who should acknowledge the sanction while the R1 continues to display the card(s).

**c.** For delay sanctions: The first referee will call the game captain to the stand, award the loss of rally if necessary, and verbalize “This delay sanction is for [delay action],” while displaying the appropriate signal. The

captain may inform the coach of the sanction for clarification purposes.

**d.** For verbal (official) warnings: Verbal or hand signal warnings must be accompanied by a whistle and are notified directly to the team member being warned or through the game captain. Multiple warnings to the same team member during the same set/match are permitted for minor unsporting conduct.

**e.** For simultaneous sanctions to opponents: When individual sanctions are assessed to opponents for simultaneous unsporting acts, the team member from the serving team shall be sanctioned first, followed by the team member from the receiving team. The sanctions are administered following the above procedures.

**27. Notification of illegal Libero replacement:**

The assistant scorer shall notify the second referee of an illegal Libero replacement after the contact of the serve. A positional fault is the resulting fault.

**28. Line judge position during time-outs:**

At midpoint of respective end line.

**29. Line judge position when server is within 1-2 meters of the line judge:**

When a server takes a position within 1-2 meters of the line judge, the line judge must step behind the server along the sideline extension. After the service contact, the line judge should quickly return to the position at the intersection of the end line and sideline.

## **Points of Emphasis**

**1. Warm-ups:**

**a.** For adult competition: When one team has exclusive use of the court, the opposing team may warm up with practice balls in the free zone surrounding the court but may not interfere with the warm-up of the opponent on

the court, including serving practice.

**b.** For junior competition: 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. Warming up with balls at the team bench or the spectator walkways is not permitted.

**2. The Serve:** The server must be on the playing surface before the serve is authorized.

**3. Coaches' Location:**

**a.** All coaches must remain 1.75 meters (5'10") from the court while the ball is in play. During dead-ball periods, coaches may briefly approach the court to give instructions to players on the court but must step away from the court when the first referee prepares to beckon for service. If a coach fails to adhere to this rule after being reminded to do so, a delay sanction may be assessed.

**NOTE:**

When the distance between the sideline and the team bench/bench area is fewer than 2 meters, the coach must remain in the free zone nearer to the team bench/bench area while the ball is in play. Coaches may not enter the substitution zone.

**b.** The coach or one assistant coach may give instructions to a player in the warm-up area but may not remain there for any extended length of time.

**4. Assistant Coaches:** One assistant coach at a time may leave the bench to give instructions to the players on the court. During play, this 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 the warm-up area, no closer to the court than 1.75 meters (5'10") from the sideline and its extension, without disturbing or delaying the match. Assistant coaches may not address the referees.

**5. Disruptive Coaching:** Includes loud or abusive language, comments to officials or to opposing teams,

throwing of objects, and displaying disgust in an overt manner.

## **6. The Libero:**

- a.** Up to two Liberos may be designated on the line-up sheet at the start of the match.
- b.** The Libero's jersey or jacket must contrast in color (dark vs. light) to the color of the jersey worn by other members of the team. (Please note USAV 19.2a.) The Libero jerseys do not have to match, but they must both be contrasting from the other members of the team.
- c.** If a Libero wears an exposed undergarment as noted in USAV 4.3, that undergarment may differ from exposed undergarments worn by teammates.
- d.** A Libero may replace an injured player in the back row after the 30-second injury evaluation if no Libero were on the court at the time of the injury.
- e.** Only one Libero per team may be on the court in replacement of a teammate at a given time.

## **7. Player Equipment:**

- a.** If a player's towel falls to the floor during a rally, which consequently requires a stoppage of play, a delay sanction must be issued. The rally should not be stopped unless a referee judges that a safety hazard exists. A delay sanction can be avoided if the team takes steps to mitigate the risk hazard in this situation.
- b.** Player equipment (eyeglasses, contact lenses, etc.) is worn at the player's own risk (Rule 4.5.2). If a stoppage of play results due to a concern for safety, a delay sanction is assessed and a replay should be granted. A similar rationale, as noted above in 7a, should be used to determine if a safety hazard exists. If a player is injured as his/her lenses fall to the floor, the injury takes precedence and the provisions of Rule 17.1 should be applied.
- c.** Casts are not permitted, regardless of covering or

padding.

**d.** Bobby pins, barrettes and hard plastic headbands may be used to control the hair. Such items do not need to be covered or padded.

**e.** For adult competition, jewelry may be worn provided its nature does not present a concern for safety, e.g., extremely long necklaces and/or necklaces with large medallions, or large hoop earrings.

### **8. Interference with Play:**

**a.** A player who places a hand/hands near the net in the path of a ball to intentionally deflect the natural rebound of a ball that has been passed into the net by the opponent has committed a net fault according to the FIVB/ USAV interpretation of “interferes with play.”

**b.** If a player contacts an official (second referee or line judge) during an attempt to play the ball legally, the first referee may award a replay if the physical interference impeded that player’s attempt.

**c.** A ball that contacts an official (referee or line judge) is ruled “out” per Rule 8.4.2.

### **9. Improper Requests (See also Referee Techniques #8):**

**a.** A request for an illegal substitution shall result in an improper request. However, if such a request is acknowledged (i.e., whistled), a delay sanction shall result.

**b.** Despite any previous delay sanction, a team’s first improper request of the match is rejected, and the improper request is assessed without further sanction.

**10. Line-Up Checks:** A line-up check is not considered a regular game interruption and is permitted prior to re-authorizing the serve for a rally that was not completed. Coaches or captains may request a line-up check.