



CHESAPEAKE REGION VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Even The Lone Ranger Worked As a Team

Corny Galdones, August 2008

Do you know how many officials are needed for a regular volleyball match? One. That's how a few officials in their own little world operate in some matches regardless of who's working with them. These lone rangers act as though they're good enough to get by without much help from anyone else. Hello! These people definitely need help. No one is that good. The Lone Ranger himself was good, but even he didn't work alone.

Attitude makes a big difference. A normal match has at least six officials – first referee, second referee, scorekeeper, libero tracker and two line judges. All functions are essential and dependent on one another. Sure, everyone wants to be a star. Sorry folks, this isn't Hollywood. Park that ego. It's not about you, it's not about me, it's about us. It's a team, only as strong as its weakest member, similar to an orchestra. All must mesh together as one to produce the sweetest sounds. If one or two wander off on their own, the chemistry is ruined. If the team fails, all share the blame. If the team shines, all share the bravos.

The first referee conducts the show and sets the tone. A smart R1 lets everyone do their job and keeps them in tune. A one-man band of an R1 trying to do everything is foolish if not blind. Three other pairs of eyes and hands are on board. Trust them. The second referee and line judges are motivated to work harder when treated by the R1 as peers, not lackeys.

An R1 is wise to glance at the R2 right away for possible signaled input when certain situations arise during a rally: 1) a ball handling error screened from view, 2) "2" or "4" hits after an attack rebounds back from the top of the net, 3) "ball down" on a pancake, 4) "reaching over the net" by a player, 5) "illegal back row block or attack" by a back row player at the net, or 6) "illegal back row attack" at the attack line by a back row attacker or a libero setting the ball with finger action. Often, violations are missed or calls disputed because the R1 ignored the R2 in these instances. In extreme cases, the R2 gave up on the R1.

Communication between the R1 and line judges is vital. Line judges are of all abilities, from wide-eyed pre-teens who can walk upright under a net to eagle-eyed referees drafted for duty. Sometimes, the youngsters pay more attention, but that's beside the point. Line judges are only as good as the R1 makes them. Why does an R1 instruct the line judges for five minutes or more before the match then seldom make eye contact with them unless absolutely needed during the match? Go figure. Anyway, that R1 will probably get consistent reactions from the line judges who may go to sleep in the briefing and match. Use them or lose them.

The scorekeeper can save the R2 from sticky score-related issues and vice versa. Therefore, the scorekeeper can't hang onto the score sheet like a private prize while the R2 mustn't look down on the scorekeeper. Children, you need each other. Let's get in sync to run things smoothly. The same can be said between the scorekeeper and libero tracker.

At least six officials make up a match crew. To be most effective, there can't be any lone rangers among them doing their own thing. Teamwork is what gets the job done best.