

BASIC PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING A USA VOLLEYBALL MATCH/COMPETITION FOR REFEREES

These are the basic procedures to be followed when conducting official USA Volleyball matches or competitions. More detailed information for each of these items can be found in the USAV Referee Guidelines and Instructions.

1. OFFICIALS

- a. The officials should be certified USA Volleyball referees and scorers.
- b. The prescribed USA Volleyball uniform and certification patch should be worn by all officials.
- c. At a minimum, referee equipment includes a whistle with lanyard, a set of yellow/red cards, a flipping coin and a watch or timing device. (See USA Volleyball Referee Guidelines and Instructions for additional information.)

2. ARRIVAL

- a. Officials should arrive at the playing venue no less than 30 minutes prior to the start of the competition and should locate the tournament director or event manager.
- b. Determine playing formats, ground rules, warm-up procedures and any other protocols.

3. MATCH PREPARATION

- a. Referees should examine the court and playing equipment prior to the first match: identify court lines, any floor obstructions and playing area; determine rulings for overhead obstructions; examine the playing equipment (including net, posts, referee stand and game balls); verify the net height and ball pressure.
- b. Scorers should ensure pens, pencils, score sheets and Libero tracking sheets are available at the scorer's table. Lineup sheets and rosters may also be required.

4. OFFICIAL'S PRE-MATCH DUTIES

- a. Prior to the coin toss, the first and second referee should discuss their match responsibilities, as well as communication techniques that will be used between them during the match. This should include: discreet help from the second referee; addressing conduct issues; and ensuring consistent application of ground rules.
- b. Preferably prior to the coin toss, or immediately thereafter, the referees will meet with the officiating crew to give instructions to the line judges (first referee) and scoring crew (first or second referee).
- c. Conduct a coin toss between the team captains prior to the start of the timed warm-up period. During the coin toss, the first referee

may designate one team as “heads” and the other team as “tails.” Once tossed, the coin should be caught and the result immediately revealed.

- d. After the coin toss, the first referee will supervise warm-up periods and may request the second referee to time their duration. (See USAV Referee Guidelines and Instructions for additional information.) Note: In the event a team does not choose to use its time on the court, the court shall remain unoccupied.
- e. During the warm-up period, the first referee should verify the legality of each team’s player and Libero uniforms. All players must wear uniforms as prescribed in Rule 4.3.
- f. At the end of the warm-up period, the first or second referee will blow a whistle to indicate that the warm-up period is over and players are to clear the court.
- g. Referees and other officials take their assigned places.

4. START OF THE FIRST SET OF THE MATCH

- a. Teams line up on the end line of their respective team court. When both teams are ready, the first referee will blow a whistle and motion for teams to take their positions on their court.
- b. The second referee, using each team’s lineup sheet, and the scorer will verify that players are in the correct positions as listed on the official lineup sheets submitted by each team. No corrections may be made unless an error or omission has been made by the scorer prior to the start of play under the provisions of Rules 4.1.3, 7.3.2 and 7.3.4. No other changes may be made in the lineups to correct an error made by teams in preparing the lineup sheets. NOTE: A substitution prior to the start of the match or any set is permitted.
- c. Upon completing the lineup check, the second referee should permit any Libero replacements to occur and confirm that the assistant scorer has recorded them.
- d. The second referee then delivers the game ball to the first server of the match. The whistle is blown and a visual sign is given by the first referee for service to begin. This marks the time the set officially begins.
- e. Prior to the serve, serving team players should halt their movements to allow officials to determine their positions. Continual or distracting movement may be construed as screening. The first referee must be aware of screening during each serve of the match.

5. DURING THE MATCH

- a. Each referee has specific duties and responsibilities during the match as outlined in Rules 23 and 24. The USA Volleyball Referee Guidelines and Instructions helps clarify these responsibilities.

- b. Judgment and ball handling decisions, as well as match control, flow and tempo, are very important for any first referee.
- c. Match administration (substitutions, timeouts, etc), communication with the team benches and scorer's table, and positioning/focus during net play are important aspects of working as a second referee.
- d. Line judge, scorer and assistant scorer duties are clarified in Rules 25, 26 and 27, respectively. Additional information can be found in the USA Volleyball Referee Guidelines and Instructions.

6. PROCEDURES FOR REGULAR GAME INTERRUPTIONS

- a. Substitutes should approach the substitution zone and wait to be recognized for entry. For multiple substitutions by the same team during a dead ball period, each player and his/her substitute must enter the substitution zone in succession, one pair at a time and must wait until entry is authorized by the second referee. For multiple substitutions by the same team, there can be no delay between incoming substitutes. When opponents request substitutions simultaneously, the second referee must ask that one team wait while the other substitution is administered and recorded.
- b. When the coach or playing captain requests a timeout, the second (or first) referee should immediately whistle, show Signal 14, Timeout, and then indicate the team by pointing, open-handed, toward that team's bench. After 30 seconds have elapsed, the second referee must blow a whistle to end the timeout. Teams should immediately retake the court. Both referees display the number of timeouts each team has taken, and then the first referee prepares for the next rally.

7. END OF THE SET AND START OF THE NEXT SET

- a. A set officially ends when the whistle is blown for the fault resulting in the winning point. The set interval begins when the first referee executes Signal 13, End of Game. Following the whistle indicating the end of a set, the referee will direct the teams to change playing areas and benches immediately, with the exception of the deciding set. The players proceed to their right until they reach their new bench area with the team on the left passing the first referee and proceeding directly to the bench.
- b. Two minutes and 30 seconds after the interval begins, the second referee will blow a whistle and teams shall immediately report to the court and line up in their proper positions to start the set.
- c. When a deciding set will be necessary, the teams follow a different procedure at the end of the set prior to the deciding set. The first referee will release the teams to their respective benches. The captains for each team then immediately meet at the scorer's table, where the first (or second) referee will conduct the coin toss for the

deciding set. Once the choice of sides has been determined, the first referee whistles and directs the teams to their appropriate team areas, using the procedure specified in 7a above if a change of court is necessary. Procedure for the start of the deciding set is the same as stated in 7b.

8. CHANGE OF TEAM AREAS DURING A DECIDING SET

- a. When teams are required to change team areas during a deciding set of a match (Rule 18.2 & USAV 6.3b), the first referee will blow a whistle and show Signal 28, Change of Courts. Teams will change playing areas without delay with player positions remaining the same.
- b. Substitutes and other team personnel will change team areas.
- c. If requested, the second referee will verify that players are in their correct positions on the court.

9. AT THE END OF THE MATCH

- a. Following the whistle indicating the last rally of a match, the first referee will whistle again and display Signal 13, End of Match, and direct the players of each team to line up on the end line of their team court.
- b. When both teams are in position, the first referee will blow a final whistle and motion for the teams to proceed to the center of the court to shake hands with the opponents.
- c. The second referee will ensure that the game ball is returned to the designated area for safekeeping.
- d. Both team captains shall thank the referees.
- e. The first referee will then review the score sheet to verify the final results. Signing the score sheet by the first referee is optional.
- e. Referees will then immediately depart the playing area.