



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Rally Scoring Format Takes Full Effect in 2004-05

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (January 21, 2004) — At its January 11-12 meeting in Indianapolis, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Volleyball Rules Committee reaffirmed the switch to the rally scoring format for high school volleyball in 2004-05, which was approved last year on an optional basis for 2003-04.

Most states enacted the format change last year, and the remainder will be required to adopt the new format this year. In rally scoring, points are awarded on each play, regardless which team serves, as opposed to the traditional side-out system.

All components of the rally scoring format approved last year will take effect in 2004-05, including the following:

- All matches shall be best three-of-five games.
- Games shall be played to 25 points (no cap), and the fifth and deciding game shall be played to 15 points (no cap).
- The let serve shall be allowed, and play shall continue provided net contact is entirely within the net antennas.
- Each team shall be allowed two time-outs per game, with a total of 10 time-outs if five games are played.

The exception to these provisions approved by the committee this year is that by state high school association adoption, teams may play a best two-of-three game match using the rally scoring format, with all three games, if necessary, played to 25 points (no cap).

“There was some interest across the country in a best two-of-three format, so the committee determined state associations needed the option of adopting the alternate format if they so desired,” said Cynthia Doyle, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Volleyball Rules Committee. “If state

associations do not adopt the alternate format as a whole, however, schools are required to follow the best three-of-five format.”

Aside from the continued emphasis on the shift to rally scoring, perhaps the biggest change made by the committee was with Rule 2-4-2, which will allow players to play a ball over a non-playable area if they have a body part in contact with a playable area at the time the ball is contacted. During the follow-through, players could enter a non-playable area after playing the ball. Previously, the official was required to stop play when a player broke the plane of a non-playable area, such as team benches, officials’ table, bleachers, or the area between the benches and tables.

“This change will allow play to continue when a player has made a great save or play on a ball while they were in a playable area,” Doyle said. “The committee determined that the previous rule actually had more of an injury risk, with players trying to stop forward motion before leaving a playable area.”

Another major change approved by the committee was the adoption of a standard official’s uniform for high school volleyball, effective with the 2005-06 season. The new requirements for the official’s uniform will be:

- a) an all-white, short-sleeved, collared polo shirt;
- b) black slacks; and
- c) solid black athletic shoes and black socks.

“The committee felt that consistency with volleyball officials uniforms was essential and, thus, eliminated allowing state associations the option of modifying the official’s uniform, effective with the 2005-06 season,” Doyle said.

Three other changes in Rule 5 concerning officials were approved, including Rule 5-7-2c, which, during time-outs, will require line judges to stand at the intersection of the attack line and the sideline on their respective sides of the court nearest the referee. Previously, the line judges stood at the midpoint of their respective end lines during time-outs.

“The positioning of the line judges near the referee provides opportunities during time-outs for the referee to communicate with the line judges and reiterates that they are part of the officiating team,” Doyle said.

Rule 5-3-14, which required the official to notify the coach of an additional time-out in a 14-14 tied game, was deleted since NFHS rules do not allow additional time-outs during extended games. In Rule 5-4-3b 12, officials now will signal how many time-outs each team has used at the completion of a charged time-out rather than at the beginning and end of a time-out.

Two changes were approved in Rule 3 dealing with equipment. In Rule 3-1-3, language will be added to cover nets that are suspended from the ceiling, in addition to the more traditional nets attached to floor poles. Rule 3-2-1 will be rewritten to confirm that the ball shall be all-white rather than just 12 pieces.

In other changes, Rule 11-2-5 was deleted since rally scoring does not award additional time-outs. In Rule 10-3-6-(3), the committee confirmed that an exceptional substitution shall count as a team substitution if the team has not exhausted its 18 team substitutions.

Volleyball is the third-most popular sport for girls at the high school level, with 396,682 participants during the 2002-03 season, according to the NFHS Athletics Participation Survey. It also ranks third in school sponsorship among girls, with 14,244 schools offering the sport nationwide. In addition, 39,326 boys participated in volleyball in 2002-03 in 1,650 schools nationwide.

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