

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**Coaches Now Allowed to Stand During Play  
in High School Volleyball**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Becky Oakes**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (January 23, 2009) — One of several new rules changes adopted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Volleyball Rules Committee will permit head coaches to stand during play. The changes, which were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors, will take effect with the 2009–10 season.

With volleyball becoming a growing spectator sport, resulting in more noise from crowds, this change to Rules 12–2–6 and 9–1–1 will allow coaches better communication with their players.

“Previously, head coaches were only permitted to stand during a dead ball or time-out. As of the 2009–10 season, coaches may stand in the replacement zone during play,” said Becky Oakes, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Volleyball Rules Committee.

With the head coach gaining the privilege to stand during play, Rule 12-2-5 was revised to clarify when it is appropriate for an assistant coach to stand and the actions he/she may perform.

In another effort to keep up with the growing popularity of the sport and crowd interaction, Rule 3-2-1 was amended to address the color(s) of an official game ball. The current rule requires a solid white ball for competition. Beginning with the 2010-11 season, teams will now be given the option of using a colored-panel ball. The new ball cannot have more than three colors, one-third of which must be white. Each panel must be a solid color.

“This rule is fairly well-received by both players and coaches,” Oakes said, “and will help fans track the ball better, while also adding excitement to the game. Putting this rule into effect during the 2010-11 season will not force schools to adjust their budgets for the upcoming season, and will give the manufacturers time to prepare for placement of the NFHS Authenticating Mark and anticipated demand.”

To keep up with the fast pace of the game and provide more exciting rallies, Rule 9-4-5 will now allow any part of the body to be considered legal contact with the ball.

“In years past, the ball was only able to hit a player from the waist up in order to remain in play, but to reward great plays and provide more excitement for players and fans, a legal contact is now acknowledged as a touch of the ball by any part of the player’s body,” Oakes said.

Two changes were made to Rule 5 regarding the deciding set and the second referee’s responsibilities.

In Rule 5-3-4d, captains will be called out before the deciding set for the coin toss by the first referee and teams will then be released to their benches. By allowing players to go to their bench rather than the end line during a coin toss, coaches will be

able to more efficiently provide instructions and ensure players are ready to take the court for the final set.

In a change to Rule 5-4-3b New 10, the second referee has the responsibility to manage illegal libero replacements.

Rule 10-2-3, the procedure of substituting in and out of the set, will be changed next year. If more than one substitution is occurring, the substitutions shall be made in succession. Only one substitute shall be in the substitution zone at a time, while the second pair waits outside of the zone.

“By having the first substitute ready in the substitution zone, it will help the scorer record who is coming in and out of the game. The second player will be up and ready, but will not be permitted into the substitution zone until the other players have been released,” Oakes said.

With a change in Rule 4-1-5, unadorned bobby pins, no longer than 2 inches in length, may be worn to control a player’s hair.

“Consistently in the past, hair devices had to be made of soft material to be permitted,” Oakes said. “With the high request for bobby pins as a means of controlling longer hair, along with the unlikely event they would cause an accident, they will now be allowed.”

The Volleyball Rules Committee also identified editorial changes and points of emphasis for the upcoming season. The four points of emphasis identified for the 2009-10 season include the head coach standing, match officials’ responsibilities, ball handling and the libero uniform.

“The main editorial change for the upcoming season is Rule 1-2-1,3, which changes the term ‘game’ to ‘set.’ This updates and reflects the current terminology of the sport and replaces all references in the rules to set,” Oakes said.

Volleyball is the third-most popular sport for girls at the high school level, according to the 2007-08 NFHS Athletics Participation Survey, with 397,968 participants nationwide. The sport also ranks third in school sponsorship with 15,009 schools sponsoring the sport. In addition, 46,780 boys participate in volleyball at 2,006 schools.

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*This press release was written by Lauren Hensley, a spring semester intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and a senior at Franklin (Indiana) College.*

#### **About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 18,500 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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