



2019 RULES INTERPRETATION NEWSLETTER #1
September 18, 2019



NOTE: Use the following code to analyze these situations:

R = RECEIVING TEAM

R1 = RIGHT BACK
R2 = RIGHT FRONT
R3 = CENTER FRONT
R4 = LEFT FRONT
R5 = LEFT BACK
R6 = CENTER BACK

S = SERVING TEAM

S1 = RIGHT BACK
S2 = RIGHT FRONT
S3 = CENTER FRONT
S4 = LEFT FRONT
S5 = LEFT BACK
S6 = CENTER BACK

SITUATION 1: Team S used player #9 as the libero for the first two sets and listed #9 as the libero for the third set. Early in set 3 the Team S libero #2 serves a point and then a side out. The assistant scorer informs the second referee that an incorrect libero is on the court. The second referee removes the point and allows player #9 (who now has a libero jersey on) to enter the court. The Team S coach wants to protest based on an inaccurate lineup check. The second referee informs the coach that the pre-set lineup check cannot be protested. The coach insists on a protest. The second referee opens the rules book to Rule 19 and shows the coach that the situation cannot be protested.

RULING: *The referee's decision is correct. Once the protest is accepted, the referee can show the coach the rule reference and move forward with the set. The second referee should make sure the scorer has recorded the accepted protest in the comment section of the scoresheet.*

SITUATION 2: The Team S libero has not yet served in the current set. After winning a point and rotating, Player S3 should be the next to serve. However, the libero, who has been on the bench, replaces S7, goes to the service area, and serves. The assistant scorer informs the second referee of the illegal server and the second referee calls a rotation fault. The second referee informs the Team S coach that the libero may only serve in that rotation for the rest of the set.

RULING: *The referee's decision is incorrect. The libero has not yet served legally in this set and may subsequently serve in any position.*

SITUATION 3: Player R3 has a plastic spacer/retainer in her ear in a non-traditional location (see picture). The coach informs the referees that it is a piercing for migraine headaches. The referees allow the player to play wearing the spacer.

RULING: *The referee's decision is correct. A plastic spacer/retainer is allowed for any type of piercing.*



SITUATION 4: During a rally a Team R player is seriously injured, and medical staff is on the court tending to the athlete. The Team R players go to their bench area. The second referee informs them they cannot leave the court.

RULING: *The referees' decision is incorrect. If significant time is required to safely remove the injured player, both teams' players may leave the court. If the injury can be handled immediately, the players should remain on the court.*

Situation 5: Team R passes a ball that hits the rafters over Team R's court. The ball enters the plane of the net where it is contacted simultaneously by a Team R and Team S player. The first referee whistles and awards the point to Team S.

RULING: *The first referee is correct. Rule 4.2.3.2.2 says the ball is "out" when: "The ball contacts the obstruction above the team's playing area and crosses the plane of the net into the opponent's court or is legally touched by an opponent."*

Challenge Review System (CRS) Scenarios

Situation 1: Coach R challenges a net fault, and the second referee accepts the challenge. While the challenge is being reviewed, Coach S demonstrates unsporting behavior that warrants a red card. After the red card is assessed, Coach R asks to withdraw the challenge. The second referee allows this to happen.

RULING: *The referee's decision is incorrect. Once a challenge has been accepted, it cannot be withdrawn. The second referee should stop the review and ensure the red card is recorded. Once recorded, the referee should continue with the challenge review. The red card assessment should be part of the challenge review timing. In the comment section of the scoresheet, it should be noted that a penalty was assessed during the challenge.*

Situation 2: During a rally Team R hits a ball down the second referee's sideline directly at the line judge. The line judge flinches and cannot make a call, and the first referee indicates she was screened and signals replay. The Team S coach asks to challenge a net fault that occurred earlier in the rally. The second referee does not accept the challenge.

RULING: *The referee's decision is correct. There must be a completed rally in order for a coach to challenge.*

Situation 3: A Team S attacker hits the ball into a Team R block, and the ball goes between a player and the net, landing on Team S's court. The first referee awards the point to Team R, and signals "in", pointing to Team S's court. The Team S coach challenges that the ball actually went between the net and the Team R blockers, ricocheted off of a blocker's leg, and went under the net to land on Team S's court. The second referee accepts the challenge. The Team R coach protests that this is not a challengeable action. After reviewing the video and making a decision on the challenge, the second referee administers the protest.

RULING: *The second referee's decision about accepting the challenge is correct. The Team S coach was challenging "in," which is a challengeable action. However, the Team R coach's protest is allowable, since s/he is disagreeing with a rule interpretation/application. The protest should be handled as described in Rule 17.*

Situation 4: Team A player #3's blocking action/contact is judged to have met the definition of a legal block; the ball continues to Team A's side and #3 immediately plays the next ball. The referees allow play to

continue. Team B's coach challenges, stating that #3 had two distinct contacts (double hit). The referee does not accept the challenge.

RULING: *The referee's decision is correct. The referee informs the coach that two hits cannot be challenged if the basis of the challenge is that the first contact was not a block.*

Situation 5: A Team A player's blocking action/contact is judged to have met the definition of a legal block; the ball continues to Team A's side, where a teammate passes the ball to the Team A setter, who sets #8; #8 then hits the ball over the net. The referees allow play to continue. Team B's coach challenges, stating that Team A had four hits. The referee does not accept the challenge.

RULING: *The referee's decision is correct. The referee informs the coach that four hits cannot be challenged if the basis of the challenge is that the first contact was not a block.*

Important Information Regarding the Jersey Number

The contrasting number rule was passed by the NCAA Women's Volleyball Rules Committee in 2016. It has been listed in the 2016 and 2017-2018 rule books. It was also covered in detail in the coaches' video in 2016, 2017 and 2018. In 2016, 2017 and 2018 the detailed specifications of the contrasting number rule were reviewed at the AVCA convention during the Division I, II and III coaches' meetings. This rule (7.1.2.4) requires that the color of the uniform number must clearly contrast with the jersey color, **irrespective of any border around the number**. This rule was changed in 2016 and implemented in 2019 at the request of coaches who had difficulty viewing non-contrasting numbers on video.

However, there are still a large number of teams using uniforms that do not comply with the 2019 requirement for a contrasting number. Due to this, the decision was made to push back the implementation of the contrasting number rule until **October 15, 2019**. On October 16th, teams **must** be in compliance with the contrasting number rule, or risk forfeiture of the match. This delayed implementation gives each institution over a month to comply with the rule. The referees have been instructed to continue to ask your team to comply prior to the October 15th deadline if possible. And, the referees will continue to report any non-compliant institutions to the NCAA Secretary-Rules Editor (SRE). The SRE will only send one notification to each non-compliant institution that is reported. It is the responsibility of each institution to comply with the NCAA rules, whether or not they received notification from the Secretary-Rules Editor.