

SPECIAL POINTS OF EMPHASIS FOR 2010

1. **Coaches addressing R1 and/or R2 in an unsporting manner**
2. **Libero serving and training for scorers and libero trackers**
3. **Training for line judges**
4. **Ball handling: moving toward greater consistency and tightening up**
5. **Substitution situations**
6. **Time-out administration**
7. **Conferences among referees**

1. Coaches addressing R1 and R2

The expectation is that the head coach should go through the R2 with his/her concerns and not yell across the court at the R1, including from the standing/coaching position during a live ball or when the play is over. In turn, the R1 will work with the captains and not yell back across the court at the coaches. As always, the purpose for addressing the officials is limited to clarifying a non-judgment ruling, confirming used timeouts or substitutions, requesting a time-out, substitution, lineup check, or calling a time-out specifically to ask for reconsideration by the R1 of a decision on the last rally that does not solely involve judgment. In general, the head coach has access the R2 to discuss rulings but not to argue judgment calls such as ball handling. Delaying the resumption of play is to be avoided. Assistant coaches are not permitted to address the officials regarding their decisions/judgments. This should not be allowed to become an issue by being addressed reasonably early on when an assistant coach starts behavior that can't be allowed to continue, and the head coach does nothing to intervene. Regarding judgment calls, assistant coaches have no inherent speaking rights in terms of the referees. The floor captain remains the primary communication mechanism between the R1 and head coaches. If referees tighten up on their calls across the board, a lot of coach reactions will dissipate.!

2. Libero serving and training for scorers and libero trackers

The move to the libero serving provides special challenges because many schools do not do a very good job of training their support personnel including scorers and libero trackers as well as line judges. There are special rules associated with the libero serving, and match officials do not have time to do much more than a short tutorial to refresh the knowledge of someone who has already been trained. Schools need to train scorers and libero trackers on how to mark the place in the serve order where the libero served (the only place he can serve in the serve order in that set) and what to do when the libero comes off the bench or moves from an on-court position to serve in a second spot in the rotation. It is important to have these support personnel show up 20 to 30 minutes prior to the match to discuss their duties.

3. Training for line judges

Line judging quality varies dramatically depending upon the school. Some schools train their line judges. Many do not. We can we offer the schools support in terms of training materials. Line judge documents are available. Each R1 is expected to provide reminders and instructions to line judges before each match. If line judges don't report 20 to 30 minutes before the start of a match, the opportunity for sufficient instructional time is lost, no matter how skilled the R1 is in educating a line judge.

4. Ball handling: moving toward greater consistency

The issue of the level or standard with which hands are called during matches is raised every year with complaints about inconsistency and not calling matches the way they should be called. For guidance, look at the documents entitled Establishing Standards for Calling Hands and the 2010 Committee Report on Ball Handling. Referees are guided to **not** make ball-handling decisions based on spin, sound or technique. The R1 should only whistle ball-handling faults when there is 100% certainty that either an illegal double contact or prolonged contact occurred.

Referees should not guess a fault, and a player's body position should not be the determinant as to whether a ball-handling fault occurred, only the visual evidence of how the ball was contacted. This philosophy is endorsed for OHSBVA is similar to that applied to other playing faults. For example, today's training for referees emphasizes not calling illegal alignments or back-row attacks unless certain that the fault occurred. Ball handling should be viewed the same way. The R1 in particular should rely upon visual acuity by viewing the body part that will contact the ball before the ball arrives and should try to react to seeing a distinct fault as quickly as possible. If the R1's whistle is consistently blown well after the ball has left the setter's hands, then perhaps other criteria are being applied, like spin or sound. Often, coaches and players affect the referee's judgment as well, but referees should stick to their guns if they're applying the right criteria already and should not be influenced by reactions of participants or fans. Referees should call every clear fault and should not allow even a first ball to be played with low receive, high release without calling prolonged contact.

5. Substitution situations:

- **Multiple substitutions by one team:** When a team makes multiple substitutions during one dead ball, all incoming substitutes can be in the substitution zone at a time. To ensure that players don't simply make an exchange without authorization, the R2 should stop one side or another verbally, process the other side substitution, then process the substitutes on the side that was held up. If a sub enters the court without authorization, the first time this happens, the R2 or R1 must tweet-tweet for attention and get the players back to properly identify, record and authorize each substitution. Subsequent failure to wait for authorization would be dealt with by denying the substitution and charging an unnecessary delay.
- **Requesting a substitution:** Remember that a substitution may be requested by either by a head coach signaling for a sub or subs (sometimes verbalizing the request while showing the sub signal; the signal is the preferred method as opposed to only verbalizing the request) OR a player entering the sub zone. The R2 may advise a head coach who only verbalizes the request that hearing the request is difficult and to please show the sub signal (accept the twirling finger as a recognized sub signal even though it barely resembles the actual signal). For the 2010 season, it's one sub at time in the sub zone.
- **A coach verbally requests a substitution without also showing the sub signal:** While this is not considered proper sub protocol, a prudent R2 will attempt to give a reasonable amount of time for subs to get to the sub zone before waving off and denying the substitution. Then, the R2 should advise the coach that the sub signal helps communicate what the coach is asking for when the coach's words may not be heard. Encourage coaches to use the actual signal since this is mentioned as an expectation in the rule book as the alternative to subs entering the sub zone as the request. Be reasonable and work at prevention of problems.
- **Recognizing substitutions:** The R2 should wait for an incoming sub to get to the sub zone before whistling and signaling to acknowledge the sub request. This allows the coach to withdraw the sub without penalty if done before the sub enters the zone and there is no real delay. The R1 should also scan and should be aware that the R2 has received a substitution request and is waiting for a player to enter the sub zone to whistle it. The R1 holds off authorizing service to allow the R2 a reasonable amount of time to handle the impending sub request. Awareness through scanning is the key. Based on a pre-match discussion between the officials, the R1 agrees to wait for the R2 to handle the sub request while the R2 agrees to not allow delays in substitution.

- **Authorizing substitutions:** The R2 (or R1 if the R2 doesn't see the sub and the R1 can't get the R2's attention) authorizes the substitution by whistle and signal but should wait for the incoming player or players to get to the sub zone before whistling. Both referees work together to ensure that subbing players do not enter the court without first seeing the R2's authorization-to-enter signal since hearing a verbal "go" as authorization could mean they've actually heard the other team's subs being authorized and could enter prematurely. Be aware that if the R2 recognizes a sub request with a whistle, the team must either complete the substitution in a timely manner or be charged with an unnecessary delay. The exception to this rule is where an R1 mind change resulted in a different rally outcome in which case the coach is allowed to withdraw the sub without penalty or something confusing occurs and the R2 believes the coach misunderstood the results of the rally and attempted to sub out of system. However, if a team has multiple subs, only one sub at a time should be in the sub zone. This enables the coach to withdraw without penalty any sub not yet in the sub zone if there is no real delay.
- **Handling more than one substitution request:** If both teams are requesting to substitute at the same time, the R2 may need the R1's assistance especially if one team's sub(s) appear to be entering the court without the R2's authorization-to-enter signal. The R2 should whistle, signal and authorize one team's subs while verbalizing "hold" to the other team's subs. After the scorer and libero tracker/LT have finished recording the subs on side that was authorized, the R2 follows the same procedure for the other team's subs. After ensuring that the scorer and LT have properly recorded both teams' subs, the R2 moves expeditiously to the receiving team's side while scanning the court area, verifies everything is ready for play, and then turns the court back over to the R1 with the ready signal.
- **Not allowing multiple requests for substitution by one team during the same dead ball:** Regardless of whether there are time-outs taken sequentially by one team or both teams, a team is allowed one and only one request for any number of substitutions (up to 6!) during the same dead ball. So, if Team S requests a substitution at the same time as Team R requests a time-out, the R2 will hold the Team S substitution and administer that substitution during the time-out. Team S is not permitted to ask for another substitution during the time-out or after the time-out. The first such request by a team may be denied without penalty. Educate rather than penalize, where possible.
- **Substitution requests prior to the start of a set are legal:** Unlike NFHS/OHSAA, OHSBVA permits a substitution before the start of the match/set. If the head coach indicates to the referees that a starting player is ill or injured, a lineup change may be made through substitution. What this means is that, unlike for OHSAA, the ill/injured player may enter the set any time after the first rally but the player is limited to entering in the initial position on the submitted lineup sheet/service order/rotation. This mitigates lineup manipulation.
- **Request for substitution during a time-out:** A team that requested a substitution before a time-out is not permitted another request for substitution either during the time-out or after the time-out. There can't be another request for substitution by the same team on the same dead ball so that team has to wait until another rally is played. However, if a team has NOT requested a substitution immediately prior to a time-out and then makes a substitution request during the time-out, each substitute's number and the number of the player to be replaced must be reported to the R2 at the same time. The R2 reports the numbers of the players involved to the scorer and LT during the time-out. The substitution is, in essence, completed during the time-out since the substitutes then enter the set at the end of the time-out without following normal exchange procedures.

Although unstated in the rules or case book/manual, it is logical for the R2 to let the R1 know that a substitution or substitutions have occurred. While the R2 checks to ensure that the subs assume the proper court positions after the time-out, it is important for the R1 to be aware that substitutions took place since the R1 is also tracking player positions on the court, setter positions, etc. The R2 can easily communicate to the R1 and can contribute to the R1's effective administration of the match by showing the sub signal and then indicating the number of the players who were subbed in and subbed out. This can be a topic for the pre-match discussion between the referees.

6. Time-out Administration: R2s are sometimes guilty of two very different mistakes in administering time-outs. Time-outs are 60 seconds – the teams should be allowed the full 60 seconds to meet, as long as they are on the court and preparing to play when the officials indicate the end of the time-out.

- Both referees have to be prepared to get the teams to timely end the time-outs and get back onto the court quickly and no later than when the clock finishes the 60 second countdown. The end of the time-out should not result in either team delaying play. Handling the end of a time-out has to be done with a mixture of comfort and composure, self-control and being directive. Proper protocol should be followed.
- The R2 sounds a warning whistle when 15 seconds remain in the time-out or ensures that the buzzer is sounded. The R2 should have whistle in mouth as the clock hits 15 seconds. If the scoreboard operator does not sound the warning horn, the R2 whistles and moves in the direction of either team that is not coming out of the huddle. The team that called the time-out is more likely to be coming out of the huddle more slowly.
- If – after the horn/buzzer or whistle at 15 seconds – a team is not breaking the huddle and moving toward the court with about 5 seconds left, the R2 should move toward the huddle and verbally instruct the players to return to the court (“Let’s go, guys – we need you back on the court” or something similar and offered politely is often a good approach). Then, when the horn is sounded to indicate the end of the time-out period, the teams should be on the court and moving into position so that the original tempo of the interval between points can be resumed.
- If a team’s return delays the next service authorization, then the team that caused the delay may be warned one time with clear communication that subsequent delays will result in an unnecessary delay being charged.

Conferences between Referees:

- Conferences should be avoided unless truly necessary. Crossing the court doesn’t look good. However, there are times when the R1 and R2 simply must communicate verbally to ensure the right result occurs.
- Although it is a relatively rare situation when the R2 has vital information to be delivered that requires verbalization, these situations are often critical to the success of the match. The R2 should not casually request to be called to the stand since **unnecessary** conferences tend to undercut the credibility of the officiating team. There are informal signals that can typically help prevent the need for the R2 to cross the court and interrupt play to discuss something with the R2. Yet, a conference between the R1 and R2 can, on occasion, be exactly the right thing to do in order to “get it right.”

- This topic should be addressed in the pre-match so that a required conference can occur quickly. This pre-match should include how the R2 will indicate the need to be invited to cross the court for a conference. Example: R2 approaches court, moving well to one side of the pole, stands toes to the sideline and makes eye contact with the R1, pointing to himself/herself as an indicator of the need to be directed by the R1 to cross the court. Getting the call right is well worth the few seconds that a succinct conversation will take.

What are some of the reasons that might result in the R2 feeling the need to cross the court to talk with the R1? They include:

- The R2 having information about the last rally that should result in a different outcome and that can't simply be signaled from across the court.
- The R2 reaching a point of being close to asking that the R1 disqualify a coach, and the R2 doesn't want to surprise the R1.
- The R2 wanting the R1 to help look for "trash talking" by the teams or the serving team possibly screening from having observed the receiving team adjusting position and still squirming to see the serve and the serving team has a potential screen with grouping of players.
- The R2 sees a position switch by the serving team and has been unsuccessful in getting the R1's attention with the illegal alignment signal. Based on a pre-match discussion, the R2 wants the R1 to see and make the call rather than having the R2 make the call when the R2 is supposed to be concentrating on the receiving team's alignment.
- A head coach is asking to cross the court to ask the R1 to reconsider a ruling related to the last rally and is willing to call a time-out for the express purpose of doing so. The R2 has 'pre-screened the request' so that the discussion will involve something other than a pure judgment call and knows the R1 will want to get off the stand and look at the Rules Book and Case Book/Manual if choosing to acknowledge that the question involves a rule interpretation or penalty application rather than solely the R1's judgment. The R2 does not want to have the 60-second clock started until the R1 has made a decision on whether the reconsideration rule is truly applicable.