

Referees,

We're a little over half way through the season, and I'd like to share a few topics that have come up in the past several weeks. This note is a little long, but please take a few moments to review these important reminders.

#1 - CANCELING ASSIGNMENTS. Check your schedules and ensure you have no conflicts with upcoming assignments through the end of the season. Life happens - jobs, family, health, etc - but the number of assignment cancellations is becoming unacceptable. Tournaments are counting on you - do not leave them or your fellow referees in a bad position. Finding last-minute replacements is difficult. Our cadre is strong and professional, so please do not cancel assignments for non-essential reasons. We must fulfill our obligations. If you find that your schedule is too full, consider accepting fewer assignments in the future, and then pick up assignments as the season progresses.

#2 - ELECTRONIC DEVICES are becoming an issue. Parents/spectators are starting to complain that work teams are distracted using cell phones, etc,. at the score table. With the exception of using the VolleyStation scoring app at GCCC events ONLY, electronic devices are not permitted. That means: NO ear buds, cell phones, non-essential medical devices (which could include a cell phone with an insulin monitoring app), music players, etc. PLEASE: We need every referee to begin each match with a courteous reminder to all work teams -- "Electronic devices need to be in your backpack, bookbag, or with your coach or parents. A work team may be assessed a 10-point penalty for noncompliance." (The 10-point penalty is an OVR policy.)

#3 - LIBERO RULES. Two rules regarding the Libero are being misinterpreted and/or misapplied: 1) YES, a Libero who is in the CENTER BACK position, may go to the serving position to replace the current server. It is FALSE that the Libero can only move to the serving position when she is rotating to the front row. 2) When a team designates two Liberos on the Set 1 line-up sheet, those two players MUST remain Liberos for the entire match. The team cannot change either Libero in a subsequent set, and neither of those two Liberos may change jerseys to be a "regular" player. The team also cannot go from one Libero in Set 1 to two Liberos in a subsequent set. When only one Libero is designated for Set 1, the Libero may be changed in each subsequent set.

#4 - BALL HANDLING. Many of you have been talking about the NCAA women's rule change going into effect this fall about "no double hit faults on a second contact". This rule has not been adopted by USA Volleyball. Our ball handling rules remain in effect. Please review the USAV Ball Handling Guidelines at the front of the current rules book and apply those standards and philosophies.

#5 - ASSIGNMENT REQUESTS. The new feature allowing you to use a "check box" on each tournament page to indicate your interest/availability for that tournament has been working very well. Everyone seems to like it! Keep a couple things in mind: 1) It is only a request; the tournament director may or may not hire you. 2) Check the tournament page to see how many teams have entered and how many referees have already been hired. Some TDs are forgetting to change the "officials needed" to zero

after they fill all the spots.

#6 - PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT. Be mindful of your words and actions when dealing with athletes, coaches, tournament staff, and fellow referees. Keep things professional. Never touch a player! Be aware of your surroundings and your word choices. Sometimes we get a little too comfortable in familiar surroundings or with familiar people. Always maintain your integrity as a professional referee.

Thanks for taking the time to read this! If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, always feel free to reach out to me. It's a busy time of year, but I'll do my best to get back with you as quickly as possible.

The OVR Board and staff appreciate everything each of you do to contribute positively to the volleyball experiences for our participants, tournament staff, fellow referees, and spectators!!

Have a great week!

Brian Hemelgarn
OVR Referees Chair