

**To:** OHSAA Boys Volleyball Officials

**From:** Lucas Tuggle, Director of Officiating Development – Boys Volleyball

**Re:** Plays of the Week – Week 5

**Date:** Friday, April 28, 2023

## ***Mechanics:*** Best Practices in How to Do Things Properly

### ***#1: Avoiding Delays***

We share responsibility for ensuring playing sessions are not unreasonably rushed or delayed. Ensuring a timely start to warm-ups for the “next” match is something where referees have some control. When the previous match ends, once the players for the next match are bench side, the R1 should double whistle for the coaches-captains meeting and then ensure the clock is started for warm-ups. If there is a match in another gym where the referees will be line judges for, typically, the Varsity match in the main gym, this shouldn’t delay the warm-ups. Get parent line judges identified and instructed to be able to fill in until the other match is completed.

### ***#2: Determining Uniform Legality***

The R1 and R2 should verify teams are wearing legal jerseys. For situations where jerseys are covered by warm-up tops, referees can ask a coach to see a team jersey and libero jersey to verify legality and compliance with the clearly-contrasting jersey requirement. This avoids a surprise when teams are on the end lines to start a match, and it is obvious that a libero jersey isn’t sufficiently contrasting or jersey numbers are located too low or in an area of the jersey where number visibility is an issue. Dealing with the issue at that time would disrupt starting the match in terms of not allowing a team to play a libero wearing that jersey or having to penalize for illegal jerseys.

### ***#3: Overlap Observed by Receiving Team Observed by R1***

Referees are expected to partner to get calls right. Although receiving team alignment is a primary R2 responsibility, if the R1 observes a big overlap or position switch on the receiving team, the pre-match discussion should govern how this is handled. The R1 may make eye communication with the R2 and give an informal illegal alignment signal on the side of the receiving team to tell the R2 the R1 has observed a positioning issue. The R2 has the options of figuring out the alignment issue (possibly with assistance from the scorer) and warning it (allowing the team to fix it), figuring it out and whistling the fault upon service contact, or not figuring it out but whistling to allow the R1 to explain which players were clearly out of position. If the R2 does not whistle, the R1 chooses whether to whistle a fault, ignore it or fix it before the next rally.

#### **#4: What Faults should the R2 not whistle?**

Informal help should be part of the pre-match discussion between the referees. The R2 agrees to provide rally-ending information to the referee via stepping away from the post to be visible while making eye contact, and the R1 agrees to use R2 movement as an indicator that the R2 has information to share. The R2 does not offer help on ball handling that is clearly in the view of the R1, nor is it appropriate for the R2 to whistle a ball-handling fault since ball-handling help is limited to informal signaling of prolonged contact or multiple contacts. Rather, the R2 will ensure he or she steps out to be visible to the R1 and informally signal a ball-handling fault that is out of the view of the R1 or where the R1 is looking for help. While the pre-match agreement may permit an R2 to whistle a clear illegal back-row attack/ block or completed attack above net height off a libero overhand set in the attack zone, the R2 always gives the R1 informal help and the opportunity for the R1 to wave off the help before whistling. The R2 should not whistle a 4-hits fault or an over-the-net fault. These are handled with informal signals, with R2 movement away from the post and toward the court or – if necessary – by the R2 getting called to the stand for a discussion with the R1 if the rally ends with the point possibly awarded to the wrong team.

#### **#5: What Are the Challenges If a Ball in Play Contacts an Overhead Obstruction?**

A. Most facilities have overhead obstructions that a ball in play can contact which should be addressed in terms of ground rules. Examples include beams, light fixtures, speakers, banners, and a flag above the court and playable area, which are considered playable overhead obstructions. Teams are typically advised in the coaches-captains meeting to keep playing until they hear a whistle when a ball hits anything overhead. **Rule 2-2** states that a ball striking the ceiling or an overhead obstruction above a playable area shall remain in play provided the ball contacts the ceiling or obstruction on the side of the net extended that is occupied by the team that played the ball last, and the ball is legally played next by the same team. **Rule 2-3f** states that a ball is out of bounds and becomes dead when it touches the ceiling or overhead obstructions beyond the vertical plane of the net and its out-of-bounds extension. So, if Team A hits a ball that goes over the net to Team B's side and contacts the ceiling/overhead obstruction, the ball should be whistled out of bounds.

Challenge 1: When the ball is hit toward the ceiling, referees need to be aware of which player made the last contact on the ball and partner if the same player makes the next hit so the R1 whistles a fault for 2 hits. A third hit contacting the ceiling is whistled out of bounds upon contact with anything above the court.

Challenge 2: Many courts have a beam/curtain above the court, running the length of the net. If the referees share that the beam/curtain will be played as directly above the net, the team hitting the ball into that beam/curtain is permitted to make the next play on the ball if the ball stays on that team's side. Again, a third team hit contacting the beam or curtain should be whistled immediately as a fault.

Challenge 3: Overhead beams/banners may screen the R1 from seeing whether or not the ball made contact with anything above the court. Line judges are often able to help from their angles using the out-of-bounds signal for a ball that contacts anything above the court and completely crosses above the net to the opponent's side.

Challenge 4: When a ball rebounds off an overhead obstruction and comes down near the top of the net, the R1 should sight straight down the net to determine whether or not the ball was contacted and, if so, by whom as well as whether the ball broke the vertical plane above the net to ensure the proper rule is applied. If the ball breaks the plane of the net and is legally contacted by the defensive team, the R1 awards the rally to the blocking team, signaling out-of-bounds. If the ball is blocked legally before the ball breaks the plane of the net, the R1 awards the rally to the blocking team, having determined that no attacking team member had a chance to legally play the ball. However, if the R1 determines that the defensive team's contact took a possible play away from the attacking team, a reaching-over-the-net fault would be whistled against the blocking team. If the R1 judges that an attacking team contacted the ball next but no part of the ball was still in the vertical plane, the R1 would signal an over-the-net fault on the attacker.

Challenge 5: If the R1 is not certain whether the ball contacted an overhead obstruction and the R2 does not offer informal help, this may require a short meeting at the stand. The R1 may call the R2 and line judges or just the R2 across the court for a discussion to try to get the call right. If no one is certain the ball hit overhead, then a clear fault cannot be determined, and the proper ruling is based on this philosophy. Referees are expected to call only clear faults.

Challenge 6: If a team hits a ball (not 3rd contact) that next contacts a portion of the curtain outside the antenna extended without passing completely to the opponent's side, this is not an antenna fault, and play should continue. An antenna fault has not occurred because the ball did not pass completely outside the antenna to the opponent's side.