

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (January 26, 2010) — One of several new rules changes by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Volleyball Rules Committee permits a coach to request a substitution after submitting his or her lineup for a set but prior to play commencing. The changes, which were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors, will take effect with the 2010-11 season.

Rather than beginning the set with a penalty of a loss of rally and a point for the opponents, the changes to Rules 10-1-4 and 7-1-2 will allow the head coach to make a substitution after the lineup is submitted, which may alleviate confusion by players and officials to start the set.

“The new rule change will allow the coach to have submitted his or her lineup at the beginning of the set and will allow substitution requests to be made before play commences,” said Becky Oakes, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Volleyball Rules Committee. “However, no change to the lineup may be made except through substitution or the existing protocol for an injured or ill player.”

In a similar effort to eliminate confusion, Rule 5-3-4e was amended to change the end-of-set procedure in the last set of the match to reduce court congestion. Currently, after the first referee confirms the score and signals end of set, the players are directed to their respective benches.

The new rule change simply requires the first referee signal to release the players from their respective end line after the score is confirmed. The rule change allows individual state associations to establish a handshake procedure if desired and will reduce congestion on the court at the end of the match.

Another distinction made by the committee was the re-defining of players, team members and non-team members.

The changes to Rules 2-5, 6-1 and 6-2 define team members as all school representatives located on the team bench area, including but not limited to coaches, teammates, managers, trainers and the players. All players on the same team in uniform are teammates, and players are now defined as those teammates who are on the court. Non-team members include, but are not limited to, officials, media personnel and spectators.

These changes were made to more clearly define all individuals present at the game, as certain actions and penalties are related to players, team members and non-team members.

After last year’s addition of bobby pins as a means of hair control, the committee has updated Rule 4-1-5 to include unadorned flat clips that are no longer than two inches in length.

“It’s just another method of hair control,” Oakes said. “These items may actually be more secure than bobby pins and do not pose a risk of injury.”

Changes made to Rules 4-1-1, 2, 3 and 4 outline the guidelines for guards, casts and braces allowed during play. Additionally, the use of prostheses must be authorized by the individual state associations. They must be determined to not be any more dangerous to players than the corresponding human body part or parts and do not put the opponent at a disadvantage.

“The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee provided the committee with information that was more current,” Oakes said. “The revised rules update the language and provide consistency among sports, where appropriate, regarding casts, braces, supports and prostheses.”

Following are other changes made by the NFHS Volleyball Rules Committee:

- In a change to Rule 1-3-1, scoring a point was redefined. When a team commits a fault, the result is a loss of rally and the opponent shall receive a point.
- New Rule 2-1-8 defines the libero replacement zone as the area near the sideline between the attack line and the end line.
- Any modification to a player’s uniform, equipment or accessories due to medical or religious reasons now requires a letter of authorization from the state association. The letter must be made available to the referees at or prior to the prematch conference.
- Rule 12-2-8d, which states one may not disrespectfully address a referee, was modified to include any match officials such as line judges, scorer, timer, libero tracker or any other similar official.
- Regarding officials signals, Note 6 improves game efficiency by requiring that only the first referee is required to signal net foul or net serve.

“This year, the rule changes the committee made were aimed at administrative details that enhanced the flow of the contest,” Oakes said. “The revised definitions provide more clarity that assist in application of the rules.”

A complete listing of all rules changes approved by the committee is available on the NFHS Web site at <http://www.nfhs.org/>. Click on “Athletics & Fine Arts Activities” on the home page, and select “Volleyball.”

This press release was written by Emily Newell, a spring intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University.