

**IHSAA Volleyball Rules Interpretations—2011**  
**(Revised August 25, 2011)**

**Situation #1: Rule 5-1-3: Authorized Officials**

In set 5, the two teams are playing very aggressively and the first referee warns both benches of their conduct. Before the set is completed, a fight breaks out and the fans aggressively threaten the referees about a call. Players from each team get involved. The first referee stops play, declares a forfeit and the officials are escorted immediately by host administrators to the locker room. The scoresheet is verified and signed, and the referees fill out required reports on the incident to the state association including the player conduct while in the locker room.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure.

**Situation #2: Rule 2-2-2: Retractable Net System**

The host school has a ceiling-suspended net system. The ball contacts (a) the cables located on only one side of the net which retract the system, (b) a pole located only on one side of the net at approximately a 45 degree angle to the ceiling used to retract the system, (c) the poles located at the end of each net which are vertical extensions of the standards. In all situations, the officials rule these playable overhead obstructions and allow play to continue.

**Ruling:** (a) Correct Procedure, (b) and (c) Incorrect Procedure.

**Comment:** Cables which are used to retract a ceiling-suspended net system and located only on one side of the net are playable overhead obstructions. If the ball contacts a pole, located only on one side of the net and used to retract the system and it affects play, it shall be ruled as a possible replay at the discretion of the referees. Poles which vertically extend from the standards are treated like the standards and the ball is out-of-bounds when it contacts them.

**Situation #3: Rule 3-1-1: The Net and Markings**

Prior to the match while inspecting the equipment, the first referee notices that the white net sleeve has the name of a local restaurant and school mascot printed along the top.

**Ruling:** Legal

**Comment:** The sleeve, so long as it does not affect the height of the net or interfere with play, may have the school name, insignia, school mascot and / or advertising placed along the top by way of a decal or professional printing.

**Situation #4: Rule 3-1-1: The Net and Markings**

As part of her pre-match responsibilities prior to a high school match in a collegiate facility, the first referee sees that the net length is slightly longer than the net length in a high school facility.

**Ruling:** Legal

**Comment:** As long as the net is within 31 feet, six inches (9.5 meters) to 33 feet (10 meters) in length when stretched, it is legal. Changes in the rule now provide a range for overall width and length of the net to accommodate both the measurements for high school and collegiate facilities.

**Situation #5: Rule 2-1-8: The Court and Markings**

School A is refinishing the gym floor. When placing the lines on the floor for volleyball the maintenance crew wants to paint lines on the floor identifying the libero replacement zone.

**Ruling:** No lines are needed on the court for the replacement zone.

**Comment:** The libero replacement zone has a physical location on the floor, the area near the sideline between the attack line and the end line, but is not identified by any lines.

**Situation #6: Rule 5-3-4e Accommodation to the Rules**

School B has a player wearing a prosthesis on the left lower leg. Prior to the pre-match conference, the head coach presents the first referee with a letter of authorization from the state association stating the prosthesis is approved to be worn during competition.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure.

**Comment:** A school requesting an accommodation to the rules for medical or religious reasons for a player shall have the request approved by the state association staff in writing and present the letter of authorization to the first referee prior to or during the pre-match conference.

**Situation #7: Rule 4-1-8: Player Equipment**

A student is in need of wearing an insulin pump. The coach provides a request to the state association to confirm that this medical appliance may be worn during competition and requests a letter of authorization.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure

**Comment:** The letter of authorization from the IHSAA should be presented to the match officials by the coach prior to the start of the contest

**Situation #8: IHSAA Procedure on Line Judge Selection**

The visiting team informs the host school that they do not have anyone that can serve as a line judge for the contest. The host school provides two line judges for the match.

**Ruling:** Proper procedure

**Comment:** Although it has been common practice for each school to provide a line judge for a match, the host school bears the responsibility to designate all officials for the match including referees, scorers, libero trackers, and line judges. It is the host school's prerogative as to whether to use both of their line judges or ask for a line judge from the opponent.

**Situation #9: Rule 10-3-5: Player Safety**

A player on Team A is apparently injured during play and the R1 stops play with an injury time out. The player is removed from the match exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion. Later in the match, the head coach notifies the officials that the player has been cleared to play by an appropriate health care professional. The R1 allows the player entry without questioning the player's ability to play safely. At the conclusion of the match, the R1 files an apparent concussion report with the injured player's athletic director.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure

**Comment:** The official need only stop play for the injury time-out and does not make any determination on the athlete's ability to play. The school bears the responsibility to have the player evaluated. The player shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. The IHSAA has defined "an appropriate health-care professional" as a medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO) that holds an unlimited license to practice medicine in the state of Indiana, or; a certified athletic trainer (ATC/L) licensed in the state of Indiana. THE ENTIRE IHSAA PROTOCOL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS (NFHS) SPORTS PLAYING RULES FOR CONCUSSIONS IS POSTED AT [www.ihsaa.org](http://www.ihsaa.org).

**Situation #10: Rule 10-3-5: IHSAA Concussion Protocol**

During the first match of a tournament, a player on Team A is apparently injured during the third set and the R1 stops play with an injury time out. The player is removed from the match exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion. The school's designated health care professional does NOT clear the athlete for return in the match. After the match, the R1 notifies the Team A's head coach and the tournament's supervisor that the apparently injured player is ineligible for play for the duration of the day. The R1 files a "Potential Concussion" report with the apparently injured player's athletic director within 24 hours.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure

**Comment:** If an athlete is removed from a match with an apparent concussion and is not cleared to return by the designated health care professional, the athlete may not be cleared to play on the same date on which the athlete was removed from play.

The IHSAA has defined "an appropriate health-care professional" as a medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO) that holds an unlimited license to practice medicine in the state of Indiana, or; a certified athletic trainer (ATC/L) licensed in the state of Indiana. THE ENTIRE IHSAA PROTOCOL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS (NFHS) SPORTS PLAYING RULES FOR CONCUSSIONS IS POSTED AT [www.ihsaa.org](http://www.ihsaa.org).

**Situation #11: Rule 10-4-5-a-Penalty 1 Libero Replacement**

After the whistle/signal for serve but before contact for serve, the libero for the receiving team replaces a back row player. The R1 does not call the illegal replacement immediately, but waits until the server for Team S contacts the ball before blowing the whistle for illegal replacement.

**Ruling:** Correct Procedure

**Comment:** The penalty for illegal libero replacement after the whistle/signal for serve is illegal alignment. Illegal alignment must be called after the contact of the serve.

**Situation #12: Rule 9-5-6-b Libero Setting The Ball**

Team A's libero sets the ball using overhead finger action on the team's second hit while on or in front of the attack line. The next (third) hit is a dump (not a spike) that is completely above the height of the net and goes into the opponent's court. The R1 lets play continue.

**Ruling:** Incorrect procedure

**Comment:** Because the ball was completely above the height of the net when the attack was completed, the correct call should be an illegal attack charged to the libero. The location of the ball when the third hit is completed determines the legality of the play, not the type of hit. If the ball is not completely above the height of the net, play continues without penalty.

**Situation #13: Rule 5-2-2 Officials Equipment**

The second referee (R2) arrives at the match site planning to use a hand-held electronic whistle (normally a training whistle used by coaches) and an electronic tablet to use in place of a paper lineup card. The R1 tells the R2 that these devices are illegal and does not allow the R2 to use them during the match.

**Ruling:** Correct ruling by the R1

**Comment:** The use of electronic devices on the court is prohibited

**Situation #14: Rule 9-5-4, 5, note Back Row Attack**

A back-row player on Team A completes an attack on a ball that is completely above the height of the net while on or in front of the attack line. The ball (a) completely crosses the net into Team B's court, or (b) is legally blocked by Team B. The R1 whistles an illegal back row attack when in (a) the ball completely crosses the net, and in (b) when the ball is legally touched by a Team B blocker.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure

**Situation #15: Rule 9-5-4, 5, note and Rule 9-7-2 Back Row Attack / Double Foul**

A back-row player on Team A completes an attack on a ball that is completely above the height of the net while on or in front of the attack line. The ball is blocked by an illegal blocker on Team B while the ball is in the plane of the net. The R1 whistles an illegal back row attack when the ball is touched by the Team B blocker.

**Ruling:** Incorrect procedure

**Comment:** The R1 should declare a double foul. The illegal back-row attack by the Team A player and the illegal block by the Team B player occur at the same instant. The R1 should have whistled the play dead, signaled each violation, and then called for a replay.

**Situation #16: Rule 9-5-4, 5, note and Rule 9-6-4-b Back Row Attack / Over-The-Net-Foul**

The back-row player who is making Team A's second contact is in front of the attack line and the ball is completely above the height of the net at the moment of contact. The back-row player mis-hits the ball, and it is clearly not going to cross the net. Although there is a Team A player in the vicinity who could make Team A's third team contact, the Team B front row players reach completely over the net to block the ball before the ball enters the plane of the net. The R1 whistles a double foul.

**Ruling:** Incorrect procedure

**Comment:** The Team B players have committed an over-the-net foul and this is the only foul that has occurred. Since Team A's second hit did not break the plane of the net, the Team A back row player did not execute an attack. The R1 should award Team A with a point.

**Situation #17: Rule 4-1-5 Equipment and Accessories—Feathers in the Hair**

The NFHS has issued a rules interpretation regarding the legality of a specific hair adornment. Feathers in the hair have become increasingly popular as of late. If the feather is woven into the hair using a soft or pliable material, it would be considered as legal hair adornment. A feather that is attached to the hair using a hard surfaced clip would be considered legal as long as the clip met the specifications of Rule 4-1-5, (the clip itself is flat, unadorned and no longer than 2 inches). If the clip does not meet the specifications of Rule 4-1-5, it would be determined as illegal.

**Comment:** If the feathers come out of the hair and land on the playing floor, an unnecessary delay penalty should be assessed to the offending team.

**Situation #18: Rule 4-1-6 Equipment and Accessories—Jewelry**

A player on Team A arrives at the match wearing earlobe gauges (devices used to stretch holes in the earlobe). The referees see the gauges and inform the coach of Team A that the player is wearing illegal equipment and it must be removed before she can participate in the team warm up or the match.

**Ruling:** Proper procedure

**Comment:** The gauges are considered jewelry and must be removed prior to participation.

**Situation #19: Rule 9-5-1-c Player Actions—Block**

A player on Team B delivers a hard driven spike that passes through the hands/arms of a front row player on Team A who is in close proximity to the net with hands above the height of the net. The ball bounces off the head of the Team A player. The R1 allows three hits for Team A.

**Ruling:** Correct Procedure

**Comment:** The contact by the Team A player is considered a block because the player contacted the ball with her hands above net height. The head can be used to block the ball, and is a legal block, not the first hit.

**Situation #20: Rule 10-4-2-a and Rule 8-1-6 Libero Replacement**

Team S is serving. The R1 whistles and signals for serve. After the whistle/signal for serve but before the contact for serve, the libero for Team S replaces player #10 in the CB position. Realizing that the libero entered after the whistle/signal for serve, the server tosses the ball and lets it drop. The R1 grants a re-serve and #10 immediately replaces the libero in the CB position. The R1 then whistles/signals for the re-serve with #10 in the CB position and no penalty for Team S.

**Ruling:** Incorrect procedure

**Comment:** In the situation, the replacement took place after the whistle/signal for serve was given and you have illegal alignment. In high school volleyball, once the whistle/signal for serve is given, if there is a problem with the replacement you would have illegal alignment. (10-4-4a). The penalty would be assessed upon contact with the ball by the server.

**Situation #21: Rule 6-4-Penalties 2-a-b-c**

Team A leads Team B 14-12 in the 5<sup>th</sup> set of the match. Player #4 of Team B serves and Team B scores their 13<sup>th</sup> point. After the point but prior to the next serve, the scorer notifies the R2 that #4 was an improper server. The R2 confers with the R1 and the R1 signals improper server/illegal alignment, awards Team A with a loss of rally point, and proceeds with the end of match protocol with the final score of the set 15-13.

**Ruling:** Improper procedure

**Comment:** Team B's 13<sup>th</sup> point should have been cancelled since it was earned by an improper server and the violation was discovered prior to a serve by the opponent. The final score of the set should have been 15-12. All other procedures by the officials were correct.