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SDHSAA

Volleyball Newsletter #1 August 24, 2026

WELCOME BACK OFFICIALS, COACHES and AD's

As another school year and sport season approaches, we would like to welcome you all to the 2026 volleyball season. We hope you all had a great summer and are as excited as we are to start the new season. We need everyone's help to make this one of the best seasons ever! Let's continue to lead by example and promote good sportsmanship and fair play throughout. Have a great season.

ONLINE RULES MEETING, MECHANICS MEETING AND TEST

If you have not yet watched the online rules meeting, online mechanics meeting (officials only) and passed your online test, please do so **PRIOR to August 31st at midnight** to avoid a late fee or fine. **NOTE:** Coaches...should you find you have missed completing any of your requirements after the 31st you will still be allowed to coach but your school will be notified and issued an invoice for the appropriate fine. Officials...should you find you have missed completing any of your requirements you would be fined individually. We understand "things happen" but we encourage you to complete all requirements sooner rather than later. Thank you.

COACHES EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Please remember that as a coach you are required to complete specific NFHS courses to maintain your eligibility to coach. These courses must be completed **PRIOR** to you starting to coach any sport or you will be ineligible to coach your team. If these courses are not completed **PRIOR** to the start of your season, you will be assessed a \$500 fine. The following courses must be completed on the *nfhslearn.com* website.

1. Fundamentals of Coaching- once you have completed this course, you do not need to take it again.
2. First Aid, Health and Safety- completed every two years.
3. Concussion in Sports- completed annually per state codified law after JUNE 1.
4. Heat Illness Prevention- completed annually after JUNE 1.
5. The Collapsed Student- must be completed every two years.
(same as the previous The Collapsed Athlete course- just the name has just changed)

WAIVER LETTER

If you have an athlete who needs to wear special equipment due to a medical condition, please email Kristina Sage at the SDHSAA to request a waiver letter for permission to use this equipment during contests.

Officials, if a waiver letter is necessary and not provided, please allow the athlete to participate in this week's contests and notify both the coach and Kristina Sage so we can ensure the proper waiver is issued.

UNIFORM NUMBERS

Make sure uniform numbers are clearly visible. A couple of changes in the coming years: a) beginning in 2028, numbers with a leading zero are not legal (01, 02); b) beginning in 2029, the number on the front of the uniform must be centered on the upper half of the uniform top.

SDHSAA REMINDERS

- Pre-wrap is allowed as a headband – it must meet undergarment color requirements.
- South Dakota **WILL REQUIRE** the use of the lineup card for the R2.
- South Dakota has adopted the policy of team benches remaining on the same side of the court unless there is a distinct advantage for one team over the other. Examples include but not limited to: a) an obstruction that hangs down below the 23-foot line – only on one side. b) backboards not up on both sides. c) more playable area on one side of the court. If, as the visiting team, you feel there is a disadvantage – please communicate with the HOME team prior to game day. If that is not possible, this must be discussed prior to warmups and agreed on by all parties. A reminder that line judges will continue to switch sides between sets.

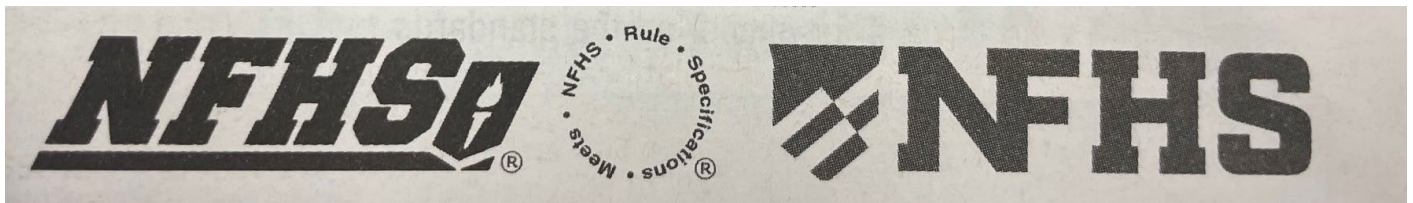
SPORTSMANSHIP AND TEAM CELEBRATIONS

Sportsmanship remains a top priority for the SDHSAA. Some reminders on this topic:

- Any form of taunting is NEVER acceptable.
- Cheer for your team in a positive manner... **not toward the opposing team or fan base.**
- Team benches are allowed to stand to celebrate a great play but must return to the bench immediately following.
- **Celebrations should be volleyball oriented and not a means of showboating or taunting the other team.**

BADEN VOLLEYBALLS

There are three NFHS Authenticating Marks in the picture below. **Any of these NFHS Authenticating Marks are acceptable for volleyball.** The game ball for competitions shall be the three-colored panel volleyball of royal blue/gray/white (Baden Perfection.) The ball shall measure at least 25 inches but no more than 27 inches in circumference. Textured volleyballs are not allowed.



UNDERGARMENT COLOR NEW RULE

Team members may wear black, white or gray undergarments in addition to the undergarments that match the predominant color of the uniform top/bottom. All team members (other than the libero) wearing an undergarment must wear the same color.

SD ADOPTED POLICY OF PRE-MATCH PROTOCOL

Following the warm-up, the anthem and introductions would happen. (The order is determined by the host team). South Dakota has opted to continue the policy of *starters and libero only* standing on the endline prior to the first set for introductions. Bench players are encouraged to stand in front of the bench or along the sideline – between the attack line and the end line. Coaches, officials and game administration are introduced. R1 then blows the whistle and motions teams onto the court.

NEW RULES FOR 2026

- Libero uniform bottoms may be any color and no longer must match the team uniform bottom.
- A team may designate up to TWO liberos but only one libero can be in the game at a time. These two liberos can wear different color jerseys but they still must contrast according to rule with the team uniform.
- The 2nd referee whistle warning *between sets* will now be at the 2:30 mark (or with :30 left on the clock) vs. the 2:45 or :15 mark.

- Non-playing teammate(s) or bench players entering the court during play will be assessed an illegal alignment penalty.
- Players on the serving team are not permitted to raise their hands above their heads during service UNTIL the ball has passed over the net.
- Players shall not wear any audio or video devices during the match.
- Coaches, non-playing teammates or team attendants may not use props on the bench during celebration.

HOST MANAGEMENT

The VB Handbook states: Fans and spectators may **stand**, but not on the playing surface. The playable area extends up to the bleachers, regardless of how far they are from the court. This Point of Emphasis pertains to fans that are standing – if they want to stand, they need to do so in the bleachers. If fans are sitting, the bottom row is fine.

Table Workers:

- Table personnel: Just a reminder that you will provide all table workers for all home matches. Scorers / Timers / Libero Trackers In the case of *Libero trackers*...even if the home team does not use a Libero during play a tracker must be provided and will sit at the scorer's table. This is probably the most difficult position to fill at the table. This individual (student or adult) should be properly trained to allow for uninterrupted play during matches. With the option to now have 2 Liberos designated per set it is imperative the tracker be well trained to allow for smooth flow of the match.

Table personnel protocol:

- Be professional: Respectful communication is key. Please refrain from negative communication in regard to officials, players or coaches.
- Remain focused: Always pay attention - avoiding phone usage and social media. Keep eyes on officials for signals.
- Remain neutral: Do not show bias toward one team.
- You are equally important to the smooth flow of the match. Help newer table members as they grow into their role.

****AD's and Coaches:** Volleyball Points of Emphasis have addressed Host Management Best Practices in more detail this year. 1) Referee's Platform Safety – referee platforms are used not only by officials they are also utilized by students/volunteers. It is critically important that these platforms are safe and secure and provide correct line of sight for all referees. 2) Equipment Evaluation – Regularly evaluate volleyball equipment for signs of wear. Frayed or loose nets or cables (showing loss of tension), posts that are bending inwards and inadequate padding are sources of concern. If necessary, officials should bring any concerns to host management first.

LIBERO TRACKING

The NFHS has created a training video titled: Officiating Volleyball – Libero Tracking. It can be found on the NFHS Learn site – link below. This is a helpful tool for all trackers.

Libero Tracking

<https://youtu.be/M1HoavLskoo?si=LkQGSif3RZBV951H>

Scoring Volleyball

<https://youtu.be/qDR8reOqVE8?si=9UXUBfVNU1nDBhmH>