



Oregon School Activities Association

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To: Athletic Directors and Volleyball Coaches
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Subject: Volleyball Reminders for the 2026 Season

Please review this information with your volleyball staff and best of luck as you start your season! Each school offering volleyball will be receiving a copy of the NFHS Volleyball Rules Book from the OSAA. Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

[OSAA Volleyball Plan Book Link:](#) OSAA volleyball specific policies and OSAA general policies.

[OSAA Volleyball Participation Limitations:](#) Please review the participation limitations. It is important to stay within the limitations for regular season dates. Below is the participation limitation for an individual student as we receive this question often at the OSAA.

Individual. A student shall not compete on more than 18 playing dates / 36 matches, exclusive of varsity district playoffs and state championships. Additionally, a student shall not compete in more **than 6 sets per day**. If a student exceeds the limit, the match in which the limit is exceeded shall be forfeited. A student may participate in only one jamboree.

EXCEPTION: The individual limit of **6 sets** per day does not apply to double duals or tournament play. In tournament play, a student may participate in only one level of competition during that day. Double duals involve two or three teams competing on one day. In double dual play, a student may participate in multiple levels of play and may play in a maximum of 10 sets during that day.

[Sub-Varsity Formats:](#) This document addresses the OSAA rule change as it relates to match formats that are allowed at the sub-varsity level, including a reminder that the "extra set" is no longer allowed at the lowest level since schools are now allowed to play best 3-of-5 at all levels. Please ensure that you have communicated the format you or your league plans to use ahead of time to your commissioner.

[HEALTH & SAFETY:](#) The OSAA website contains a variety of information regarding heat, hydration, and concussion management. The page contains links to informational items that all coaches should familiarize themselves with as practices begin.

[Practice Model:](#) Notable requirements contained in the policy include:

- Prohibition on consecutive days of multiple practice sessions.
- A teaching session as one of the practice sessions on the first two multiple practice days (the intensity, duration and pace of all practice components in a teaching session shall be modified from a normal practice session);
- Maximum of one hour of weight training before or after practice on a single practice session day.

[Heat Index:](#) Athletic Directors and Coaches should subscribe to heat alerts through the OSAA website. Alerts are sent about 11am daily when the forecasted heat index in your area is high. If an alert is received, the policy requires that schools check the actual heat index within one hour prior to the start of practice to determine if modifications must be made. If no alert is received, no action is required by the school that day.

[Air Quality Guidelines:](#) The Air Quality Index (AQI) should be monitored throughout the day, and during an event, to have the best data possible to make informed decisions about conducting practices and competitions. School personnel shall review the AQI information for all regions throughout the state on either the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) website

at <https://oragi.deq.state.or.us/home/map>, the Oregon DEQ app "OregonAir", or on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) Air Now](#) website to determine if action is necessary. Schools shall regularly review the AQI throughout events to assess deteriorating conditions.

Concussion Management: OSAA Staff worked with the Oregon Legislature to align Max's Law (public schools) and Jenna's Law (private schools) when it comes to the return to participation protocol. Therefore, all OSAA member schools are subject to the same policy when a student is removed after exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body. The state still states that, on an annual basis prior to participation, private schools shall require each student and at least one parent or legal guardian of the student to sign a consent form acknowledging the receipt of information regarding symptoms and warning signs of concussions. Private schools shall maintain a copy of each student's signed form on file for review at any time by OSAA staff.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Team members may wear black, white or gray undergarments in addition to undergarments that match the predominant color of the uniform. However, all team members, other than the libero, must wear matching colors. Libero bottoms may be any color.

Removal of any uniform top or bottom 4-2-7: Clarifies the penalty for the removal of any part of the uniform top or bottom as a yellow card charged to the coach for unsporting conduct.

Jewelry / NFHS Rule 4-1-7: Small, secured stud or post jewelry may be worn above the chin. No jewelry is permitted below the chin.

Legal Volleyballs: Per OSAA adoption, schools may use volleyballs that are solid white or a maximum combination of three colors (with each of the 12 panels being a solid color) and of which at least one-third of the panels shall be solid white. The ball shall include the NFHS Authenticating Mark. Schools shall use NFHS-approved Wilson volleyballs for all OSAA playoff matches.

HOME CONTEST MANAGEMENT:

Annual Review of Equipment and Facilities: The school coach and athletic administrator have the responsibility to be certain all equipment is in compliance with the rules and kept in good condition. Equally important is the facility set-up for the match to have a clear playing area, and proper floor markings and officials table in the proper location along with team benches. The review of equipment should be done annually as well as checking to be sure all is in good order for the night of the contest. **This includes the referee's platform.** If problems arise with equipment, the proper staff member should be notified so the matter can be resolved. Taking time to review your equipment and facilities will benefit the teams and officials.

Scorers and Libero Trackers for Home Matches: It is imperative that all scorers and libero trackers show up on time for matches and are properly trained to perform these important duties. This includes the training for the new double libero.

Line Judges for Home Matches: If not supplied by your local association, it is vital that all line judges show up on time for matches and are properly trained to perform these important duties. It is strongly recommended that schools use adults, not students, especially for varsity matches. Line judges should switch sides after every set.

Blood Kit: Verify that a blood kit is readily available in each gym for all home matches.

Volleyball Formats: Please note that these are the ONLY three formats that are allowed for OSAA volleyball play. All other formats are illegal under OSAA rules. You can find this information on the OSAA website within the OSAA Volleyball Plan at <http://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/vblplan.pdf>.

- a. Single Match:** 2 schools involved; individuals are allowed 6 sets allowed. Varsity matches are best 3 of 5 and sub-varsity matches are best 2 of 3 or best 3 of 5.

b. Double Dual: 2 or 3 schools involved; schools can play a maximum of 2 matches on this date. Individuals can compete in a maximum of 10 sets on this date, at any level, and each match counts towards the 36 match individual limitation. Varsity matches are best 3 of 5 and sub-varsity matches are best 2 of 3 or best 3 of 5.

c. Tournaments: Multiple schools involved; consists of pool play and/or bracket play; limited to 16 sets per team, including pool play. <http://www.osaa.org/docs/vbl/VolleyballParticipationLimitsFINAL.pdf>.

OSAA RANKINGS INFORMATION:

Volleyball Tournaments Results: The school hosting the tournament is **not** responsible for inputting all the matches and results from the tournament. **Each school is responsible for making sure their own schedule and match results are accurate following the conclusion of all tournaments.** Pool play shall not count in the OSAA rankings and is not to be recorded on OSAA website. This includes pool play in out-of-state tournaments, even if a match is played. ***Please send bracket play information to chrisb@osaa.org so reported scores can be confirmed.***

Contests vs. Teams Whose Classification's Rankings Are Frozen. Results from contests involving any team whose classification's rankings are already frozen shall not be included in the rankings.

Contests vs. Teams More Than One Classification Away. In the RPI system, results from contests added to a team's schedule after a certain date each season (**Fall – Sept. 16**) vs. a team more than one classification away shall not be included in the rankings.

NOTE: bracketed contests at tournaments are not affected by this policy.

Contests Added After a Certain Date. Results from contests added to a team's schedule after a certain date each season (**Fall – September 30th**) shall not be included in the rankings. **NOTE:** Contests not affected by this policy include bracketed contests at tournaments, league tiebreakers, and district/league tournaments. Schools may apply for an exception to OSAA Staff in extenuating circumstances.

Tracking Out of State Opponents: Varsity teams are required to update their schedule and results through the OSAA website throughout the season. Schools are also required to track records of out of state opponents. Each Oregon school is ultimately responsible for making sure their own schedule and results are accurate, including the records of their out of state opponents.

OSAA ADOPTED VOLLEYBALL RULES AND INTERPRETATIONS:

The 2026-27 NFHS Volleyball Rules Book will be used with the following clarifications:

A team may designate up to two liberos, but only one libero can be in the game at a time. When a team designates two liberos and one is injured/ill, a new libero may be re-designated. When a team designates two liberos and one is disqualified; the team must continue with one libero.

Rationale: Allows more student-athletes to participate by creating an additional opportunity for coaches without having to utilize a substitution.

The second referee will provide a double whistle warning between sets at two minutes, 30 seconds (4:30 when intermission is used) instead of 2 minutes, 45 seconds.

Rationale: Improves pace of play between sets by notifying teams earlier to make their way onto the court for the officials to administer lineup checks before the final audio signal and resumption of play.

Players on the serving team are not permitted to raise their hands above their heads during service until the ball has passed beyond the net.

Rationale: Discourages player positioning during the serve that prevents the receiving team from viewing service contact and/or the flight of the ball and assists officials when evaluating the existence of screening. This change aligns with all other volleyball rules codes.

Players shall not wear any audio or video devices during the match.

Rationale: Clarifies the prohibition of electronic communication with and by players during the match and aligns with other NFHS rules codes.

Warm-Up Safety. Risk minimization continues to be a priority for the NFHS Volleyball Rules Committee and the OSAA. Though volleyball continues to have one of the lowest injury rates of the 22 high school sports under surveillance, the growing number of concussions occurring during warm-ups as reported annually by the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance System (High School RIO) has increased awareness regarding warm-up procedures before and during the match.

With the risk for injury being highest during shared net warm-up time, no shared net warm-up time is allowed. Teams can warm up on either side of the net without attacking or serving over the net. Required warm up procedures are as follows:

Match Warm-Up Required Protocol: Minimum amount of warm up time is 20 minutes.

- 20-minute warm-up time: 4 minutes shared court time, each team stays on their chosen or assigned side of the net. Then the visiting team takes the full court for 8 minutes, followed by the home team taking the full court for 8 minutes.

Double Dual Warm-Up Required Protocol: Minimum amount of warm up time is 16 minutes.

- 16-minute warm-up time: 2 minutes shared court time, each team stays on their chosen or assigned side of the net. Then the serving team takes the full court for 7 minutes, followed by the receiving team taking the full court for 7 minutes.

Tournament Match Warm-Up Required Protocol:

- 10-minute warm-up: The serving team has the full court for 5 minutes followed by the receiving team taking the court for 5 minutes.
- 5-minute warm-up: Serving team has the full court for 2.5 minutes, followed by the receiving team taking the full court for 2.5 minutes.

Some things to consider when establishing best practices for implementing this warmup protocol include facility space, shared court time, placement of athletes and those assisting with warm-ups, and familiarity of all team members with the warm-up procedures for the match. In addition to pre-game warm-ups, it should be noted that warming up between sets is allowed. Rule 11-5-3 clarifies that teams must remain on their side of the net, in their playable area. No hitting or serving is allowed and volleyballs may be used only on their own side of the playing area.

State Association Adoptions – Team Benches

The NFHS Volleyball Rules Book, like many other NFHS rules books, includes specific rule modifications that are allowed by state level adoption. These specific rules are found throughout the rules book and address match format, forfeit protocol, uniform and equipment accommodations, line judge flags, electronic devices and even bench rotation. These adoptions allow for decisions to be made at a local level regarding rules that have local implications or have no impact on play. For example, states with more rural competition – long bus rides – might opt to have their schools play best two-of-three sets to allow for shorter competition times.

One accommodation of note is the ability for a state association to authorize permission for teams to remain on the same benches throughout the match. A rules consideration for the 2020-21 season due to the spread of COVID-19 – the elimination of rotating benches between sets – was universally well received.

OSAA ADOPTION: *In Oregon, we will continue to eliminate the rotating of benches between sets unless there is a significant advantage on one side of the net which may include hoop heights, lights, or reflections. The officiating crew of the contest will determine if there is an advantage or not. In a deciding set situation, benches shall remain the same if they have not been rotated between sets, and the deciding set coin toss would only have the options of serve or receive.*

2026-27 NFHS NEW Points of Emphasis:

Referee's Platform Safety

Student-participants' and officials' safety continues to be the top priority of the Volleyball Rules Committee. Often overlooked, referee platforms can be incredibly dangerous if they are old, broken, improperly set up, etc. It is critically important that these platforms are safe and secure and provide the correct line of sight for our referees to confidently climb the ladder, stand on the platform and officiate without fear of injury.

By rule, hosts must provide a safe, stable platform. The first referee (R1) should carefully examine the stand prior to the match, and if the first referee determines that the platform is unsafe, the match will still go on, and the R1 will work from the floor. When evaluating the referee stand, ensure the platform is secured over top of the top ladder rung. Never step onto a platform where the platform is simply touching the top ladder rung. Referees should not use ladders, chairs, boxes, trash cans or similar substitutes that could endanger the well-being of the official. Additionally, to appropriately officiate a match, it is preferred that the referee stand be adjustable to ensure that the R1's head is 2-3 feet above the height of the net. If there are any issues, the referee should notify the host school and the state association.

