

# Chapter 3

## Competition Rules



***USA******Volleyball***®

**OPEN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

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## Rules of Play

The [2017-2019 USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations](http://www.volleyballreftraining.com/rules_interpretations_indoor.php) will be in effect throughout the season and for the 2019 USA Volleyball Open National Championships (see: [http://www.volleyballreftraining.com/rules\\_interpretations\\_indoor.php](http://www.volleyballreftraining.com/rules_interpretations_indoor.php) to download the Domestic Competition Regulations). Participants, coaches and team representatives in the USA Volleyball Open National Championships are subject to and must obey ALL rules, regulations and policies of USA Volleyball herein or otherwise written.

Please review the 2017-2018 Critical Rules and Interpretations training material below:

[https://www.volleyballreftraining.com/rules\\_interpretations\\_indoor.php](https://www.volleyballreftraining.com/rules_interpretations_indoor.php)

### Key rules for all 2-of-3 matches are listed below:

- Rally Score to 25 points, all sets must be won by a margin of two (2) points.
- Deciding sets of best 2-of-3 matches will be rally scoring to 15 points
- Third sets of matches in designated 3-team pools will be to 25 points and there will be a coin toss between sets two and three to determine “side”, “serve” or “receive”.
- In all third sets of full matches and in all playoff matches, teams will switch sides at eight or 13 points as appropriate.
- Twelve (12) substitutions and up to two (2) Liberos
  - If two (2) Liberos are used, they must be identified prior to the start of the match
  - If zero (0) or one (1) Libero is used, they must be identified prior to the start of each set
- The Roster may contain up to 15 players and no more than 5 staff members.
- Each team must play within its own playing area and space. However, the ball may be retrieved from beyond the free zone. Rule USAV 9 states:
  - *If obstructions or other safety concerns prohibit retrieval from beyond the free zone, the player retrieving a ball over a non-playing area must be in contact with the playing surface when contact with the ball is made.*
  - *Non-playing areas are defined as the: (1) walls, bleachers or other spectator seating areas; (2) team benches and any area behind the team benches; (3) area between the scorer’s table and the team benches; (4) any other area outlined in the pre-match conference by the first referee.*
  - *If nets or dividers are separating courts, only the player attempting to play the ball may move the net or divider to play the ball*

The area beyond the edge of the Sport Court is designated a non-playing area due to safety concerns.

- No artificial noise makers are permitted.
- The USAV TEST Rule regarding what happens when an illegal player is found on the court will be in effect—see Rule Book for updated language:

[https://volleyballreftraining.com/rules\\_interpretations\\_indoor\\_dcr.php](https://volleyballreftraining.com/rules_interpretations_indoor_dcr.php)

## Protest of Playing Rules & Due Process & Appeals

**Protests of the playing rules** during a set/match must be lodged in a formal manner prior to the next service. Between sets, a protest of the last play of the set must occur within one minute, and also at the end of the match, the protest of the last play of the match must occur within one minute. The protest shall be handled by a committee of two (2) to three (3) persons, one of whom must be a certified USA National referee or scorer, depending on the nature of the protest. The committee shall be composed of the following:

1. **Committee Chair:** The National Rules Interpreter or designee (Head Referee for the Event)
2. A representative of the USAV Championship Committee, USAV Events Department staff or designee to be named by the Event Director.

**All rulings of this committee are final and not subject to appeal.**

All protests will be settled at the time they are lodged. No match will be allowed to proceed until the protest is settled. Protests can **ONLY** be related to the rules of play. **Judgment calls are NOT subject to protest.**

The following are examples of what may be protested:

- misinterpretation of a playing rule
- failure of the referee to apply the correct rule to a given situation
- failure to apply the correct penalty / sanction for a given fault

**Due Process & Appeals:** USAV Bylaws (Article XI) and USAV Operating Code (Article X) govern protests, appeals, due process and ancillary procedures. Both of these documents are published in the USA Volleyball Guidebook. Protests, appeals and due process for this Event are specifically governed by these documents. Protests and appeals at this championship event are a simple one or two-step process.

## Team Uniforms

Team players shall wear uniforms that are in full compliance with the USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations (**see Rule 4.3**). If two or more sets of uniforms are used, players will be required to wear the **same** number for each set of shirts. Shirt numbers must be clearly visible for identification by scorekeepers as well as members of the All-tournament selection committee and spectators. The numbers "0" and "00" are unacceptable and will not be permitted. Team members shall be in proper uniform when warming up. All Libero shirts shall be numbered. If an individual competes in a position other than Libero as well, his / her number must be the same.

Please note that **Rule 4.3.3.1 and 4.3.3.2** will be strictly enforced. This rule specifies that numbers must be of contrasting color (to the jersey) with no smaller than 6-inch numbers on the back and 4-inch numbers on the front of the jersey. Please note that numbers must be **centered** both horizontally and vertically on the **player's**

chest and upper back as specified in **Rule 4.3.3.1**. Color combinations for numbers such as purple/black, dark green/black, navy/black, white/light yellow or navy/maroon are not distinctive enough to comply with **Rule 4.3.3.1b**. Once competition has begun, no number changes will be permitted.

**Rule USAV 4.3.5** states, “For nationally-sanctioned competition, uniforms must be identical with the exception of the sleeve length and the Libero Player. An exception will also be made for a single manufacturer’s logo or trademark on the outside of the jerseys or shorts, provided that the logo or trademark does not exceed 14.6 square cm (2 ¼ square inches)”. **USAV 4.3** states: “If undergarments, including but not limited to t-shirts, boxer shorts, tights, leotards, body suits, bicycle shorts, sports bras, etc., are worn in such a manner that they are exposed, they will be considered a part of the uniform. In that case, they must be similar and the same color for any team members who wear such a uniform. Socks and sport shoes are not part of the uniform.”

Teams must wear jerseys that meet all the requirements as described above, but may wear uniform **shorts** that are similar in color, regardless of style, cut and trim.

**Rule USAV 19.2a** states, “The Libero player’s jersey must contrast in color with that of the predominant colors of the jerseys of the other team members. Color combinations such as purple/black, dark green/black, navy/maroon and white/light yellow are not distinctive enough to comply with the rules.”

## Height of the Net

The height of the net is specified in the USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations (see **Rule 2.1**).

<u>LEVEL OF PLAY</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>	<u>MALE</u>
Open, AA, A, BB, B, 40s	2.24 m (7’4 1/8”)	2.43 m (7’11 5/8”)

The height of the net **MAY** vary for specific age groups as follows:

<u>AGE GROUPS</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>	<u>MALE</u>
70 years & above	2.19 m (7’2 1/8”)	2.29 m (7’6”)
60 years & above	2.19 m (7’2 1/8”)	2.38 m (7’9 5/8”)
55 years and above	2.19 m (7’2 1/8”)	2.38 m (7’9 5/8”)
45 years and above	2.19 m (7’2 1/8”)	2.43 m (7’11 5/8”)

## Structure of Play

Pool play for seeding will precede the championship medal rounds. In some tournaments there may be two (2) round robin pools.

**The championship round** will be a **SINGLE** elimination tournament in all **CLUB, OPEN and SITTING** Divisions and a **DOUBLE** elimination in the ***Gold Flight*** only in all Masters and Seniors divisions. In all other flights, the championship rounds will be single elimination. Every effort will be made to schedule each team for a minimum of six (6) matches over the course of the tournament. This will be based upon the number of entries in a tournament.

## Tie Breaking Procedures

### **TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES**

Match percentage and then sets percentage will determine the position of each team within a round-robin pool. It is possible for a team to be eliminated from the next stage of championship competition by inferior set or match percentage.

- If two teams are tied in match records and played each other, the result of their head-to-head match will determine which team is the higher seed.
- If three or more teams are tied on match percentage, the teams are ranked by set percentages and then by point percentage. If teams are exactly tied, even on point percentage, team rank will be determined by a minimum number of coin tosses.

### **RANKING TEAMS WITHIN EACH ROUND-ROBIN POOL**

Each team in a round-robin pool achieves a pool record, consisting of the following criteria, in order:

Each record is computed as a percentage of a total. For example, a team that plays three matches:

Winning	25-10, 25-5
Losing	25-23, 20-25, 19-25
Winning	25-9, 25-12

Achieves the overall record:

...Matches...		...Sets...		...Points...	
Won-Lost	%	Won-Loss	%	For-Against	%
2-1	66.67	5-2	71.43	164-109	60.4

## Match Protocol

1. For each match, the court will be available for warm-up ten (10) minutes prior to the match time. If a previous match on the same court runs late, then the ten (10) minute warm-up time will begin at the conclusion of that match.
2. Ball handling on any concrete portion of the convention center is **PROHIBITED**.
3. Following the captains' meeting with the referees for each match, the warm-up period for the match may consist of five (5) minutes for each team separately on the court, or may be ten (10) minutes jointly in accordance with the current rules of play. Both captains must agree to share the court for 10 minutes; otherwise, 5 minutes for each team will be required. (**NOTE: The warm-up period for the Open Division will be six (6) minutes shared or three (3) minutes for each team separately. See page 26 of the [2017-2019 USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations](#).**)
4. Matches will not begin before the scheduled match time except as noted in #5 below.
5. The Championship Committee reserves the right to reschedule and / or relocate matches with respect to court and time to expedite competition. Any such changes will be posted in the results area, and every attempt will be made to inform the team representative of the change.
6. Non-deciding sets: rally score to 25 - all sets must be won by a margin of two (2) points.
7. Deciding set: rally score to 15 points - must be won by a margin of two (2) points.
8. Libero player(s) is/are designated for the match and must be indicated on the line-up sheet at the beginning of the match. Teams may now designate either two liberos for the match or one (or no) libero per set. If two liberos are designated on the first set lineup sheet, both designated liberos must remain as liberos for the entire match. If less than two liberos are identified on the first set lineup sheet, the libero may be changed for each subsequent set of the match provided no more than one libero is designated at any given time.
9. The Libero player may not block or attempt to block.
10. In one position, the Libero MAY SERVE after replacing the player in position 1 (page 59 [DCR](#)).
11. Each team must play within its own playing area and space. However, the ball may be retrieved from beyond the free zone.
  - *If obstructions or other safety concerns prohibit retrieval from beyond the free zone, the player retrieving a ball over a non-playing area must be in contact with the playing surface when contact with the ball is made.*
  - *Non-playing areas are defined as the: (1) walls, bleachers or other spectator seating areas; (2) team benches and any area behind the team benches; (3) area between the scorer's table and the team benches; (4) any other area outlined in the pre-match conference by the first referee. [Rule 23.2.5].*
  - *If nets or dividers are separating courts, only the player attempting to play the ball may move the net or divider to play the ball.*

## Coaching

Rule **USAV 5.3.1** limits the activities of assistant coaches during a match (see below):

*One assistant coach at a time may stand to give instructions to the players on the court, but has no right to intervene in the match. During play, this assistant coach may give these instructions while standing or walking within the free zone in front of his/her team bench from the extension of the attack line up to the warm-up area, no closer than 1.75 meter (5'10") from the sideline and its extension, without disturbing or delaying the match.*

Only one assistant coach may stand at the same time during a set if a team has more than one assistant coach. There is no requirement to designate a "stand-up assistant coach". All assistant coaches are not permitted to talk to the referees or intervene in the match.

Other assistant coaches may give instructions to players on the court while remaining seated on the team bench.

The assistant coach has no right to intervene in the match.

Should the head coach have to leave his/her team, the assistant coach may, at the request of the team captain and with the authorization of the first referee, assume the head coach's functions.