

# WHEN IT COMES TO ASSISTANT OFFICIALS, SCHOOLS MUST GET “SET” FOR THE SEASON

ARTICLE FOR 2011-2012 NFHS VOLLEYBALL PRE-SEASON GUIDE

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Hosting a volleyball competition is an exciting opportunity for a high school and its athletes. The privilege of being able to host requires advanced planning and preparation in many areas. Host schools must get **SET** for the season. One of the most important responsibilities a school has is to **SELECT**, **EDUCATE** & **TRAIN** all of the assistant officials.

Assistant officials in a volleyball contest include the scorer, libero tracker, timer and line judges. Each play an extremely important role in the administration of a volleyball match, therefore, host schools must **SELECT** (in advance), individuals to fill these roles, **EDUCATE** them on the responsibilities and duties of the position they will assume, and **TRAIN** them to successfully fulfill their role.

## **READY, GET “SET”**

### **SELLECT**

An important part of the selection process is identifying the 4 W’s: What, Who, When, & Where.

**What is needed:** A volleyball match/court will need 5 assistant officials. To identify the number of assistant officials needed: 1. Determine the number of dates your school will host; 2. Look at the number of teams participating/courts to be used on each date (example: a dual match = 1 court; a quad (4 teams) = 2 courts).

**Who can fill these positions:** Find out if these positions must be filled by faculty (through negotiated agreement). If not, consider: parents, former players, other school athletes, area college students, faculty by departments, community leaders, etc.

**When & Where:** Once individuals are identified: 1. Find out their dates of availability; 2. Assign to specific positions and send information on the responsibilities and duties of the position(s) (see Educate & Train); 3. Set a master schedule and send to all assigned to work; 4. Notify (email, text) a reminder to individuals the week prior to their assigned date to work.

### **EDUCCATE**

The assistant officials play an extremely important role in the management of a volleyball match. In addition to training and practice in advance of the match, keys for success = understanding the position and its importance & knowledge of the position responsibilities and duties. Pages 22-25 of the NFHS Rule Book and pages 89-100 of the NFHS Case Book & Manual provide more detailed information regarding the responsibilities and duties of these positions.

**SCORER:**

- Pre-match: Report 20 minutes before match; Record team line-ups on score sheet.
- Positioning: Sit at Officials table, next to libero tracker.
- Primary responsibilities: Record score, substitutions, penalties and time-outs.

**TIMER:**

- Pre-Match: Report 20 minutes before match; Inspect timing device.
- Positioning: Sit at officials table, next to score keeper (if possible).
- Primary responsibilities: Run clock (3 minutes between sets, 60 second time-outs); Audio signals (as directed by R2); Put up score if using timing/scoring unit.

**LIBERO TRACKER:**

- Pre-Match: Report 20 minutes before match; Record team line-ups on tracking sheet.
- Positioning: Sit next to scorer at officials table.
- Primary responsibilities: Track/record the libero replacements and all substitutions.

**NOTE:** It is important for the tracker to understand who the libero player is – i.e., the libero player is a defensive specialist who plays on the back row only. This is the player who is wearing a uniform top different from his/her teammates.

**LINE JUDGES (2):**

- Pre-match: Report 20 minutes before match; attend meeting with referees (R1 & R2).
- Positioning: As assigned by R1.
- Primary responsibilities: Assist referees with calls (FLAT-foot faults, line calls, antenna calls, player touches) .

Several State Associations have tutorials and/or power points on their websites that outline the responsibilities and duties for assistant volleyball officials.

**TRAIN**

Would you want to be put in a position to do something in which you had no training or experience? I sure wouldn't. So let's treat people the way we would want to be treated. Give those you have identified to serve as an assistant official a fair chance to succeed in these important roles by organizing hands on training sessions.

**Key individuals to assist in your training endeavors are registered volleyball officials.** These officials (R1 and R2), while serving as the primary officials for the match, must understand and be able to perform the duties of all assistant officials.

Training opportunities include:

**Pre-season Team Scrimmage** – Invite/require all selected assistant officials to arrive 1 hour in advance of the scrimmage. Invite several primary officials in your area to attend and assist in conducting hands-on training in all areas. When it is scrimmage time, ask the primary officials to shadow the assistant officials and assist/mentor as needed.

**Official's Clinics** – Many official clinics offer training for assistant officials. Check to see if your state association conducts official clinics. Schools should be aware of these opportunities in their area and arrange to register assistant officials and transport, if needed.

**Mentoring Opportunities** – Ask veteran assistant officials to serve as mentors for new, up and coming assistants. For table officials, ask new officials to sit beside a veteran during a match to observe or reverse the roles and have veterans shadow new officials (i.e., assist them as they work). As for line judges, observing veteran line judges is an excellent way to prepare to work.

**READY, GET “SET”!** Well-managed volleyball events don't just happen. They require advanced planning and preparation by the host school. The time that schools devote to **Selecting, Educating & Training** assistant officials is key to the success of a home volleyball contest. So, prepare now to make the experience of “getting to serve” as an assistant volleyball official a memorable and rewarding opportunity.