

REFEREEING TECHNIQUES FOR BALL HANDLING

The aim of this section on the difficult area of ball handling is to outline techniques that an official might utilise to more correctly and consistently judge the players actions. These techniques seem to be generally inconsistently applied and in some observed cases poorly, during previous seasons. One area of immediate concern appears to be the consistency of calling double contact (strictly called) vs. carried ball (loosely called especially allowing prolonged carrying). Also the **adjustments in the referee assessment criteria for setting overhand with fingers** require very special attention.

It is hoped that these techniques will be applied during the 2010 season more closely and have some impact on the consistency and criteria applied to ball handling.

1. RULE 13 PLAYING THE BALL

- There are **various unique methods of setting** and passing the ball in Beach Volley. A REFEREE must understand the nature of these shots concentrating on their length (the emphasis quite correctly with the carried ball is the duration of the contact) and how technically correct or clean the contact was (the emphasis with the double contact is that this is not indicated by the spin of the ball but by the fact that a clear fault – time difference between the two hands that contact the ball – has occurred and that this is visible for the REFEREE).
- However, for the new “setting overhand” interpretation to successfully be implemented all REFEREES must be **consistent** in their application of the setting criteria between the carried ball and double contact (i.e.: must still call bad double contact faults – where two contacts can be clearly seen).
- REFEREE’S must try to apply both **consistency and criteria** uniformly to all areas of ball handling. It is not desirable officiating technique to call a fault (based on certain criteria) and then not later penalise a similar fault that is equal in criteria.
- REFEREE’S must definitely consider that a **clear fault has occurred** not indicated by the spin of the ball, sound, player’s actions, position etc. You must see the fault to penalize it (or receive information from other officials).
- **General points to consider in judging double contact (finger setting) are:**
 - **Spin** must not be used as a guide to calling a fault, i.e.: It is not correct to state that if it is spinning it **must** be a fault. It is possible for this to occur for other reasons
 - The position of the players before, during and after the action should **not** be considered as definitive. The key remains the **cleanness of the contact** as observed by the official(s)
 - The sound of the playing action should **not** be considered as indicating a fault or not a fault. The key remains the **cleanness of the contact** as observed by the official(s)
 - REFEREES should concentrate on the **time difference** between the two hands that contact the ball. This is the fundamental nature of a double contact. A difference in the timing of two hands that contact the ball that is excessive is called as a double contact
 - It is important that a REFEREE is consistent in their calling of double contact setting a clear **consistent criteria** that is called through out the match
 - A REFEREE, especially the 1st REFEREE may need to alter their **position** in order to gain a clear line of sight to see the player’s actions
 - It is possible that the REFEREE will not be able to clearly **see the action** of the player in playing the ball. In such cases it is good technique to use **collaboration** with your 2nd REFEREE
 - The 2nd REFEREE should work collaboratively with the 1st REFEREE indicating by use of small **hand signals**. This should be done as much as possible privately between the two REFEREES. A 2nd REFEREE should not insist that the 1st REFEREE assume the consequences of the signal.

- **General points to consider in judging carried balls (setting) are:**

- Technically in ALL hand setting actions the ball rests and also moves downward whilst in contact with the hands of the player. It is the quickness of this action that will determine if the "downwards motion" or the "length of the contact" is of **visible significance**, and consequently a fault.
- The key component of judging carried calls when setting remains the **duration** (length, time of) the contact. **Prolonged contact** allows players to gain an unfair advantage in the playing of the game and it should be strictly called as a fault
- The position of the players before, during and after the action should **not** be considered as definitive. The key remains the **cleanness of the contact** as observed by the official(s)
- The sound of the playing action should **not** be considered as indicating a fault or not a fault. The key remains the **cleanness of the contact** as observed by the official(s)
- REFEREES should concentrate on the **duration of the contact** with the ball. This is the fundamental nature of a carry. The duration of the ball contact that is excessive is called as a carry. This duration is defined as being the difference in time between the initial contact point and the release point
- It is important that a REFEREE is consistent in their calling of carries setting a clear **consistent criteria** that is called through out the match
- A REFEREE, especially the 1st REFEREE may need to alter their **position** in order to gain a clear line of sight to see the player's actions
- It is possible that the REFEREE will not be able to clearly **see the action** of the player in playing the ball. In such cases it is good technique to use **collaboration** with your 2nd REFEREE
- The 2nd REFEREE should work collaboratively with the 1st REFEREE indicating by use of small **hand signals**. This should be done as much as possible privately between the two REFEREES. A 2nd REFEREE should not insist that the 1st REFEREE assume the consequences of the signal.

- **General points to consider in judging hard driven balls are:**

- For judging hard driven balls the best indication is if the ball is received in a **defensive action**. The player's action should be a reaction and have no time to play the ball in another manner. If the defensive player had time to make a decision as to how to play the ball it was probably not a hard driven ball
- It does **not** include the **service**
- It occurs mostly after a spike (but not always)
- The **speed of the ball** is very important
- Does the receiving player have **time to change their technique?**
- It does not include roll shots, poked shots etc or balls that are **initially hard driven** but contact the net or block and the **speed slows down** significantly
- The ball can be **held slightly overhand**, thus not allowing balls to be held underhand
- If the player makes an **attacking shot (deliberately)** back over the net this is by definition not defensive in nature but offensive
- If the player is well **back from the net** and the attack is not very fast then the player clearly has time to react and change their technique
- Is the play in defence of a **ball that has been blocked?** It is possible that this situation may allow a ball to be defended as a hard driven ball.

- **Specific Notes for Hard driven balls**
 - This area of officiating is one of the most **difficult and complex** and requires close attention to the theory behind the rules and their application in the match situation
 - REFEREE'S should carefully remember that the **service reception is not** covered by this rule and therefore service reception should be judged under different criteria for double contact or carried ball especially
 - Additionally the rulebook previously described this situation as of a **hard spiked ball**. The use of the word spiked is slightly misleading as the ball can still be hard driven while not being spiked. The criteria above should be closely understood. The key elements are **speed of the ball, time between attack and defence (closely linked to distance) and nature of the contacts (contact technique)**
 - If the ball **touches slightly the block** the 2nd shot may be played with a slight hold but the REFEREE must use the same criteria as indicated above for the first contact.
- **Specific Notes for other areas of playing the ball**
 - A situation that must be examined very carefully, is the **simultaneous hold over the net (joust)** as it is not a fault (play continues) and after this contact the ball may land outside the court or contact the antennae
 - REFEREE'S must also be aware of this special situation regarding the **joust**. This is the only time that 4 contacts are allowed. There are 3 more contacts allowed after the simultaneous contact
 - REFEREE'S should initially establish for a **joust**, if there is a simultaneous contact or contacts that are distinctly separate and make decisions accordingly. REFEREES should also pay particular attention to the player's actions prior to the joust (especially the possibility of an attack hit fault)
 - REFEREES must also very carefully examine the case of a team after having played their 3 hits being involved in a joust situation. This should be called as 4 hits as the team that played the 3 hits should not be able to play the ball before the other team contact the ball (and a joust is a simultaneous contact).
 - Because the block counts as the first contact the 2nd REFEREE (and linejudges) can **signal** in front of their body or slightly to the side (depending on circumstances) if they notice a **touch** on the block (especially if it is small)
 - In collaboration **eye contact** between the officials is extremely important
 - If the rally continues and **4 contacts** occur then the 2nd REFEREE should signal but not in a confrontational or insisting manner to the 1st REFEREE.

2. RULE 17 ATTACK HIT

- **General points to consider in one handed attack (tips) are:**
 - **Contact type;** knuckle, poke, roll etc
 - **Fingers;** together or separate?
 - Does the contact occur prior to a simultaneous **block situation** or at the same time?
 - Did the player carry the ball into the block?
- **General points to consider in judging setting as an attack hit are:**
 - **Intention:** Was the player trying to set the ball up for an attack by the other player?
 - The **established body position** at the time of the attack
 - Did the ball travel in a **straight line from their body**?
 - The ball may travel **forwards or backwards** as long as the trajectory is in a straight line.
- **Specific Notes for attack hits are:**
 - An attack hit on the opponent's service when the ball is entirely above the top of the net is **not** allowed. This could happen with an extremely high sky service when it comes down in its path close to the net.

3. RULE 18 BLOCK

- **General points to consider in judging blocking are:**
 - A ball can possibly strike a player near the net when their intention was to move back to a position defending away from the net
 - **or** the ball could strike a player **below the height of the net**
 - **or** strike **multiple parts** of the body
 - **or** is it a **block or a jumping set** (possibility of an attack hit fault)
 - The **length of the contact** (hold, carry) is important in judging if a block is legal
 - REFEREE'S must be careful as to the **definition of close to the net**, and higher than the top of the net
 - There is no requirement as to **trajectory** (direction that the ball takes) of the blocked ball after it is blocked.

4. RULE 25 FIRST REFEREE

- **Collaboration** is very important for all officials, as the game is very open in nature with only 4 players on the court. Excellence in decision making as a team is very important. The other members of your REFEREEING team may have vital information in making the final decision correctly.
- A REFEREE should **not** make all decisions themselves without collaboration esp. as 1st REFEREE.
- REFEREE'S should **involve the linejudges** (acknowledging / watching their signals) even if the REFEREE'S already know the correct decision. This ensures they remain part of your REFEREEING Corp or team.

5. RULE 26 SECOND REFEREE

- It is important that the 2nd REFEREE **communicate constantly** with the 1st REFEREE especially on matters that the 1st REFEREE may be unsighted on.
- Note that the 2nd REFEREE may signal the ball as being **"in"** especially if the 1st REFEREE is potentially unsighted as to whether the ball has contacted the playing surface (sand).
- **Position** is very important for the 2nd REFEREE in allowing the 1st REFEREE to see them and the information that they wish to convey to the 1st REFEREE. Many 2nd REFEREE'S remain too close to the pole when signalling to the 1st REFEREE and they then can not see this signal. One good technique to move directly to the sides away from the pole so that you are in a clear line of vision to the 1st REFEREE. This will improve collaboration (or ensure that some signals to each other are not missed).

REFEREEING TECHNIQUES TO REDUCE MATCH DELAYS

The aim of this section on improvement in officiating technique is to look at current techniques (and some changed) to deal with delays to the match. These techniques seem to be generally inconsistently applied and in some observed cases poorly. It is hoped that these points will be applied during the 2009 season more closely and have some impact on the duration of the match while this being one of the main emphasis for the current season's officiating.

1. FIRST REFEREE

- Between rallies: Referees must insist on players between rallies as much as possible moving directly to their position for service or reception.
- Delays between rallies: Referee will only allow a delay between rallies if rejecting it would represent substantial hazard, danger or threat to the safety of the player or decrease the image / presentation of the match. The spirit of the FIVB's 12 seconds guideline must be kept especially with regard to players not delaying the time between rallies by altering lines, excessive communication to their partner, use of towels, wiping of glasses etc.
- Explanation of decisions: (the following is the usual pattern to be followed)
Step 1: Referee must only accept 1 request for explanation of the rules per rally per team,
Step 2: then reply explaining it only once using correct English Technical Terminology which may as appropriate be accompanied by hand signals,
Step 3: then ask if they wish to protest, and
Step 4: then request the players to continue the match. The entire explanation of the decision should take 20 seconds, maximum.
Note: Failure to communicate effectively in English a decision was identified as a major source of problems hence delays.
- Verbal warnings: Referee should give verbal warnings of 1st instances of various delays of obvious nature. Repetitions of individual type of delay or continuous different delays should be penalized with delay warnings or penalties as appropriate.
- Linejudge position: Referee should check that linejudge has between rallies checked condition of lines under their supervision.
- Coaching: Referee to issue verbal warning to the team(s) concerned immediately if they believe that illegal coaching is occurring (1st instance), and immediately refer the situation to the Technical Supervisor.
- Checking of Ball Mark: The 1st Referee may check ball marks and to do this process quickly and efficiently (may involve linejudge). It is important that the players are kept away from the immediate area so that no confusion or influence can be made concerning the decision. Clear communication of the decision is important. The 1st referee should control this process with neutrality, fairness and clarification of a decision utmost in mind.
- Communication: Referee should adopt technique of continuously monitoring other officials between every rally especially at the immediate end of a rallies conclusion, and during the rally if there is some element of doubt (e.g.: near antennae). More use should be made of non-verbal signals (4 hits, double contact, touch etc) especially during / after the rally by the 2nd referee. Referees should more clearly acknowledge other official's signals. Additionally referees should feel that it is acceptable technique to ask another official to repeat their signal if requested or to offer any relevant information on the circumstance that occurred in the match.
Note: Failure to see or acknowledge other official's signals was identified as a major source of problems hence delays.

- Screening: Referee must clearly check before authorization of service that no screen exists and is being signalled for correction by the reception team or that the screen has been corrected by the service team player with no resultant new screening occurring.
- Request for # of Timeouts: The referee should allow only a small number of requests of this nature and be aware that the player may be using this legal request as a means to create a delay. If the referee considers this request excessive, they may reject it and consider issuing a delay penalty or warning (as appropriate).
- Between 2nd and 3rd sets: Referee must conduct the coin toss as quickly as possible, while also ensuring that all players and match officials are ready to commence the next set within the allocated 1 minute interval.

2. SECOND REFEREE

- Timing of Timeout and Technical Timeout: Referee should commence their timing of timeout from the time of the completion of the signal (TO or TTO), when it is clear that both teams have seen this signal, not when the last player leaves the court. This involves common sense in when to start the timing, allowing both teams to clearly understand that play has finished and the Timeout or Technical Timeout started.
Note: The length of time allowed to players in these circumstances has been identified as a major cause of match delay.
- Checking of Scorer: Referee must be more active in checking the Scorer in recording of Timeouts, Technical Timeouts, Court Switches and Sanctions etc, and then verifying this recording by hand signal to the 1st referee.
- Checking of Score: Referee should check that all scoreboards match each other preferably the small scorers table first and then all other match scoreboards. The next rally should not take place until all scoreboards have the points updated. Referees should remember the score themselves at all times utilising appropriate counting techniques. Referees should try as much as possible to deal with problems with the Scorer (e.g.: wrong score) quietly and efficiently between rallies and signal to the 1st referee when they are ready to recommence play.
- Checking of Server: Referee should between each rally check that as the server moves into position that the score table has displayed a number paddle and that it corresponds to this player about to serve.
- At the end of Timeout and Technical Timeout: Referee should at blowing of whistle at end of TO or TTO, be active in watching the teams in the return to the court. If a team does not respond by moving towards the court, a 2nd whistle should be blown 5 seconds later. If a team does not respond after this, (5 seconds) the 2nd referee should signal to the 1st referee of their belief that a delay has occurred.
- Conveying that a team has no more Timeouts to call: Referees must at the completion of each team's timeout (within a set) clearly indicate to the team that they have exhausted their allowable timeout and that they are allowed no more for that set.
- Coaching: 2nd Referee must be active in informing 1st referee if they believe coaching is taking place.
- Between 1st and 2nd sets: Referee must convey decisions of teams as soon as possible to the scorer within the allocated 1 minute interval time.
- Between the 2nd and 3rd sets: Assist the 1st referee in organising the captains for the coin toss and ensuring that the scorer has the decision of the teams following the coin toss.

3. PLAYERS

- Cleaning: Players are individually responsible for cleaning of glasses, body or uniform. No use of auxiliary official's uniforms without permission of the 1st referee will be allowed. Players may use available towels **at the immediate end of a rally** but this is at the discretion of the 1st referee. This is a privilege not a right of the players. The referee(s) have the right to reject or refuse this request asking the players instead to resume the match.
- At service: Players should generally proceed directly to serve. Scorer and / or 2nd Referee will notify them if they are incorrect. Players should check the number paddle, as they are moving towards the service zone.
- Request of # of Timeouts: Players should if there is a system being utilized, look at the scorer's table for their number of timeouts used. Repetition of requests for # of Timeouts will be regarded as a delay and penalized accordingly.
- Court condition and equipment: It is the responsibility of linejudges under the control of the referees to ensure that the lines are in good condition. Players have the right to draw the referee's attention to any equipment or court condition that represents a danger to the players (not merely an inconvenience).

4. LINEJUDGE

- Lines Condition: Linejudges must between each rally check the condition of the lines. Two lines if two linejudges are utilized and one if four linejudges are utilized. The lines must be in a correct position before the next rally commences.
- Checking of Ball Mark: Whenever checking a ball mark the 1st referee may request a / the linejudge to show him / her the ball mark or to explain any information previously given (signals etc.).
- Repetition of signal: Linejudges may be requested at the end of the rally to repeat a signal previously made or to convey information on something that occurred during the match to the referee.
- Holding the signal for a longer time: In general terms a linejudge should hold their signal until that signal has been clearly seen by the match officials (and usually acknowledged). This may involve continuing the signal for a prolonged period during a rally etc.

5. SCORER

- Number paddle: Scorer must immediately after the completion of the rally raise a number paddle to signify the correct next server. This number paddle must be clearly visible, and be held until the player has been authorized to serve or clearly acknowledges seeing the paddle.
- Wrong Server: The scorer must immediately indicate to both the players and officials that the wrong player is about to serve and indicate the correct player. This can be done even if the player has not reached the service zone.
- Scoresheet error: The scorer should as quickly as possible stop the match if for any reason they believe that the scoresheet is in error. Errors are compounded by the scorer delaying the stopping of the match.

- # Of Timeouts: Scorer should as soon as the Timeout is called confirm which team called the timeout. When the players have returned to their designate players seats they should communicate to the 1st and 2nd referee how many timeouts each team has had 1 or 0. If possible, this should clearly be visible to all participants on the scoreboards.
Note: Within the current rules players can legally request the number of timeouts they have used multiple times during a match creating on occasions considerable delays. This should be clearly classified as a delay.
- Between sets: Scorer must ensure that all required information is received as soon as possible and that they are ready to commence the new set.

6. OTHER (AUXILIARY OFFICIALS)

- Raking and watering: This is authorized only between games unless a danger exists to players. Raking and watering is modified to not be for the whole court but concentrates on net, service reception, lines and service position areas (except if time permits e.g.: Final day).
- Sand Levelling during intervals: During intervals a quick raking of the court may occur focussing on the lines and the area under the net.

7. SUPERVISORS (REFEREEING AND TECHNICAL)

- Injury: Supervisors and properly accredited medical staff must be able to be communicating as quickly as possible with referees if an injury occurs. Officials should know the location of communication equipment such as walkie-talkies and location of key personnel, staff rooms etc.
- Protest Protocols: Supervisors must ensure at all times that, they can be contacted to action a protest (or injury). This can be managed through such apparatus as a walkie-talkie. Referees should also know the physical location of the Supervisors.

REFEREEING TECHNIQUES FOR ASSESSING NET CONTACT

The aim of this section is to provide referees with a standardised method by which to deal with the situation of the net contact assessment – new wording/interpretation for the Rule 15. PLAYER AT THE NET

1. RULE 15.3 WORDING

- Contact with the net is not a fault, unless it is made during the action of playing the ball or interferes with play. Incidental contact of the hair is never a fault. Some actions of playing the ball may include actions in which the players do not actually touch the ball.
- Once the player has hit the ball, he/she may touch the post, rope or any other object outside the total length of the net provided that this action does not interfere with play.
- When the ball is driven into the net and causes it to touch an opponent, no fault is committed.

2. REFEREE GUIDELINES WORDING FOR POINT 15.1

- We draw attention to the text of the contact of the player with the net (Rule 15.3), emphasizing in particular the wording of Rule 15.3.1. Contact with the net or antenna (Rule 15.4.3) is not a fault, unless it is made during the action of playing the ball or interferes with play. The action of playing the ball is any action of players close to the ball attempting to play it.

3. BASIC DEFINITIONS

- The wording of the Guidelines while clearly stating (such as the Volleyball guidelines do currently) that “the action of playing the ball is any action of players close to the ball attempting to play it”, basically rule out of the fault zone any contacts with the net that occur while the player is distant from the ball (see couple of possible examples below):
 - blocker hits the net with his shoulder after landing while pulling out from the net to start his action in order to set the ball defended by his team-mate into the middle of the court;
 - a player hits the net with his head (or shoulder) while crossing under the net to retrieve a ball crossing to the opponents free zone.

4. DEFINITION FOR “IN THE ACTION OF PLAYING THE BALL”

- Players are considered to be “in the action of playing the ball” when they are judged to be *close/near to* and *attempting* to make a play on the ball and this from the *beginning* of their action towards the ball until its *completion*, meaning that the action is completed at the moment the concerned player regains balance or starts a new move.

5. DEFINITION FOR “INTERFERING WITH PLAY”

- Net faults by players, who are not “in the action of playing the ball”, but “interfere with play”:
 - are those that are judged as causing a *distraction*...
 - and/or judged as causing a change in the *integrity of the net*...
 - thus, effecting or altering the play result.
- Team member actions can be considered as interfering with play if they involve:
 - obstructing opponents in their legitimate playing actions;
 - creating clear unfair advantage to their own team, or clear unfair disadvantage to the opponent team;
 - disturbing or damaging equipment within the playing area causing an interruption to the rally.

6. POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

- setter hits the net with the shoulder while setting the partner / FAULT
- setter hits the net with the chest (or shoulder) after releasing the ball but in the continuation of the prior setting action / FAULT
- setter while setting the ball to his partner touches the net. The ball is attacked by his partner far away crossing the net not close to the setter action / FAULT
- blocker hits the net with his shoulder after landing while pulling out from the net to start a new action in order to set the ball defended by his team-mate into the middle of the court/NO FAULT
- blocker hits the net with his shoulder after landing while pulling out from the net to regain position / NO FAULT
- blocker hits the net while moving laterally to gain blocking position. No block action has been completed in the sequence of this action / NO FAULT
- blocker hits the net while moving laterally to gain blocking position. A block has been attempted in the sequence of this action / NO FAULT
- blocker hits the net with the hands/arms while starting his/her jump for a blocking attempt while the ball being attacked by the opponents. No block has been completed / FAULT
- an attacker after landing and in the immediate sequence of the attacking action loses balance and hits the net / FAULT
- while faking a set to his partner a player deliberately attacks the opponent court (no infraction to the specific regulations). Simultaneously, his partner in his attempted attack action in front and close to the ball hits the net / FAULT
- while faking a set to his partner a player deliberately attacks the opponent court (no infraction to the specific regulations). Simultaneously, his partner in his attempted attack action, in front but not close/near to where the ball crosses the net to the opponent court, hits the net / NO FAULT
- a player hits the net with his head (or shoulder) while crossing under the net to retrieve a ball crossing to the opponents free zone / NO FAULT
- a player hits the net with his head (or shoulder) while crossing under the net back to his own court after having retrieved the ball that had crossed to the opponents free zone / NO FAULT