NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE

HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

Relaxed Hair Adornment, Uniform Rules Among Changes For High School Volleyball in 2022-23

Hair adornments such as beads are now legal in high school volleyball as long as they are securely fastened and do not endanger other players. This rule change, along with eliminating manufacturer reference size and quantity restrictions on uniform bottom waistbands, headline new rules adopted for the 2022-23 season.

In all, seven rules changes were recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Volleyball Rules Committee at its annual meeting January 16-18. All rules changes were reviewed and approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“Most of this year’s rules changes deal with the administrative side of things. The NFHS Volleyball Rules Committee really feels like the sport is in a great place,” said Jo Auch, assistant executive director of the South Dakota High School Activities Association and chair of the NFHS Volleyball Rules Committee. “The two changes of note relax restrictions on hair adornments such as beads, as well as the number of manufacturer logos on uniform bottoms. We’ve seen some different trends in these areas that helped lead to the changes we made. We feel pretty positive about them and believe coaches, officials and players will, too.”

To align officials’ rulings on flat barrettes and other hair adornments, the Volleyball Rules Committee eliminated size restrictions of 2 inches or less that were previously cited in Rule 4-1-6. The rule now allows for bobby pins, flat clips, flat barrettes and other adornments to legally be worn in the hair as long they do not present a safety hazard to the player, teammates or opponents.

The adoption of changes to Rule 4-2-1f presents student-athletes with the opportunity to wear uniform bottoms featuring multiple manufacturer logos, trademarks or references that exceed 2¼ inches on waistbands. Oftentimes, student-athletes are responsible for supplying their own uniform bottom. Given current trends in the sport of volleyball, the rules committee recognized the lack of uniform bottoms available to student-athletes without substantial manufacturer representation.

“The Volleyball Rules Committee took another step in creating a more inclusive environment within the sport by relaxing restrictions on hair adornments,” said Lindsey Atkinson, NFHS director of sports and liaison to the Volleyball Rules Committee. “It was extremely important to the rules committee to create rules language that supported diversity of hair trends while minimizing the risk of injury to the athlete, teammates and opponents.”

Another focal point of the committee was the alignment of Rule 5-6-3b, e, and Rule 5-7-3e, addressing scorer and libero notification procedures. The committee's actions eliminate the use of the sounding device when an improper server is used and aligns the notification to that of a discrepancy in the score, at which point the second referee is notified during the first dead ball.

Other changes adopted by the Volleyball Rules Committee include additional allowances for time-out and substitution-related requests by a head coach, assistant coach or playing captain.

Changes to Rule 11-2-1 now allow for verbalized requests for a time-out on a dead ball by the head coach or playing captain prior to the first referee's signal for the ensuing serve. This allows the second referee to grant a time-out during a dead ball without visual signal when heard verbalized by a head coach or captain and not require the visual signal.

The introduction of new language to Rule 12-2-5a clarifies that assistant coaches may ask the second referee for the number of their team's substitutions during a dead-ball situation. Previously, the rule allowed for assistant coaches to review the accuracy of the score, verify the number of time-outs, request the serving order of the assistant coach's team, and verify the proper server for the opponent.

A complete listing of the volleyball rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on "Activities & Sports" at the top of the home page and select "Volleyball."

According to the most recent NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, volleyball is the second-most popular sports for girls (trailing track and field) with 452,808 participants in 16,572 schools nationwide. In addition, there are 63,563 boys participating in the sport at 2,692 schools, and 25 states conduct state championships in boys volleyball.