



## Volleyball – Sport Rules Modifications, Interpretations, and Points of Emphasis

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Volleyball dated June 2016 will be in effect for the 2017-2018 SONC program year. This document is intended to be used in conjunction with USA Volleyball (USAV) rules, and SOI rules. Therefore, those rules are not repeated here but they will be enforced unless in direct conflict to SONC modifications.

### Appropriate Attire and Equipment

- Team Uniforms
  - Jerseys should be long (recommended) or short-sleeved shirts of similar style (exception=jersey of the Libero player).
  - Per USAV rules, jerseys must be numbered (1-99) and centered on the front and back. Numbers should be of contrasting color to the jersey and clearly visible (at least 6" high and centered on back and 4" high on front)
  - Shorts should be of similar color
  - All types of denim material are not permitted for competition
  - Shoes: Light and pliable shoes with rubber or leather soles without heels (if soles are black then they must be "non-scuff" shoes)
- Individual Skills Uniforms
  - Athletes competing in individual skills must adhere to the same basic standards as described under team uniforms. Jersey numbers are not applicable and unnecessary for athletes competing in individual skills.
  - Shoes: Light and pliable shoes with rubber or leather soles without heels (if soles are black then they must be "non-scuff" shoes)
- Traditional volleyball (for traditional team competition)
  - Regulation size (25.6 to 26.4" in circumference) and weight (9-10 oz)
  - Inflated to 4.3-4.6 lbs
- Modified volleyball (for modified team and individual skills competition)
  - The size of the modified ball should be no larger than 32 inches in circumference and weigh no more than 8 oz. It is lighter in weight and larger in size than a traditional volleyball.
  - SONC will use the yellow, lighter, oversized, Mikasa VT-2 volleyball for modified team and individual skills competition.
- For more information on players equipment and uniform standards visit the [USA Volleyball](#).

### Competition Modifications and Interpretations

#### All Team Competition

- Touching any part of the net while playing the ball is a fault<sup>1</sup>
- Modified Serve for traditional team play and Unified Sports<sup>2</sup>
  - Each team may have two modified servers, but may designate only one player on the court at a time as a modified server
  - Coaches should indicate modified server with an "M" on the line up sheet and team roster. This modification of play moves the service line three meters (9 feet, 10 inches) closer to the net for teams with weak servers.
  - If a player can serve from the end line, they should do so.
- Coaches must play all athletes on the roster during the match.
- The court size and net height will be the same for all team competition.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SOI Rule 4.4.3.3

<sup>2</sup> SONC modification to SOI section 4.4.2.5

<sup>3</sup> SONC modification of SOI section 3.4.1. Court size is 18 meters by 9 meters.

- A coach is permitted to make a request for substitution. This request will be recognized by the referee even if the player has not yet entered the substitution zone.
- Games are called sets. Matches are the best 2 out of 3 sets. The 3<sup>rd</sup> set (if needed) is played to 15 points.
- During the third set, teams will not switch courts at 8 points.<sup>4</sup>
- For divisioning purposes at all levels, once a server has scored 3 consecutive points, his/her team shall rotate to the next server and continue to serve. After divisioning, this will only apply to Unified and Modified play for the remainder of Summer Games.<sup>5</sup>
- Teams may play with two Liberos per match. For Unified Sports teams, Liberos could be athletes or both could be Unified Partners or there could be one of each, as long as each Libero exchange is athlete for athlete or partner for partner. Only one Libero is allowed on the court at any one time. Liberos will not be allowed to serve.
- For minor misconduct violations, a verbal warning is issued first through the team captain by the 1<sup>st</sup> referee. After a warning, a yellow card is issued for the next offense to the team member(s) involved which will serve as the team's formal warning. Any following offense will result in a red card, which results in a penalty, or a yellow and red card shown together, which results in expulsion from the set, or a red and yellow card shown separately which results in disqualification from the match.<sup>6</sup>
- Jewelry is allowed as long as it would not cause injury or give an advantage. Some examples of jewelry that would NOT be allowed; long dangling necklaces, and earrings. This decision is ultimately left up to the 1<sup>st</sup> referee.
- At Summer Games, team quota slots will be allocated on a random-draw basis. This means that a local program may not be represented in that team sport (i.e. Jones County may not get their one team slot because Wake County had two team slots randomly drawn instead). This is done to ensure that all teams no matter from what size program they come will have an opportunity to be selected.
- Any protest involving the judgment of the officials will not be considered.
- Only the Head Coach may protest and must do so immediately prior to the authorization of the next service. If the protest involves the last point of the set, the protest must be filed within the first 60 seconds of the interval between sets. If the final point of the match is disputed, the protest must be recorded within the first 60 seconds after the final point of the match is scored.<sup>7</sup>
- For a protest to be considered it must be (1) a misinterpretation of a playing rule, (2) a failure of the referee to apply the correct rule to a given situation, or (3) a failure to charge the correct penalty or sanction for a given fault.

#### Modified Volleyball Team Competition

- Service: The modified service line is 3 meters (9ft, 10in) closer to the net.
- Coaching: Modified team coaches will be allowed to coach from both sides of the court – the team bench side and the side opposite.
- For more Modified Team rules, please reference SOI rules, Section 6.

#### Unified Sports Volleyball Team Competition

- During competition, the lineup shall never exceed three athletes and three partners at any time. After the match begins, only the following line up is allowed:
  - 3 athletes and 3 partners, or
  - 3 athletes and 2 partners (in the event of injury or illness).
  - Failure to adhere to the required ratios results in a forfeit.

<sup>4</sup> SONC modification to SOI Section 4.4.5.1.

<sup>5</sup> SONC modification to SOI Section 5.3.2.

<sup>6</sup> SOI rule section 4.3.3.4.

<sup>7</sup> Clarification of Article 1, Section 8.3

- For example, a team can start with three athletes and three partners on the court, but if one of the partners becomes injured or ill and cannot continue, and the team does not have a partner substitute, the coach could substitute an athlete or play short one Unified Partner.
- Each team shall have an adult, non-playing coach responsible for the lineup and conduct of the team during competition.
- Once a server has scored three consecutive points, his/her team shall rotate to the next server and continue to serve.<sup>8</sup>

### **Special Notices**

- All athletes must participate in a divisioning round to participate in state level competition.
- Rosters may change from training roster to registration, but must remain consistent after games registration.
- Team quota slots will be allocated on a random-draw basis. This means that a local program may not be represented in that team sport (i.e. Jones County may not get their one team slot because Wake County had two team slots randomly drawn instead). This is done to ensure that all teams no matter from what size program they come will have an opportunity to be selected.
- Additional competition opportunities are being researched for Unified Sports. This is being done in anticipation of potentially removing all Unified competition from state-level events starting in the 2018-2019 program year.

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<sup>8</sup> SOI Section 5.3.2.