

Metro Volleyball Conference Rules

1. WIAA Rules

All WIAA volleyball rules apply to all grades with the following exceptions/clarifications:

A. Serving

- All players must serve from behind the end line and within the sidelines.
- EXCEPTION 4th grade boys and 4th and 5th grade GIRLS – Modified Serving Line
 - The modified serving line is optional for 4th grade boys and 4th girls playing on a 4th grade team and **5th grade girls playing on a 5th grade team only.**
 - *The modified serving line is 24 feet from the net and extends from one side of the court to the other parallel to the regular serving line.*
 - *The modified serving line shall be marked on the right side of the court from the sideline extending 10 feet into the court.*
 - 4th grade boys and 4th and 5th grade girls using the modified serving line, must start their serve in front of, and NOT touching, the regular serving end line.
 - 4th grade boys and 4th and 5th grade girls choosing to use the regular serving end line, will follow normal serving rules and be charged with a foot fault if their foot contacts the regular serving end line at the moment of the serve.
 - 4th grade boys and 4th and 5th grade girls using the modified serving line are not allowed to jump serve. The players feet must stay on the floor.
 - **NOTE: this does not apply to 4th grade boys playing on a 5th grade team, 5th grade boys playing down on a 4th grade team, 5th grade girls playing on a 6th grade team, or 6th grade girls playing down on a 5th grade team.**
- Players on the serving team are not permitted to raise their hands above their heads during service until the ball has passed beyond the net.

B. Players

- Four players are needed to start a set. When beginning the set with 4 players, they will occupy positions 1, 2, 3, and 4 on the court. When beginning the set with 5 players, they will occupy positions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 on the court. Once a 5th or 6th player becomes available, they must be put in at an open position in the lineup submitted by the coach prior to each set.
- There is a loss of serve but no penalty/point shall be assessed for the phantom server.
- All 7th and 8th grade teams may designate up to two liberos. If designating one libero, they must have a minimum of 7 players present. If designating two liberos, they must have a minimum of 8 players present. Only one libero can be in the game at a time. When a team designates two liberos and one is injured/ill, a new libero may be re-designated. When a team designates two liberos and one is disqualified, the team must continue with one libero. Liberos may change from set to set.

C. Coaches

- All coaches must be in compliance with the Archdiocesan certification requirements.
- Per the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Athletics Policy Manual: *Head coaches must be at least 21 years of age; assistant coaches must at least 18 years of age and a high school graduate. High school students age 18 or younger may assist with coaching activities under the direction of the head coach. No high school student shall have any supervisory responsibilities.*
- Only one coach may stand at any given time during a game. This can be the head coach or an assistant coach and can alternate throughout the match provided only one coach is standing during play. This privilege may be revoked. Additional coaches must remain seated except: during a time out, attending to an injured player, spontaneously reacting to an outstanding play by a player on their team, or requesting a substitution or a time out.
- Assistant coaches may stand during a dead ball situation and ask the referee to verify the number of time-outs and/or the number of substitutions used by their team.



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- During play, the coach that is standing shall be no closer to the court than 6 feet from the sideline and the sideline extended, and in the coaching zone defined as from the attack line (10-foot line) to any distance beyond the end line desired. *A coach cannot stand in the substitution zone.* If there is not 6 feet available between the chairs and sideline, the coach may stand directly in front of the chairs, *but not in the substitution zone.*

D. Player Uniforms

- All team uniform tops with the exception of the libero shall be like colored/identical. Uniforms shall have a number on the upper front and back of the uniform top. The number on each jersey shall not be a duplicate of any other player's jersey on the roster. The number shall not be more than two digits. Numbers from "0-99" and "00-99" are allowed.
- Uniforms must be worn as manufacturer intended. Uniform tops cannot be tied off in front, on the side, in back, etc. unless the knot is completely tucked into the uniform bottoms.
- Multiple styles of uniform bottoms may be worn by teammates including shorts, spandex, pants, or skirts. While it is recommended uniform bottoms be similar or alike in color, it is NOT required they match.
- The libero shall wear a uniform top that is immediately recognized from all angles as being in clear contrast to and distinct from other members of the team. Note: For Metro Volleyball Conference games, this could be any opposing-colored t-shirt or uniform shirt available. A contrasting color pinney may also be worn in place of a contrasting uniform. *When designating one libero, the libero uniform does not require a number. When designating two liberos, the liberos' uniform tops require different numbers or must be different colors.*
- The libero shall have with them a regular team uniform top, like colored/identical to that of the other team members, whenever playing, in the event of an injury and/or need for an exceptional substitution thereby eliminating the libero position. The number on that jersey shall not be a duplicate of any other player on the team.
- Visible garments (t-shirts, body suits, and other similar garments) of any color may be worn under the uniform top but must be tucked into the uniform bottoms.
- All approved player equipment must be unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production and worn as manufacturer intended.
- Removal of any part of the uniform, top or bottom, by any player while in the playing area/gym is unsporting conduct (yellow card for the first offense or red card for any subsequent offense) and shall be assessed to the coach.

E. Balls

- Game balls must be a WIAA regulation ball and bear the NFHS authenticating mark.
- Game balls may be either solid white or a maximum combination of 3 colors (with each panel being a solid color) and of which at least one third of the panels shall be solid white.
- The Molten VB-U12 will be used by 4th and 5th grade boys, and 4th, 5th and 6th grade girls. The NFHS authenticating mark will not be found on the Molten VB-U12 balls.

****NOTE: Boys' teams grades 6-8 will use the V5m5000-3NFHS Molten Flistatec stamped ball (red, white, blue) beginning with the 2027 season.**

2. PLAYING AREA

Players are allowed to play a ball over the bench, bleachers or similar areas as long as they have 1 foot in contact with the floor when playing the ball. They are allowed to follow through into the bench or bleachers after the play.

3. TEAM/PLAYERS



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- A. Players must attend the school or Christian Formation program at the school which the team represents.
- B. **Players can only be listed on one roster per sport for the season.**
- C. No player may be added to the roster without the consent of the League Director. Failure to do so will result in the forfeiture of all matches in which the added player participated.
- D. Each team must submit a team roster to the Metro Volleyball Conference one week before the start of the first match. The roster form provided by the Metro Volleyball Conference must be completed in its entirety and signed by the *sponsoring* school's coach, athletic director, AND their principal/pastor. Rosters including the names of players participating in the parish religious education program must also be signed by the parish Director of Religious Education. Teams shall not play, but will forfeit matches until completed rosters are submitted to the League Director. (Refer to Metro Volleyball Conference Bylaws Article IV Eligibility, Section 9.)
- E. A student, with school/parish and parent approval, may participate in more than one school/parish-sponsored sport in the same season, for example cross country and volleyball in the fall. If a school/parish allows this, it must allow all students the opportunity, not just one or two, and it must work out how conflicts between practices and/or games will be resolved to avoid forfeits for either team. Refer to Metro Volleyball Conference Bylaws, Article IV, Section 7.
- F. **Only teams comprised of players representing a single school/parish and in existence as a team during the entire sport season are eligible to participate in any school or parish sponsored tournaments.**
- G. If a school is combining two grades to make up one volleyball team, they will play at the upper grade level.
- H. In NO instance will more than two players be allowed to play down, or more than one of the two be allowed on the playing floor at the same time. If a team is allowed to play a student(s) down, all opposing teams shall be advised of the names and numbers of the players. **The request will be granted only as a last resort, specifically an inability of the student(s) to play up a grade or merge with a nearby program.** The request should first be made to the League Director, who will forward the request to the Archdiocese Office for Schools with its recommendation. The Office for Schools will make the final determination.
- I. A parish/school entering more than one team in one grade must have an annual tryout to ensure the proper distribution of talent.

4, 5, & 6 grades: 4, 5, & 6 grades: a parish/school which enters more than one team in one grade must divide the talent *equally* based on an annual tryout. Standings will be monitored by the League Board to ascertain equality of teams from the same parish/school.

7 & 8 grades: a parish/school which enters more than one team in one grade must divide the talent into an "A" team and "B" team(s). The "A" team must clearly have superior talent when compared to the "B" team(s). The division of talent must be based on the annual tryout and easily recognizable.
- J. **The league will use its discretion to place a team in the "A" or "B" division using standings from the previous year.**
- K. Playing Time is to be determined as per the direction of the Milwaukee Archdiocese. Refer to the *Archdiocese of Milwaukee Athletics Policy Manual*, 6145.2 Elementary School and Parish –



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Based Athletic Programs; “Practices and Games”. Also referenced in the *Metro Volleyball Conference Bylaws, Article V, General Rules, Section 4.*

4. CONDUCT

- A. All gyms will have an adult gym supervisor (age 21+) present on site and available *in the gym at all times* during all league play. The gym supervisor’s specific roles and responsibilities include those related to monitoring conduct of players and spectators. *Refer to the Metro Volleyball Conference Bylaws, Article V, Section 5.*
- B. Coaches and players will not interfere with play. This includes berating officials, line judges, scorekeepers, and other players. The referee’s ruling on all judgment calls is final. Judgement calls by a line judge or referee CANNOT be disputed. Violation of this rule will result in a yellow card warning, red card penalty point, and/or red and yellow cards together which are immediate disqualification for the match and an ejection from the gym could result thereafter. Referees have total authority on match conduct.
- C. The use of artificial noisemakers including bells, whistles, horns, etc. is prohibited from being used at any time.
- D. If the entire team or an individual player is found guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct, whether committed on the court or in the building, the team or player will be penalized. If the infraction is severe enough, the team may be dropped from the league.
- E. **Only rostered players, assigned coaches, and a team high school assistant(s) who consistently attends team practices and matches may occupy the team’s benches.** A team assistant is defined in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Athletics Policy Manual: “*High school students age 18 or under, may assist with coaching activities under the direction of the head coach. No high school student may have any supervisory responsibilities.*” No other child, student, or adult is permitted on the team bench at any time.
- F. It is an unsporting conduct violation if coaches, non-playing teammates, or team assistants use props on the bench during celebrations.

5. THE MATCH

- A. Social media practices such as using social media apps, videotaping games, etc. are only allowed if they meet the Archdiocese [Social Media & Digital Communication Policy](https://intranet.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding/Social-Networking-Policy.htm) found on the [Social Networking Policy](https://intranet.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding/Social-Networking-Policy.htm) page of the Milwaukee Archdiocese website. (<https://intranet.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding/Social-Networking-Policy.htm>)
- B. Teams must be ready to play within five minutes after the scheduled time for the first set and another five minutes for the second set, or the team will forfeit the match. If a team arrives after the forfeit time has expired, it will be up to the referee to determine if the time remaining allows for any or all of the missed sets to be played. If the decision is made to allow part or all missed sets to be played, it is then up to the opposing team to determine if the sets will be played or forfeited. Both coaches must sign the scoresheet for the approval. If a team forfeits the match, they will be charged \$25 for the first instance, \$50.00 for the second forfeit, and \$100.00 for each additional forfeit thereafter for the duration of the season.
- C. Written **Metro Volleyball Conference** line-up sheets must be submitted to scorer’s table prior to each set and remain at the scorer’s table. **The Metro Volleyball line up sheet is required.** Players must be listed in their proper serving order, the first person to serve on the team being listed as #1.
- D. One of the six starting players on the lineup sheet or the libero shall be designated as the playing/floor captain. A “C” is placed next to the player’s number on the line up sheet. This is



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the *only player* who may communicate with the referee. If this player is replaced by a sub, the coach shall designate a player as captain who remains as such until substituted for or until the original playing captain returns to the set.

- E. Teams in all grades will play up to 25 points rally scoring for sets 1 & 2. Set 3 will be played to 15 points even if a team wins sets 1 and 2. There must be a two-point difference to win a set with no cap. A match will consist of three sets. Standings will be kept by matches won. Ties in standings will be resolved by the following winner of the match between the two teams which are tied. If tie is not broken then the tie remains.
- F. Teams playing on their home court may choose a side of the court when they arrive for warm-ups. The referee will determine a home team in the event that both teams are away teams.
- G. If a referee is not in the gym approx. 10 min before game time, it is acceptable for another person familiar with the process to begin warm-ups (i.e. Gym Supervisor, Athletic Director, Volleyball Coordinator). The gym supervisor shall follow procedure and first contact the referee for an update on when they will arrive and then begin warm-ups if necessary. The pre-match conference will take place once the referee arrives.
- H. The referee shall conduct a pre-match conference prior to each match with a player and a coach from each team. A coin toss by the referee between the captains of each team with the visiting team calling the toss will determine which team serves first. A coin toss for set 3 will only take place if set three is a deciding set with the home team calling the toss. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of serve or receive. If set three is not a deciding set, the team losing the first two sets will serve the third set. Teams will NOT switch sides during the match.

Exception: If in the referee's judgement, there is an obvious advantage to a team playing on one side of the court rather than the other, the referee has the authority to rule that the teams switch sides for set 2 of the match. The referee will then notify both coaches of the ruling prior to the beginning of the match. The referee's decision is final. A coin toss for set 3 will only take place if set three is a deciding set with the home team calling the toss. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of serve or receive or side. If set three is not a deciding set, the team losing the first two sets will serve the third set and teams will remain at the benches they occupied during set 2.

- I. Warm ups: IF time allows, teams may use their half of the court *prior to the timed warm up period* for ball handling (bumping, passing, setting, etc.). Each team is given 3 minutes of court time alone. This includes time for serving. There will be no shared serving. Coaches may use their own court time as they desire. Ball handling is not permitted during time-outs or between sets.
- J. Each team is responsible to provide one **impartial** line judge. Line judges shall be high school aged students only, preferably with volleyball experience, or adults. Referees are expected to review MVC rules (signals, position on the court, etc.) with both line judges before each match. While it is preferable that the same person(s) line judge the entire match, it is acceptable for a new line judge(s) to enter prior to beginning of each set. A referee has the authority to overrule a line judge's call at any time. Line judges shall stand on the side opposite of their team. During time outs and between sets, they will stand at the midpoint of their respective end line, with one line judge holding the ball until play resumes.
- K. Players must remove all jewelry except small, secured studs or posts worn above the chin. (Hoops are not permitted). No jewelry is permitted below the chin, including string bracelets, commemorative bracelets, and body jewelry. In addition, taping jewelry is NOT permitted. Exception: a religious or medical medal may be worn if taped to the body under the uniform. The penalty will be an unnecessary delay of game (administrative yellow card) warning on the first offense. Any subsequent delay during the same set results in an administrative red card with a loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent. Cards do not carry over from set to set but if



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a team has unnecessary delays in multiple sets, the referee may consider this unsporting conduct and penalize accordingly.

- L.** Hair adornments may be worn provided they are securely fastened and do not present a safety hazard. There is no length limitation for bobby pins, fat clips, and flat barrettes. Hair devices to control hair such as headbands may be up to three inches wide. Soft ribbons of any width, length, or number will be allowed. No glitter or face paint is allowed. The penalty will be an unnecessary delay of game (administrative yellow card) warning on the first offense. Any subsequent delay during the same set results in an administrative red card with a loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent. Cards do not carry over from set to set but if a team has unnecessary delays in multiple sets, the referee may consider this unsporting conduct and penalize accordingly.”
- M.** Players may not chew gum on the court or on the bench. Water must be kept off the floor at all times, or an unnecessary delay of game warning/penalty point may be charged to wipe up the floor.
- N.** Pre-match back line lineup procedure will be followed. **Note:** ALL players on the roster, not just starting players, may stand on their respective end lines prior to the first set.
- End of set 1: All players return to their benches. Teams do NOT switch sides.
 - End of set 2: All players return to benches. **Exception:** If the referee determines teams will switch sides, they shall do so for set 2. In this case, players on the court DO NOT go back to the end line but around the standards. If the gym is too small, they go under the net. Those on the benches switch benches.
 - A coin toss for set 3 will only take place if set three is a deciding set with the home team calling the toss. The winner of the coin toss then has the choice of serve or receive. If set three is not a deciding set, the team losing the first two sets will serve the third set and teams will remain at the benches they occupied during set two.
 - End of set 3: Referee blows his whistle signaling the end of the match. Players on the court proceed to the net (NOT the end line) and shake hands with the opposing team and the players on the bench follow behind them.
- O.** All teams will rotate into the serve. Serving time after the whistle blows is 5 seconds. Players may either catch OR allow the ball to drop in order to obtain a re-serve. This can only be done once per service rotation.
- P.** A tossed ball for serve coming in contact with or hitting an overhead obstruction above the service area is a fault, and is not eligible for a re-serve (i.e. basketball hoop or backboard).
- Q.** If a ball contacts a vertical backboard or it's supports over a playable area, the referee will stop play. If in the referee's judgement a player would have been able to play the ball had the backboard not been there, a replay will be called. If the ball would have landed out of play, a point-side-out will be awarded the opponent. Raised backboards are considered part of the ceiling and remain in play.
- R.** Setting or overhand passing a serve is allowed as long as it is not a lift. Blocking a served ball is not permitted. Attacking a served ball while the ball is completely above the height of the net is not permitted. However, the contact is legal and the ball is not out of play until it completely crosses the vertical plane of the net or is legally contacted by an opponent. If the ball drops lower than the top of the net before being hit, it's a legal hit.
- S.** Double Hits:
- A double hit is allowed on any first team contact. A double hit cannot be called on a serve or first ball over the net as long as it is one attempt to play the ball. However, a lift or held ball may be called by the referee.



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- A double hit is also allowed on any second team contact only if the ball is next contacted by a teammate (the second contact does not cross the net or is not legally blocked by the opponent before being contacted by a teammate).
- T. During the match, a player can play the ball with any part of their body including the head and feet.
- U. A ball is out of bounds and becomes dead when it touches the ceiling or overhead obstructions beyond the vertical plane of the net and its out-of-bounds extension. If the ball is hit over the net and hits the ceiling on the receiving court's side, it becomes a dead ball as soon as it hits the ceiling. However, if the ball hits the ceiling prior to crossing the net, it is still playable as long as the team has hits remaining.
- V. If the referee is not on site 15 minutes after scheduled start time, is the responsibility of the teams to supply a referee until a substitute arrives.
- W. Protests must be made in writing at the time of the disagreement prior to the signaling of the next service. If the final point is disputed, the protest must be made before the referee leaves the playing area. Protests are recorded on the official score sheet and signed by both coaches and the referee prior to completing the game. This written protest should be forwarded to the Referee Coordinators within 24 hours for review. Referee judgment calls cannot be protested.
- X. The referee shall have the power to make decisions on any point not specifically covered in these rules. The decision of the referee shall be final.

6. TIME-OUTS

- A. Each team is limited to two 60 second time-outs per set.
- B. Requests for time-outs by a coach and/or playing captain can be signaled or verbalized.
- C. If the team calling the time out returns to the floor prior to 60 seconds, the other team doesn't have to return to the floor immediately. They can use all 60 seconds if they wish. However, teams must be on the floor ready to play at the end of the 60 seconds. Failure to do so will result in an unnecessary delay of game (administrative yellow card) warning on the first offense. Any subsequent delay during the same set results in an administrative red card with a loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent. Cards do not carry over from set to set but if a team has unnecessary delays in multiple sets, the referee may consider this unsporting conduct and penalize accordingly.

Exception: A special time-out may be called by the referee when a team has an injured player, no time-outs remaining and no legal/exceptional substitutes available.

7. SUBSTITUTIONS

- A. Player must report to the referee before entering the playing area. The head coach may visually signal to the referee that a substitution is desired or the substitute may enter the substitution zone. The player and substitute remain in the substitution zone until the referee signals the exchange.
- B. There are unlimited entries per player in a set.
- C. There is a maximum of 18 substitutions per set. Libero replacements do not count as substitutions and are unlimited.



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8. LIBERO (optional for 7TH and 8th grade only)

NOTE: Teams failing to follow all Libero guidelines/protocols will automatically forfeit the match.

- A.** The libero is a back-row player who is a defensive specialist. Teams may designate up to two liberos per set.
- B.** The libero when used:
- Must be designated on the lineup sheet prior to each set.
 - May be the team captain.
 - May be used as an exceptional substitution for an injured player if no other legal substitutes are available.
 - Shall not replace a disqualified teammate.
 - Shall be allowed to serve in one position in the serving order.
- C.** The libero shall not:
- Complete an attack from anywhere if, at the moment of contact, the ball is entirely above the height of the net.
 - Set the ball using overhand finger action while on or in front of the attack line extended, resulting in a completed attack above the height of the net.
 - Block or attempt to block.
 - Rotate to the front row.
- D.** Procedures for libero replacement:
- Is allowed to replace any player in a back-row position.
 - May serve in one position in the serve order.
 - May only be replaced by the player whom he/she replaced.
 - One libero replacement may be exercised per dead ball/rally unless the libero is replacing the player in the right back position and will serve the next rally.
 - Must take place between the attack line and the end line in front of that team's bench.
 - Must be completed during a dead ball prior to the whistle and signal for serve.
- E.** Replacements may only take place:
- At the start of each set after the starting lineup has been checked.
 - After the end of a rally.
 - While the ball is out of play and prior to the whistle and signal for serve.
 - After a time-out, once all players have returned to the court, provided the replacement sits out one rally/dead ball.
- F.** Libero Serving:
- Allowed to serve in one rotation.
 - When serving, the libero would not be required to leave the playing area or be out of the set for one rally/dead ball before replacing the incoming player in the right back position.

9. EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY HOST GYM:

- A.** An official volleyball either leather or composite with the NFHS logo, air pressure being 4.3-4.6 pounds for 6th-8th grade boys' teams and 7th and 8th grade girls' teams.

****NOTE: Boys' teams grades 6-8 will use the V5m5000-3NFHS Molten Flistatec stamped ball (red, white, blue) beginning with the 2027 season.**

- B.** The Molten VB-U12 for 4th and 5th grade boys' teams and 4TH, 5TH, and 6TH grade girls' teams, air pressure being 4.3-4.6 pounds



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- C. Appropriate grade specific warm-up balls for all teams.
- D. Net height shall be 7 feet, 4 and 1/8 inches for ALL grades and divisions, both boys and girls. Each gym shall have a net chain available at all times.
- E. Net antennas are required. They shall be attached to the net in line with the outside edge of the sideline and extend upward at least 2 and 1/2 feet but no more than 3 and 1/2 feet above the net. The antennas shall be fastened securely to the top and bottom of the net. They shall be of unbreakable material no more than 3/8 inch in diameter with alternating 4 inch to 6 inch white and orange or red bands.
- F. All lines on the court must be clearly marked including the side, end, attack (10 foot), center, and modified serving line for 4th grade boys, and 4th, 5th, and 6th grade girls.
- G. All standards, the front and side of the referee's platform, and floor/wall cables (guy cables or rigid braces) shall be padded.
- H. A first aid kit and ice. A gym supervisor must be readily available in case of injury. See Metro Volleyball Conference bylaws, Article V, section 3 for additional information regarding gym supervisors.
- I. A copy of the most recent Metro Volleyball Conference rules is to be kept at the scorers' table. A National Federation of High School rulebook is also recommended, but not required.

10. SCORER'S TABLE

- A. Scorekeepers are a part of the referee team, but the responsibility of the gym supervisor. Only official scorekeepers should be at the scorers' table. The referee may ask others not directly involved in keeping score to leave the table.
- B. Libero Tracker: **(Teams failing to provide a Libero Tracker shall not use a libero.)**
 - 7th and 8th grade teams using a Libero are required to provide an experienced Libero tracker. This can be an assistant coach, a parent of a player, a high school aged volleyball player, or a team assistant who consistently attends team practices and games. **It shall not be a player on one of the two teams or anyone younger than a high school volleyball player, even if experienced.** Exception: an injured player unable to play, may libero track if sitting at the scorers' table. **All Libero trackers will sit at the scorers' table.** Exception: If the libero tracker is an assistant coach or a team assistant for a team playing, they may libero track from the bench.
 - If both teams are using a libero, it is suggested they agree on one libero tracker to track for both teams. It is not necessary in this case to have one libero tracker for each team.
 - Exception: If a school chooses to provide a Libero tracker at the scorer's table, the team(s) using the libero does not have to provide one.
 - **NOTE: The Libero tracking sheet shall be retained by the host school along with the scoresheet for the duration of the season.**
- C. Electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, IPODS, etc.) are NOT allowed at the scorers' table during game time, including time outs. If noted, referees will ask that the device be put away. They may also report such activity to the gym supervisor who will take appropriate action in assuring these devices are not being used.

