



CIF-SS Beach Volleyball Rules 2025-26

Net Height

Length: 26 to 28' (8-8.5m) long.
Height: Women 7' 4^{1/8}" (2.24m) Men 7' 11^{5/8}" (2.43m) at center (3/4" higher at ends)
Antennas are required.
Padding around any poles in the playing area, including light poles.

Ball

Light-colored, 9-10 oz. (260-280g) weight, with approx. 26" (66-68cm) circumference, at 2.5 to 3.2 psi (1.75-2.25 kg/cm²).

- **"The Official Beach Volleyball of the CIF Southern Section is the Wilson AVP OPTX Game Volleyball.** The mandatory official ball rule is for all playoff rounds. The rule applies throughout the conduct of all CIF-SS postseason contests. Should a school fail to provide the correct game ball, the game will always be played. Teams/schools failing to utilize the correct official ball in CIF-SS playoffs will be reported by officials to CIF-SS and will not be allowed to host their next available home playoff game. Penalty will carry over to the next season if not enforceable this season due to elimination."

Court

26'3"x52'6" (8.0 x 16.0 m) The short diagonal measures 37'1" (11.31m).
The court includes its lines: their outside edges are the court boundary.
Sand that is 12 - 18 inches deep. (Must be turned and leveled)

- Ability to wet the courts down to reduce dust and lower the temperature of the sand. (recommended NOT required)

Lines

Should be 2" wide and include **adjustable buckles** on all four sides. When possible, the free zone around the court should be marked with banners, etc.

Spirit of the Game

Teams play without outside intervention or assistance of any type.
Spectators, including parents and teammates, are encouraged to positively cheer, but may not assist at any time (ex: "calling shots" is prohibited).

Coaching

Coaching is permitted under the following guidelines. Coaches:

- must be certified under CIF; the team will forfeit all games coached if not certified.
- should be identified on the Lineup Form as a coach, assistant coach, and/or volunteer coach and dress professionally, in shirt and shorts as a minimum requirement.
- may not address the officials or attempt to influence their decisions at any time.
- may perform drills with their team, on the playing court, until the conclusion of the coin toss.
- must leave the playing court at the conclusion of the coin toss.
- **REVISION:** may instruct from the sideline during the shared, official warm-up, and **between rallies.**
- may not give instructions during play, may give instruction during time outs, technical time-outs, side changes (walk and talk), between sets, and **between rallies.**
- **while coaching a specific pairs match**, must remain in the team area, and will switch sides with their team.
- may suggest to team captain, in non-disruptive manner, a request for time-out.
- are subject to sanction (individual misconduct or delay) for inappropriate behavior, for delay of the match, and/or for giving instruction(s) during play.
- Who may coach? Three (3) coaches may be active during an event.
- Teammates of the players on the court may not act as coaches during competition and may not sit or stand in or near the designated player's box.



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Coaching (cont)

- Conversations between a coach and an opposing player are not allowed. A coach shall not initiate a conversation with the opposing player or in any way get involved with an on-court problem, except at the request of the referee, the player, or the coach of the player involved. At no time should a player initiate a conversation with an opposing coach. Violations of these provisions by the coach are subject to misconduct.
- Penalties for inappropriate coaching.
 - Language between rallies that involves instructional content is subject to sanction by the referee (First instance = verbal reminder; Second instance = Yellow card; Third instance = Red card, loss of rally, and a point for the opponent).
 - Language during a rally that offers instructional content or that might affect the rally in play is immediately sanctioned (First instance = Yellow; Second instance = Red).
 - Coaches are NOT allowed to interact directly with the officials during a match (First instance = Yellow; Second instance = Red)
 - On-court captains should know that they have the right to occasionally ask referees for explanations of decisions or clarifications of rules

Teams

Two (2) players – no substitutes.

- Beach volleyball pairs in team competition shall compete with pairs on the opposing team with the same skill rank.
- If a team member is unable to continue during play, that match shall be forfeited
- When a team member is unable to participate in a subsequent duel in her established position from the previous match, that position shall be filled by either an alternate or a team member who previously participated in a pair within one position, either up or down (Ex: 2s to 3s or 3s to 2s).
- Players may only move up or down one pair position from duel to duel

Alternates

- Alternates must be designated on the lineup card before the match has started.
- Each team may have up to 5 Alternates
- Alternates are not allowed to also be listed as part of pairs 1-5.
 - INJURY – Team Competition
 - If an athlete is injured and can no longer compete in future team competition, an alternate may be put in their place.
 - If an athlete is Disqualified, the current match is forfeited. In team competition, an alternate may be put in the place of the disqualified athlete for the next match.

Uniforms

- Uniform top must include school name or mascot. Numbers must be on the FRONT and BACK. Uniform bottoms must be identical
- Partners must wear identical jerseys. The entire team must be in one matching color scheme.
- Cold weather gear (sweats suits, etc.) may be allowed. (Guideline temp: “below 65 degrees”)



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Game Time & Late Arrival

- Teams should plan on arriving at the venue at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- Gametime is Forfeit time

Match Format & Scoring Games

- "10 Minute" Official Pre- Match Protocol: Coin toss at -10min, then 8-minute warm-up period. Coaches must clear the court after the conclusion of the coin toss.
- COIN TOSS: Winner of the coin toss chooses to serve, receive, or side. The other captain chooses from the remaining options. Both captains state the service order for the set. (1st & 2nd Server)
- SERVICE ORDER: Players alternate terms of service.
- POSITION FAULTS: Players (other than the server) must be on court at the moment of service (any position on court). The server must initiate from the playable area.
- COURT SWITCH: After 7 points of play in sets 1 & 2, and after 5 points of play in set 3, the teams will switch sides. This is not a time out or water break; players switch, then resume play.
- Water breaks may be allowed during the side switch in excessive weather.
- SCREENING: Service teams must take positions so that the receiving team is able to see EITHER the server or the flight of the ball.
 - Fair Play: The receiving team should use the "raised hand" signal to indicate a potential screen. The Serving team should adjust position without delay.
- DELAY: The time between rallies should not exceed **12 seconds**.
 - Violations result in a Delay Warning, with subsequent occurrences leading to a Delay Penalty.
- TIMEOUTS: Each team may call ONE timeout per set. Timeout is 60 seconds, as follows:
 - 15 seconds to move to player areas, 30 seconds at player area (whistle at 45 sec), 15 seconds to return to play.
 - Timeouts are to be taken near the court or designated player boxes if available (no running to tents).
 - Coaches may suggest a timeout to their captain.
 - A "Technical Timeout – 60 secs" (TTO) after 21 combined points in sets 1 and 2 is suggested.
- The interval between sets is 2 minutes.
- There is NOT a Technical Timeout in the Deciding 3rd Set.
- SCORING: Match Play, best-of-three played to 21, 21, 15.
 - Rally scoring; win by two.
- In the case of a 20-20 tie, play is continued until a 2-point lead is achieved (22-20, 23-21; etc.) **(NO Cap)**
- Deciding Set: Play to 15 points, win by two (2). Switch sides on multiples of 5. **(NO Cap)**
- BALL MARKS: The ball is "IN" if it lands inside the court or touches a boundary line. Corner "tie-downs" are not considered boundary lines.
 - If the referee is in doubt of a line call, they should immediately initiate a "ball mark protocol". Players may not insist that a ball mark be reviewed.
- Players cannot: alter the ball mark (or court boundaries), cross under the net to review a mark, or attempt to influence the decision of the officials.



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Playing Format

- Duel: Contest between two schools in a head-to-head format. Three (3 pairs) or Five (5 pairs) matches will be played to determine the outcome of the duel, which will include a minimum of three (3) pairs or five (5) pairs/flights of teammates from opposing schools. The contest will be the best of 3, or best of 5 format, so the first school to win two (2) or three (3) flights (matches) will win the duel.-
- The length (time) of a duel will depend on the number of courts being used. Two courts are recommended, three courts are preferred.
- If a team only has 3 pairs, they must play them as 1s, 2s, & 3s, not 3s, 4, & 5s.

Disputes

- The on court captain may occasionally approach the referee to request an explanation of a call (exception: judgment related calls).
- The referee(s) should be approachable and must offer an explanation based upon the rules, without prolonged discussion.
- The on court captain has the right to protest rules misinterpretations / misapplications, but not judgment calls or sanctions.
- COACHES are **NOT** allowed to dispute calls, or to interact with match officials at all.

Warnings & Sanctions

ALL DELAY AND MISCONDUCT WARNINGS REMAIN IN FORCE THROUGHOUT THE MATCH

- Delays are indicated by displaying a “Card on Wrist”: Yellow = Warning, Red = Penalty (point and loss of rally)
 - 1st Delay by a player or coach should result in a Team Delay Warning (Yellow card on wrist).
 - Any further delay by any member of that team, including the coach, during the match, results in Delay Penalty. Multiple Delay Penalties may be assessed within a match.
- Misconduct by any player or coach should be managed, when possible, through verbal warning(s).
 - Referees may offer one Formal Warning (Yellow Card) to a TEAM (player or coach) guilty of misconduct.
 - Subsequent minor misconduct by any team member (player or coach) on that team in that match must be sanctioned by Penalty (Red Card).
- Rude Conduct is sanctioned by Penalty (Red Card). It is not necessary that a Misconduct Warning (Yellow Card) has been issued previously.
 - Players may receive a maximum of TWO Penalties per player per SET. Further misconduct results in the player being EXPELLED for the SET, and results in that team defaulting the match.
 - Coaches may receive a maximum of ONE Penalty per SET. Further misconduct results in the coach being EXPELLED for the SET.



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Sportsmanship & Ejections

- Players who are ejected must immediately leave the playing area and remain in the designated team area, and display excellent sportsmanship.
 - A player ejected from a contest for any reason shall be subject to disciplinary action under the Sportsmanship Rule under the CIF Constitution.
- A coach who is ejected must immediately leave the contest area and can no longer interact with players. If there are no certified coach/school personnel to continue coaching the team, the match will be declared a forfeit with the scores of 21-1 for each game.
 - A coach ejected from a contest for any reason shall be subject to disciplinary action under the Sportsmanship Rule under the CIF Constitution.
- The official must submit a CIF Ejection Report form to the CIF Liaison within 24 hours after completion of the game for any player or coach who was ejected.
- SPIRIT OF THE GAME.
 - Spectators, including parents and teammates, are encouraged to cheer, but may not assist at any time (ex: "calling shots" is prohibited).
 - Coaches, when present, may cheer the exceptional play, but may only instruct during timeouts, side-changes, and between sets.

OFFICIALS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Prematch

When an official is requested, the official's authority begins when they arrive at the facility and ends when they leave the immediate playing field. It is required that the official(s) be at the facility 1-hour before the scheduled contest start time. The official(s) duties during the 1-hour pre-game should be to:

- Meet with both head coaches.
- Meet with captains.
- Coin toss.
- Scoresheet prep and review.
- Review rules of play.
- Confirm match playing format.
- Confirm courts are legal for play (level).
- Adjust/reset any court lines that are not legal.
- Review spectator rules.
- Any additional procedures to get ready to play an official match.



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PLAYING ACTIONS and FAULTS

Blocks and play above the net

- Players must contact the ball within their own playing space (follow-through into the opponent's playing space after contact is legal).
- It is always illegal to attack a ball that is completely in the opponent's space.
- Blockers may contact a ball in the opponents' space after the attack hit, or if, in the referee's judgment, the attackers are not attempting to play the ball.
- "Joust" (simultaneous contact above the net) between opponents is legal. Any player may make the next play, as their team's 1st contact.
- The block contact counts as first team contact; either player may make the 2nd team contact.
- A player may block a ball in any direction.
- "Directional" or "snap" blocks are legal unless the ball is caught or thrown. If the blocker clearly catches or throws the ball, the fault must be whistled.
 - As a guideline: the ball may be blocked quickly in one direction, with one motion.

Attacks and Tips

- "Open hand tipping" is prohibited. Referees use "illegal attack" signal.
- Knuckles may be used to "poke" the ball, provided that the ball rebounds (is not caught or thrown).
- Fingertips (including thumb "not controlled") may be used to "poke" the ball only if those fingertips in contact with the ball are "rigid and together."
- Attacks with finger action (setting over the net) must be made perpendicular to the shoulders - either directly forward or backward.

Net Contact

- It is a fault to contact any part of the net between (and including) the antennas, during the action of playing the ball.
- The action of playing the ball includes (but is not limited to) takeoff, hit (or attempt), and landing safely, ready for a new action.

Play under the net, and Interference

- Players may contact any part of the ball until it has passed completely through the plane below the net.
- There is no centerline. Players may contact any part of the opponents' court as long as they do not interfere with the opponents' next play.
- A player who interferes with an opponents' ability to make their next play must be called for the fault.
 - Interference is a FAULT that results in a point, not a replay.
 - Note that this is sometimes a delayed call (the referee must wait to see if the opponents are truly hampered in their next action).
 - Incidental contact between opponents does not constitute interference (bump knees, briefly step on toes, etc.).
 - Interference can occur without physical contact (ex: fallen player under net prevents defender covering short).
 - Point under the net with your index finger, and say "interference." (This call will generally require explanation.)



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PLAYING ACTIONS and FAULTS (cont)

Pursuit

Is legal in beach volleyball. Only balls which pass “over or outside” an antenna are eligible to be pursued.

- A player may pursue the ball by any route, including under the net and/ or through the opponents’ court.
- Opponents may not interfere with legal pursuit.
- The ball must be played back on 2nd team contact “over or outside” the same antenna.
- Third team contact must send the ball legally through the crossing space (between the antennas).

Ball Marks

The ball is “IN” if it lands inside the court, or touches a boundary line. Corner “tie-downs” are not considered boundary lines.

- If the referee is in doubt of a line call, they should immediately initiate a “ball mark protocol”. Players may not insist that a ball mark be reviewed.
 - Players cannot: alter the ball mark (or court boundaries), cross under the net to review a mark, or attempt to influence the decision of the officials.
 - The line-judge(s) may assist as the referee inspects the ball mark.
 - The referee must be careful to inspect the correct ball mark, considering ball trajectory, the effect of raised lines, and possible “splash” of soft sand.
 - If the referee determines that the line was moved significantly during the rally in question, they should fix the line before judging the result.

Ball Handling / Hand Setting

There are two types of ball handling faults: “Caught Balls” and “Double Contact”.

- The ball must be played with one quick motion.
- Balls that significantly move downwards while in the hands, or visibly come to rest, are considered a “Caught Ball” fault (aka: “deep dish,” “held-ball,” or “lift”).
- Clearly distinct and separate contacts of the ball constitute a “Double-Hit.”
 - Spin is not a fault ... but spin may be an indication that a “double-contact” fault has occurred.

Simultaneous Contact by Teammates

If teammates touch the ball simultaneously it counts as 2 team contacts. Either player may make the 3rd contact.

Defense

- It is LEGAL for ANY first-team contact WITHOUT finger action to strike two or more parts of a player during a single attempt to play the ball. Including:
 - Any style of contact: hands or fists together or apart, heels of hands together or apart, tomahawk, etc. (see finger-action below).
 - All plays without finger action, even if the ball is observed to have been clearly double-contacted.



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PLAYING ACTIONS and FAULTS (cont)

Defense (cont)

- First-team-contact **WITH finger action** should be judged just as any setting contact:
 - The referee should call a double-hit if the player uses finger action and the ball contact is a clear double.
 - **EXCEPTION:** If the double contact was in defense of a “hard-driven attack” then the referee should allow play to continue.
 - In judging an attack as “hard-driven,” the referee must consider the following:
 - Speed and trajectory of the ball, as well as the distance between the attacker and defender.
 - The referee must judge the player’s action: “reactive” (double allowed) or “decision” handset (double-contact called).

If an incorrect server is identified, it must be corrected immediately. There is no penalty for an incorrect server.

Serve Receive

In serve receive, a double contact is allowed. However, If finger action is used, the referee will judge the contact as a set. Therefore, the contact must be clean.

- It is legal to use techniques such as: hands or fists together or apart, heels of hands together or apart, tomahawk, etc.
- **REMINDER:** It is legal to receive serve “open handed with finger action”, but strict hand-setting judgment must be applied to the contact.