



CHESAPEAKE REGION VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Are You Ready For Prime Time?

Corny Galdones, March 2005

Anyone with a general idea of the sport and knowledge of the rules can blow a whistle and claim to be a volleyball referee. Upper echelon referees have to do better. Much better. The following assessment will give an aspiring referee a good gauge of being ready to move up the ladder. This technical checklist, which may be useful to all, isn't inclusive. Performance standards of local jurisdictions aren't covered.

- Can you cite chapter and verse of every rule? Do your common sense and "spirit of the rule" prevail over "going by the book"?
- Do you know the game? Do you know how every current player skill and technique is executed? Can you explain today's defensive and offensive team strategies and alignments?
- Do you act, look and talk professional? Do you know what causes conflicts of interest and wrong perceptions? Do you avoid these situations? Are your uniform and appearance spic and span? Do you treat everyone with respect and courtesy? Do you converse with coaches and players only on matters pertinent to conducting the match? Do you take care of every logistical and administrative detail of your matches?
- Are you punctual? Do you show up at courtside prepared for your matches by the report time? Do you end warm-ups in the period allotted? If the preceding match ends on time, is your first service beckon no later than the scheduled match time?
- Do you have a commanding presence? Are your signals not only mechanically correct, but also strong and crisp? Is your whistle prompt and authoritative in sound? Do you project a poised "I know what I'm doing" aura without being overbearing?
- Are you battle tested? Are you court wise? Have you made tons of mistakes and been yelled at countless times by players and coaches to know how to handle any situation under fire quickly and properly in a calm manner?
- Are you at ease officiating at the highest competition level? Can you keep up with the action?
- Is your ball handling judgment correct? Are you comfortable with your standard? Is it consistent throughout a match? Have you officiated innumerable matches to tell instantly between an ugly or weird but legal set and a pretty but illegal set? Do you no longer draw questioning looks and negative reactions from the teams on ball handling?
- Are you catching all violations besides ball handling violations?
- Are your errors now far and few between, and not repeats of previous ones?

- Are you approachable to explain calls? Are these talks short and sweet? Do you know what to say to placate the different but common questions that may be asked? Do you cut off ongoing conversations? Do you do it with tact and finality?
- Do you take preventive control measures? Do you recognize the difference between venting of frustrations and abusive behavior? Do your matches rarely get out of hand? If they ever do, do you regain control immediately? Can you do it without sanction cards?
- Are you a team player and communicator and not a Lone Ranger? Do you coordinate duties with your line judges and R1/R2 partner before the match, have them do their jobs and solicit their input through eye contact throughout the match?
- As an R1 or R2, do you know all the places to look and what to look for before a serve? During a rally? At the end of a play? During warm-ups? Before start of a game?
- As an R2, do you know where to be positioned and when to be there before a serve? During a rally? At the end of a play? For bench requests? Do you minimize damage from coaches disputing calls and protect the R1? Do you resolve scorekeeping problems promptly?
- As an R1 or R2, do you know what hand (and maybe whistle) signals to make and how to display them for specific situations during a rally? For a violation? At the end of a play? For sanctions? For match interruptions? For bench requests?
- Can you track player rotations and quickly detect an overlap no matter what formations the teams are in?
- Do you keep your matches moving at a lively pace regardless of playing caliber? Have you stopped from causing match delays?
- Do you accept criticism without having to defend or explain yourself? Do you implement suggestions and advice right away and not get messed up?

This isn't a pass/fail questionnaire. Be realistic for your own good. It might not be a bad idea to consult a candid, learned colleague. Your skills must be developed so that every answer is "yes" to these criteria similar to the formal evaluation process. Here's the bottom line. Are you an official anyone would be confident and willing to have as a partner on any given match?

You can fool yourself, but not the expert raters who will determine your fate in being promoted to the next officiating certification level. Why take chances? Admit and fix all deficiencies now. Or pay the price later.