

January 2004

## Record Crowd Attends 7th Annual Clinic

The Eastside Volleyball Officials Association (ESVBOA) hosted its 7th annual officials' clinic on Saturday, December 6, 2003. The new Anchor Bay High School was the site for what proved to be the biggest and best gathering in the history of the event. Officials attended four sessions throughout the day.

The new Anchor Bay High School features two large gymnasiums making it possible to use three courts for practical experiences for officials. Additionally, the increased number of courts created more time for officials to work with ESVBOA trainers. Clinic attendees had an opportunity to work on-court as referee, umpire, and line judge with emphasis on the correct use of flags.

After lunch, attendees enjoyed the popular coaches' panel. Participating



Officials register for the 7th Annual ESVBOA Clinic at the new Anchor Bay High School on Saturday, December 6, 2003. An attendance record was set with more than 70 officials attending the event.

varsity volleyball coaches were: Terri Szur, Anchor Bay High School; Sue Walker, Warren Woods Tower High School and Oakland University women's volleyball head coach, Dave Schmidlin. The coaches discussed topics ranging from what they look for when evaluating officials' abilities, to rotation faults called at crucial moments of matches.

Additional sessions offered tips on effective tracking of player positions, a video presentation showcasing various game situations while stressing correct officiating mechanics and rule applications, and a session on ball-handling.

Appreciation goes out to this year's clinicians: Arnie Gray, Ronnie Mutter, Kay Kornis, Bill Crouch, Pat Jones, Steve Miller and Jay Shaheen. We are also grateful to Terri Szur and her fine

staff at Anchor Bay High School for being such gracious hosts.

Mark your calendars now for the 8th annual ESVBOA officials' clinic: Saturday, December 4, 2004 at Anchor Bay High School.

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**REMAINING ESVBOA MEETINGS ARE:**  
FEBRUARY 29, 2004 @ Pontiac Notre Dame Prep - 2:00p.m.  
MARCH 21, 2004 PIZZA PARTY @ Peace Lutheran (Warren)- 2:00p.m.



ESVBOA Clinician Ronnie Mutter discusses the the rules and philosophies of calling ball-handling. The session included a live playing demonstration by the Anchor Bay High School Varsity Volleyball Team.

# From the President

Fusako Hines, ESVBOA President

## Scanning and Good Eye-Contact With Your Partner is Crucial for a Great Match

Happy New Year!

I trust that you have identified your officiating goals for the new year, both on and off the court. As always, I encourage you to work hard to achieve those goals. One of my goals this year is to keep a good tempo in my matches while maintaining eye-contact with my partner.

Quality referees exhibit an even tempo and composure throughout matches. The best referees quickly scan the entire court before each beckon for serve. The reasons for this are twofold: First, there is an increasing number of coaches who request substitutions or time-outs *just* prior to the beckon for serve. A court scan before the serve beckon helps you to observe and recognize these requests thus avoiding problems. Second, scanning allows you to ensure players are ready and that the server has the ball. I have often beckoned for serve, then noticed a player tying her shoes! The importance of scanning soon became evident.

After every play, I work hard to do something very important prior to signaling - look at my partner! Eye-contact saves me from having to change calls. For instance, imagine a spiked ball that hits the floor for an obvious kill. We blow the whistle to end play, signal ball

down, then point/side out. As we are signaling, the umpire is blowing his/her whistle indicating an offensive net foul! Good job by the umpire watching the net instead of the ball, but we now have conflicting calls and a knotty problem to resolve. Taking a moment to glance at the umpire prior to signaling is key to getting this play right the *first* time.

To summarize:

- 1) Blow the whistle to end play.
- 2) Glance at the umpire *before* making a signal (this should only be a *slight* pause)
- 3) If the umpire has a call, honor it unless you judge it to have occurred *after* the primary infraction.
- 4) Referee and umpire mirror the final call.

Remember, great officiating is the result of great teamwork. Court scanning prior to the serve beckon, and partner eye-contact at the end of play will ensure a successful and enjoyable match for officials and participants.

Have a great season.



## DID YOU KNOW???

Former ESVBOA Member Herbert "Ted" Wilson served on the National Federation Volleyball Rules Committee that voted on the change outlined in "Time Warp" (see below). Wilson, a former physical education instructor at East Detroit High School, was very active in recruiting and training of officials. Ted retired from volleyball officiating in 1993.

## FOCUS ON...

### Substitution Mechanics

The mechanics that an umpire uses to administer substitutions is crucial to the pace of a match during dead-ball situations. Here is the procedure that should be followed for best results:

1. Blow the whistle when a substitute enters the substitution zone or the coach verbally requests a substitution.
2. Step back to the scorer's table and to one side so that you do not block the scorer's view of the substitute.
3. As the players approach the sideline, look for their numbers and verbalize them so the scorer can hear you.
4. When the players have reached the line, signal them to exchange positions by gesturing with an open palm from the side of your waist, sweeping forward. (See Signal 19b)
5. Record the substitute, repeating the numbers verbally while writing, and **glance** to the other bench to see if there is a substitute about to enter. If not, signal the court back to the referee and assume your position for the next serve.



## TIME WARP

Key Rule  
Changes from  
the Past



**1992-93** - The National Federation Volleyball Rules Committee adopts the use of yellow and red cards for unsportsmanlike conduct. The conduct card system replaced the unsportsmanlike conduct signal (one hand behind the head using the arm on the side of the offending team). The penalty for the unsportsmanlike conduct call was point or side out.

# BY THE RULES

Jay Shaheen, ESVBOA Trainer

## 'In' and 'Out' Should Be Left Out Of Umpire Responsibilities

The question is: Should the umpire be responsible for helping with 'in' and 'out' calls when the ball contacts the floor? Generally speaking, the answer is no.

Now, if the words "generally speaking" could be eliminated, this discussion would be brief. I would cite sections of the rule and case books which explain the umpire's duties during play, scold officials who take their eyes off the net and center line, and be done with it. But the evolution of umpires' responsibilities in volleyball makes this issue complex.

Routinely, the umpire should not watch the ball. Training of officials, especially in their first few years, repeatedly emphasizes this mandate. If the umpire is regularly signaling 'in' or 'out' prior to the referee's indication, it is proof that the umpire's eyes are not where they belong! When both officials and both line-judges are watching the ball, who is watching the net and center line? Believe me: The coaches and fans *are* watching. They will let us know when a violation has occurred.

After umpires have established full confidence in their primary duties during play, trainers and mentors will begin to suggest a broadening of vision to assist the referee in other areas of the game including legality of serve-reception, ball-handling violations clearly out of the referee's view, pancakes, take-off points and other potential violations of back-row players. This broadening of vision is commonly referred to as *cheating off the net*. It should only be practiced when the chance for net and center line faults are minimal. Remember: Whenever we *cheat*, we might get *caught*.

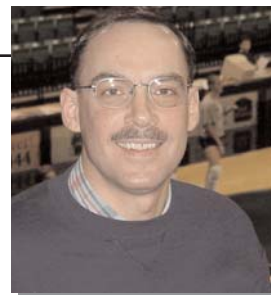
Okay. Let's pose the question differently: Should the umpire ever cheat in order to help with 'in' and 'out' calls? And if so, when? How should the umpire convey such information to the referee? This is where the discussion becomes difficult. Although clinicians, observers, and raters at all levels of play recommend situational assistance with line calls, rule books and

mechanics manuals from three volleyball rule codes fail to offer much guidance on the topic. Let's examine what the books *do* offer - and what they don't.

The NFHS directs umpires to "...concentrate on play by both the offense and defense near the net. The umpire's primary responsibility is the net area; however, if there is no activity at the net the umpire may broaden that field of vision to assist the referee. The umpire must resist the temptation to follow the ball away from the net" (5-4-2b; CB Part 3-E-Umpire). The NFHS, however, does not expound on the words "broaden that field of vision to assist the referee." It does not even hint at helping with 'in' and 'out' calls.

NCAA rule books contain similar language regarding the umpire's primary responsibilities, but introduce the notion of situational assistance to the referee. "Move quickly at contact of the serve to the serving team's side of the net while observing the receiving team's contacts...During the rally...look through the net to see net faults by the attacker, and to observe the take-off point of a back-row attacker...Stay focused on the net and center-line until the chance for faults is minimized, then quickly pick up the flight of the ball again" (Duties of the Second Referee; Guidebook-Officiating as a Second Referee). Still, there is no mention of helping with 'in' and 'out' calls.

While "observing the receiving team's contacts" means following the flight of the served ball and giving a discreet signal to the referee if there is illegal contact, clinicians and raters also urge umpires to watch the served ball hit the floor if the ball is *not* contacted. Then, *if requested by the referee*, signal 'in' or 'out' if the umpire had a *clear* view of the ball hitting the floor. The words "then quickly pick up the flight of the ball again" are interpreted to mean observing *second* team hits and discreetly signaling if illegal contact occurs. Remember that on most first



and third team contacts, not including serve receptions, there is a high likelihood for net and center line violations. Therefore, generally speaking, second team contacts are the only ones umpires should be observing.

USAV rules, at last, specifically address umpire assistance with a ball contacting the floor. The text reads, "[The umpire] may, without whistling, signal faults to the...referee outside his/her responsibilities including a ball contacting the floor, but may not insist on them. If [the umpire] sees that the...referee and line judge are unable to see where a ball contacts the floor, the [umpire] is authorized to signal, without whistling, the ball 'in' or 'out'" (27.2; CB 27.1). However, these words are narrowly interpreted. According to national clinicians, umpires are urged, except on a served ball, to consider observing a ball contacting the floor only if the ball is falling near the umpire's side-line between the net and the attack-line, or on an attempted pancake in clear view of the umpire. In neither situation should the umpire whistle. *If requested by the referee*, the umpire may signal 'in' or 'out' on a ball landing near the umpire's side-line, and signal 'ball down' without being requested on an unsuccessful pancake. Remember, though, the potential consequences of cheating.

So, should the umpire be responsible for helping with 'in' and 'out' calls? Generally speaking, the answer is still no! But this discussion would remain incomplete without opening up a smelly can of worms: Weak line-judges. Throughout my career, I have been asked numerous times if it is okay for umpires to watch for line calls if one or both line-judges have poor judgment or are simply not paying attention. We can all relate to the temptation to protect ourselves from the inevitable onslaught

(continued on pg.4)

## MECHANICS ARE WHAT THEY SEE...

### When do I use the "Touch" signal?

Starting this season, if the ball goes out on the same side of the net as the last team to touch it, the officials will give the touch signal. In previous seasons, the only time the touch signal was given was when the first team contact caused the ball to go out on their side of the net.

### Examples

After the second contact by Team A, the ball contacts the wall on Team A's side of the net. **Signal:** *Touch*

Team B attacks into the Team A block. After contacting the block, the ball goes out on Team B's side of the net  
**Signal:** *Out*

After Team B's third contact, the ball hits the officials stand.  
**Signal:** *Out* (Comment: The signal is always "out" when the ball hits the official's stand, standards, antennas or net outside the antennas.)

### ESVBOA MEMBERS OFFICIATE THE 2003 NCAA DIVISION I VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

Congratulations to Fusako Hines and Ann Hutchins for their assignments to the NCAA Division I Volleyball Tournament. Fusako and Ann, both members of the Big Ten Conference officiating staff, worked the first and second round of the tournament at Michigan State University on December 5 and 6.

Additionally, Ann Hutchins officiated the NCAA Regionals at the University of Florida on December 12 and 13.

Congratulations to both of you for your honors!

**VISIT THE ESVBOA ON THE INTERNET!**

<http://home.comcast.net/~eastsidevolleyball>

### IS THE GAME BALL LEGAL?

Be sure the game balls in your matches are approved by the National Federation Rule Book!

**4.3-4.6 psi is the required air pressure  
for each game ball**

It is always a good idea to have at least two balls checked and ready at the scorers table. If enough support personnel are available, a three-ball rotation is very desirable and keeps the game moving!

NFHS  
Authenticating Mark



## BLACK & WHITE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION  
OF THE EASTSIDE VOLLEYBALL  
OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

*Black and White* is a publication devoted to educating and inspiring volleyball officials through articles and interpretations of rules and mechanics. Our goal is to provide a supplement to the NFHS Volleyball Rule Book and Casebook, while offering volleyball officials in-depth information on volleyball officiating issues.

*Black and White* is produced by Steve Miller, ESVBOA Trainer and Clinic Coordinator. Edited by Jay Shaheen, ESVBOA Trainer.

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### BY THE RULES

*(continued from pg.3)*

of verbal assaults from coaches and fans when bad line calls are made. But there are better solutions than an umpire abandoning net-area responsibilities. I mean, if temptation is *that* overpowering, we would be better off to take over that line-judge position ourselves! But then, who would watch for net and center-line violations? Nobody -- just as it would be if we follow the ball to help call the lines! It is better to replace an ineffective line-judge, or for the referee to maintain extra focus on line calls while prepared to overrule whenever necessary.

How do we know when it is necessary to replace a line-judge? And how do we do it without embarrassing the line-judge, or ourselves, in the process?

As officials, that may be the toughest call of all.

