



2024-2025 MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Boys and Girls Volleyball Rules and Policies

General Information

See the [MSHSL Handbook Page](http://www.mshsl.org/governance) (www.mshsl.org/governance) for information regarding the following:

- Multiple Level Teams at Sub-Varsity Level
- Official Squad Size
- Substitution in MSHSL Tournaments
- Weather Conditions (heat, cold, lightning & air quality)

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 501](#) for information regarding:

- Maximum Number of Contest Chart

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 502](#) for information regarding:

- Daily and Season Player Participation Limitations

CONTEST RULES

Refer to [Bylaw 402](#): Except as modified by the League, the National Federation of High School Association rules for the current year shall be the official game rules for all interscholastic contests in which League members participate.

END OF SEASON

Refer to [Bylaw 411](#)

- A. Student Participation on a Non-School Team While the Season is Still in Progress:
 1. The season shall end when the student or the student's team has been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series.
 2. Students who have been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series may participate as an individual or as a member of a non-school team in that sport.
- B. School Team Practice and Competition: The "end of season" shall be defined to be the last date of the state tournament in that sport.
 1. Schools may continue to conduct practice and training for all squad members, including the students who have been eliminated from further individual competition in a League-sponsored series until completion of the state tournament conducted by the League in that activity.
 2. Dual contests may be scheduled after the start of the official League tournament series providing the school does not exceed the maximum number of games/matches/meets permitted in that activity.
- C. No school may engage in any meet or meets, practice, training or other activities between the end of the season and the opening of the next season.
- D. During the Summer Vacation Period ([Bylaw 208](#) - Non-School Competition and Training - Team and Individual Sports) members of a high school team may participate on a non-school team and they may receive coaching or training from a salaried or non-salaried member of the student's sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity high school coaching staff in that sport provided the school has approved a summer coaching waiver for the coach or coaches of that sport.

MSHSL MINIMAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR REGULAR AND POST-SEASON TOURNAMENT COMPETITIONS

These policies “elevate standards of sportsmanship and encourage the growth of responsible citizenship among the students, members schools and their personnel,” consistent with the Minnesota State High School League’s Founding Purposes and the belief that sportsmanship needs to have a constant presence in all school-based activity programs. The League and its member schools work intentionally to create safe, welcoming and inclusive environments for fine arts activities and sports in our schools and competitions.

School officials are responsible for the proper conduct of teams, team members, students, and home spectators regardless of where the contest is being held. ([Bylaw 409](#)).

Behavior Expectations

To create safe, welcoming and inclusive environments in fine arts and sports in our school and competitions, I will:

- Lead by positive example and demonstrate respect and support for others.
- Follow all MSHSL, school and venue expectations.
- Refrain from using profanity or ethnic, racial, religious, ability or gender-based comments, posts or messages directed at participants, directors, coaches, officials, spectators, or team representatives.
- Act as a responsible and respectful digital citizen who positively uses social media platforms.
- Speak or act in support of others when they are harmed by words or actions.
- Honor each contest and all involved, including participants, directors, coaches, officials, spectators, and team representatives.
- Hold high standards for myself, engage positively and demonstrate sportsmanship.

Requirements of Attendees

Prohibited Items

- Flags, whiteboards, large signs on sticks, signs with vulgar, obscene or inappropriate language or images, or that obstruct the views of others or similar items
- Balloons, confetti, glitter, baby powder, pom poms or other similar celebratory items
- Artificial noise makers (i.e., megaphones, cowbells, sirens, whistles, thunder sticks and other similar items)
- Drones and laser lights
- Firearms or other weapons
- Vapes, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis or illicit drugs
- The following are prohibited at MSHSL postseason events. These may be prohibited as determined by the venue during the regular season:
 - Backpacks and other bags
 - Outside food and drink
 - Professional cameras and tripods
 - Pets

Dress Code/Attire

- Spectators may not wear masks or costumes that limit the ability to identify individuals. Masking for medical purposes is allowed
- Spectators must wear clothing that covers the torso
- Clothing worn must not be vulgar, obscene, or inappropriate

Behaviors

- No one may interfere with the contest in any way
- Only members of the official squad may be on the contest surface
- The use of appropriate language is always expected. Profanity, negative chants, booing, trash talk, name calling, personal attacks or other acts of disrespect are unacceptable
- Respect the Flag and the National Anthem

*Venues may have additional requirements and prohibited items.

*For most contests, spectators may bring cameras, including cell phones, that are basic point and shoot, consumer-grade cameras without detachable lenses. Spectators should confirm restricted items for contests with contest management.

VIDEO RECORDING ANOTHER SCHOOL'S GAME

It shall be an ethical violation to capture on video another school's game, meet or contest without their permission. Further it may be a violation of the laws governing copyrights. Each school owns the copyrights to their games, meets and contests. Taping another school's game without permission could constitute a violation of the copyright law.

Volleyball Information – Regular Season

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 520](http://www.mshsl.org/governance) (www.mshsl.org/governance) for information regarding:

- Contests
- Equipment Issued
- Last Date to Join a Team
- Practice Sessions before First Contest
- Season Begins

RALLY SCORING

Rally scoring shall be used for all interscholastic matches in Minnesota. The match format for rally scoring is as follows:

- All matches shall be best three-of-five sets.
- Sets shall be played to 25 points (*no cap*) and the fifth and deciding set shall be played to 15 points (*no cap*). The let serve shall be allowed and play shall continue provided net contact is entirely within the net antennas.

Each team shall be allowed two time-outs per set, with a total of 10 time-outs if five sets are played.

VARSITY MATCHES FOR THE DUAL MEET SEASON

1. Length of Sets (Rule 1-2-1): A team that has scored 25 points rally scored and is at least two points ahead is the winner. If the leading team does not have a two-point advantage, play shall continue until one team has a two-point advantage.
2. Length of Match (Rule 1-2-1): A match consists of the best three-out-of five sets. The fourth and/or fifth set shall not be played unless it is necessary to determine the winner of the match. If a fifth and deciding set is played, a team scoring 15 points and is at least two points ahead is the winner.
3. The Ball (Rule 3-2-1): In all varsity contests the use of the three-colored panel volleyball in grey/blue, white is required. Sub-varsity may utilize the three-colored panel ball or solid white volleyball.

SUB-VARSITY & INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

Sub-varsity matches and invitational tournaments shall be best-of-three sets rally scored to 25 points (*no cap*) and the third set played to 15 points (*no cap*).

In sub-varsity and invitational tournaments, a match consists of the best two-out-of three sets rally scored to 25 points (*no cap*). **PLEASE NOTE:** If a team wins a sub-varsity match in two sets, the competing schools may elect to play the third set. If the third set is played match officials and contest personnel (scorers, timers, etc.) must be present and the set must be counted as one of the five sets per day (or 15 for tournament exception) permitted for individual players. The third set shall not be played if contest personnel (scorers, timers, etc.) are not available.

If schools elect not to play the third set but elect to conduct a scrimmage during the available time prior to the next match, the scrimmage must adhere to [Bylaw 411](#), Scheduling of Contests, Game Definition.

Schools should decide prior to a sub-varsity match whether they will play a third set or conduct a scrimmage and notify the game officials and contest personnel. If both coaches cannot agree, the third set cannot be played. The schedule of matches should respect the contracted times for the match officials.

MOUTHGUARDS

The use of mouthguards is strongly recommended. Mouthguards that have been cut down or modified in any manner are illegal equipment. Any color mouthguard is permitted for volleyball, including transparent.

OFFICIALS

Schools are required to employ a First Referee and a Second Referee for interscholastic matches. Two line judges will be assigned to each match for the state tournament. Two or four line judges may be secured for subsection and section tournaments.

PROTOCOL FOR TEAMS AND OFFICIALS

A. **BENCHES:** **During the regular season, teams will not switch sides.** Home team will choose their side.

B. **COIN FLIP:** Pre-game captain's meeting will determine Serve or Serve Receive by coin toss.

C. **WARM-UP PERIOD**

1. Directed by Second Referee.
2. Timed by timer on visible scoreboard and Second Referee on stopwatch.
3. 20 minutes of warm-up:
 - a. 4 minutes of **shared court time**
 - b. 6 minutes of **warm-up** by visiting team with 15 second warning whistle.
 - c. 6 minutes of **warm-up** by home team with 15 second warning whistle.
 - d. 2 minutes of **exclusive warm-up** by visiting team with 15 second warning whistle.
 - e. 2 minutes of **exclusive warm-up** by home team with 15 second warning whistle.

Space needs to be provided for the other team during the six-minute court time periods.

D. **INTRODUCTIONS:** First Referee and L1 stand on sideline near officials stand (facing benches) with first referee standing closest to net. Second Referee and L2 stand on sideline near bench (facing court on opposite side of net from First Referee) with Second Referee standing closest to net. During the anthem and introductions, line judges will stand without flags - L1 places flag on referee stand and L2 on scorer's table.

1. First Referee whistles both teams to their respective end lines, teams remain on their respective end line until number '4' below. Coaches remain in the team bench area;
2. National Anthem is played;
3. Announcer introduces visiting reserves, starters and coaches; followed by home team reserves, starters and coaches;
4. First Referee whistles and signals:
 - a. The starting players to immediately take the court to begin the match
 - b. The remaining team members (including libero) will proceed to the team bench area.
5. Officials and line judges assume their match positions.
6. For sets 2 through 5, players report directly to the playing court.

E. **BEGINNING OF FIRST SET IN THE MATCH:** First Referee on stand and Second Referee by scoring table:

1. First Referee signals starters to end line;
2. First Referee whistles and signals players onto court (arms extended in front, bring palms together over net).

3. For sets two through five, players report directly to the playing court.

F. END OF SET: First Referee whistles and signals players to their respective benches.

1. Non-Deciding Set - First Referee whistles and signals players the end of set and directs players to their team benches.
2. Deciding Set
 - a. The First Referee whistles, signals end of set and directs players to their team benches.
 - b. The Second Referee double whistles and raises coin in the air to signal the captains to go near the officials table for deciding coin toss. (Home teams calls the toss).
 - c. The Second Referee communicates results to the First Referee extending an outstretched arm on the side of the team to serve first and giving the appropriate signal indicating if teams remain on their current side or change.
 - d. The First Referee whistles to start the 3-minute clock between sets.
 - e. The Second Referee verifies the 3-minute clock has started.

G. END OF MATCH:

1. First Referee whistles, gives the end-of-set signal and whistles and signals the teams to shake hands at net.
2. The Second Referee verifies the score by initialing the score sheet. Match becomes official when the scoresheet is initialed.
3. The officials leave the confines of the gymnasium together.

Volleyball Information – Post Season

REGION/SECTION SEEDING CONSISTENCY - [Seeding Consistency](http://www.mshsl.org/sectionseeding) (www.mshsl.org/sectionseeding)

ELIGIBILITY DURING MSHSL TOURNAMENTS - SUBSECTION, SECTION AND STATE

Refer to [Bylaw 206.4.B.1.d](#): A student must be fully eligible under all local school district policies, MSHSL Bylaws and Rules & Policies to be in uniform, occupy the bench or playing area, participate and receive individual/team awards, including all-tournament honors, in the awards ceremony.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN LEAGUE-SPONSORED TOURNAMENTS

Refer to [Bylaw 405](#): A member school must schedule a minimum of three interscholastic varsity games, meets or matches to qualify for League-sponsored tournament participation in that sport.

SECTION TOURNAMENTS

All information and directions for Section Volleyball Tournaments will come to each school from the Section Tournament Manager.

ADVANCEMENT FROM SECTION TO STATE

One team from each section will advance to the State Tournament. All Section Tournament matches shall be best three-of-five sets rally scored to 25 (no cap). The fifth and deciding set shall be played to 15 points (no cap) (**Rule 1-2-1**). The Region Committee will establish the tournament formats which determine that section's representative to the State Tournament.

STATE TOURNAMENT QUALIFYING SCHOOL INFORMATION

Specific information for qualifying schools is posted on MSHSL Dashboards under State Tournament Resources.

CLASSES

The Girls Volleyball State Tournament will be played in four classes, determined by school enrollment.

Class AAAA: Largest 64

Class AAA: Next 64

Class AA: Next 128

Class A: Remainder

The Boys Volleyball State Tournament will be played in one class.

OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT BALL

Baden (VX5EC-220 Perfection, Blue/White/Grey)

SEEDING THE STATE TOURNAMENT

The coaches of the teams who qualify for the state tournament will rank the eight section teams to determine the eight seeds (teams do not rank themselves). Teams will be placed in the bracket as follows:

#1 vs. #8 #4 vs. #5 #2 vs. #7 #3 vs. #6

Brackets will be posted to the MSHSL website on Sunday before the start of the state tournament.

OFFICIAL SQUAD

18 Players

2 Student Managers

3 Coaches

Total of 23

AWARDS

Subsection

- Medals: To all members of the official squad of the first and second place teams **(23)**.
- Trophies: To the first and second place teams.

Section

- Medals: To all members of the official squad of the first and second place teams **(23)**.
- Trophies: To the first and second place team.

State

- Certificates of Participation: To each student member of the official squad **(23)**.
- Certificates of Recognition: To the head coach and the two assistant coaches of each team.
- Medals: To each member of the official squad **(23)** including the coaches of the first - third place teams.
- Trophies: To the first - fourth place teams and consolation winner.
- An All-Tournament team will be selected.

Note: It is a violation of MSHSL policy for a member school or a representative of a member school to establish, distribute or accept any awards not provided by the MSHSL for section or state tournament.