

**USA Volleyball
2011-2012 Rules Interpretation Bulletin #1
February 2012**

Player Equipment, Rule 4.5.1 & USAV 4.5.1

1. A player would like to play while wearing a foam martial arts-type helmet. She/he has a note from a doctor recommending the player wears such a helmet during play. Should this be allowed?

RULING: Yes, this type of helmet would not create an unfair advantage for the player, and does not present greater risk for injury than a player's head without such a helmet. The player should have a note from a medical professional (doctor or athletic trainer) recommending the player wear such an item.

Hard shell helmets would not be allowed under this exemption to USAV 4.5.1, no matter how well padded.

2. A player with a hearing impairment is wearing a cochlear ear implant (pictured below). Is this type of equipment allowed?



RULING: Yes, this piece of medical equipment would be permitted, similar to an insulin pump, heart monitoring device, or any other hearing aid. Exposed wires that connect the hearing aid to an audio transmitter, and the audio transmitter itself (if worn), may need to be tucked under the uniform.

The Libero, 2011-2013 Rule Changes & Modifications

NOTE: Rule 19.1 now states that a team may designate up to two (2) specialized defensive players, i.e., Liberos, for the match. The Liberos must be recorded on the line-up sheet for the first set of the match. The Libero designation is for the duration of the match, except in the case where re-designation is permitted. (See below.)

1. If a team designates only one Libero at the start of the match, can the team designate a different player as Libero for subsequent sets in the match?

RULING: No. Whether a team designates one or two Liberos for the start of the match, the player(s) designated as Libero prior to the match will be the only players who may participate as a Libero in the match, except in the cases where re-designation is permitted. (See below.).

2. If a team designates two Liberos for the match, are both Liberos required to wear the same color jersey?

RULING: No. Each Libero is required to wear a jersey that clearly contrasts with the jerseys worn by the regular players. They are not, however, required to wear the same color jersey.



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3. If a rally is stopped and replayed, can the Libero on the bench (second Libero) replace the Acting Libero on the court even though a completed rally has not occurred?

RULING: No. Libero replacements, including the replacement of one Libero for another, may only occur after a completed rally.

4. The starting Libero is on the court in replacement of #8. At the end of the rally, can the second Libero directly replace the Acting Libero without the need for #8 to return to the court?

RULING: Yes, either the player who was replaced by the Acting Libero, or the second Libero, may replace the Acting Libero on the court following a completed rally. When the original player returns to the court, she/he will replace either of the Liberos currently occupying that position.

5. If a team designates two Liberos for the match, can either Libero replace a starting player for the first rally of the match?

RULING: The starting Libero must be declared on the line-up sheet submitted prior to the start of the match. If a Libero will play in the first rally of the match, this must be the starting Libero as declared on the line-up sheet in the first Libero box. After the first completed rally of the match, either Libero may enter the match to replace a back-row player. It is not required that the starting Libero play in the match before the second Libero can enter. (See also: USAV Casebook)

6. After the second referee has checked a team's line-up at the beginning of Set 3, the second Libero, whose number is listed in the second Libero box on the line-up sheet, replaces a back-row player.

RULING: Correct procedure. The Libero listed in the first box is designated the starting Libero. If a Libero enters the match prior to the first service of the match, it must be the starting Libero. After the first completed rally of the match, either the starting or second Libero may enter the court.

7. When the Acting Libero's position rotates to the front row, can the second Libero immediately replace another back-row player when the Acting Libero is replaced, without an intervening rally?

RULING: No. This would necessitate two replacements during the same set interval. Rule 19.3.2.1 states: "...there must be a completed rally between two replacements involving a Libero (unless a penalty causes a rotation to position 4, or the Acting Libero becomes unable to play, making the rally incomplete.)"

8. Team B's coach has designated two Liberos on the line-up sheet for Set 1. The line-up sheet for Set 2 shows a different number for one of the Liberos.

RULING: Incorrect procedure. Designation of one or two Liberos is for the entire match. Any Libero(s) listed on the line-up sheet for Set 1 may not be changed unless re-designation becomes necessary (See Rule 19.4). In the case of re-designation, neither of the original Liberos may return to play in the match. **NOTE:** The 2011-2012 USAV line-up sheet does not provide boxes for designating a Libero(s) for any set other than the first.

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Rule 19.4: Re-designation of a New Libero, 2011-2013 Rule Changes & Modifications

1. Team A's starting Libero replaces #17. The Libero becomes ill and cannot continue playing. Team A's second Libero and another player, #20, are on the bench.

RULING: Either the second Libero or the player the Libero replaced, #17 in this case, may replace the ill Acting Libero on the court. If both Liberos become ill or injured, another player may be re-designated as Libero. If re-designation occurs, it is for the remainder of the match, and the original Libero(s) may not re-enter the match.

2. Team B has designated two Liberos for the match. The Acting Libero becomes injured on the court. Can Team B re-designate another Libero in order to continue the match with two Liberos?

RULING: No. A team that has designated two Liberos for the match will continue with only one Libero if the starting or second Libero becomes ill or injured. A team may re-designate a Libero only in the case when the team has been reduced to NO Libero(s) through injury or illness. If re-designation occurs, it is for the remainder of the match, and the original Libero(s) may not re-enter the match.

Special Notes regarding re-designation and expulsions/disqualifications:

- When a team has designated only one Libero for the match and that Libero is disqualified, the team may NOT re-designate another Libero. They must play the remainder of the match with no Libero. Similarly, if a team has designated two Liberos for the match and they are both disqualified, the team will play with no Libero for the remainder of the match.
- When a team has designated two Liberos, and one is injured, ill or unable to play, and the other is disqualified, the team may re-designate one Libero to replace the injured/ill player.
- When a team has designated only one Libero for the match and that Libero is expelled, the team will play without a Libero for the remainder of that set. If the team has designated two Liberos, and one is injured, ill or unable to continue play, and the other Libero is expelled, the team will play without a Libero for the remainder of that set.

Rule 17.1: Exceptional Substitutions and the Libero, 2011-2013 Rule Changes & Modifications

NOTE: The priority listing for exceptional substitutions remains unchanged. See Rule 15.7a (i).

1. Team B has listed six players and two Liberos on its roster. A Team B player becomes injured on the court and cannot continue to play. Neither of Team B's Liberos is on the court at the time of the injury. Which Libero can be used as an exceptional substitution?

RULING: When neither Libero is on the court at the time of the injury, either Libero may be selected as the exceptional substitute, at the team's discretion. The Libero must change jerseys to match the rest of the team. The team will continue the match with only one Libero.



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2. Team B consists of six players and two Liberos for the match. Team B #10 becomes injured on the court and cannot continue to play. Team B's starting Libero is on the court in replacement of #12 at the time of the injury. The second Libero is on the bench. What is the exceptional substitution procedure in this case?

RULING: Team B has two options when a Libero must be used in the exceptional substitution procedure: 1) The second Libero on the bench may be used as the exceptional substitute for the injured #10; or 2) player #12 returns to the court for the Acting Libero, and then the Acting Libero may be used as the exceptional substitute for injured #10. In either case, the Libero used as an exceptional substitute must change uniforms to match the rest of the team.

3. Team B consists of six players and two Liberos for the match. Team B #10 becomes injured on the court. Team B's starting Libero is on the court in replacement of #12 at the time of the injury. Team B's coach would like a Libero to replace #10 instead of using an exceptional substitution. Since a Libero was on the court at the time of the injury, is this permitted?

RULING: No. This would require two Libero replacements during the same dead-ball period, and consequently is not permitted.

Officiating Procedures: Deciding Set Coin Toss & Pre-Match Protocol with Two Liberos

1. Editorial Correction: DCR, pages 120-121, #21: During the deciding set coin toss, the TEAM captains, not *game* captains, will represent their respective teams at the toss, per Rule 7.1.1.
2. During the pre-match team presentations (used at National-level events), when a team has two Liberos, the following protocol will be used:
 - The teams line up along the bench sideline, shoulder to shoulder, facing the court.
 - The first player standing at the sideline/attack line intersection outside the substitution zone is the team captain. She/he is the player closest to the referee on her/his respective side of the court.
 - The STARTING Libero stands next to the team captain.
 - The remaining team members, preferably in ascending numerical order, follow the STARTING Libero.
 - The second Libero will be the last player in the team presentation line.