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To: Head Volleyball Coaches
From: Cindy Simmons, OSAA Assistant Executive Director
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Subject: NFHS Ball-Handling Information
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In an effort to be more "consistent" nationwide, NFHS has produced training materials to assist officials in the area of ball-handling calls. These materials are in line with the materials Oregon has developed and taught statewide for the past three years (from Section H of the NFHS Volleyball Casebook). Remember, a ball-handling call is a judgment call and not open to debate. Keeping that in mind, the information detailed below is being sent to you so you are aware of the following guidelines that all OSAA officials are instructed to use:

[2009-2010 NFHS Volleyball Case Book and Manual – Part 3, Section H, Pages 76-81](#)
[Guidelines for Determining Ball-Handling Violations \(excerpts\)](#)

Legal Hit: Contact with the player's body that does not allow the ball to visibly come to rest, or have prolonged contact with a player.

Criteria officials should consider each time a ball is contacted:

- a. Did the contact result in a lifting, pushing, holding, throwing, rolling, or carrying action?
- b. Did the ball change direction by holding or guiding it during contact?
- c. Did the player carry the ball across the plane of her body?
- d. Was it a roll or spin?
- e. Did the ball visibly come to rest or have prolonged contact?
- f. Was the ball over-controlled?

Only Criteria – Vision

Not sound; Not unusual body position; Not unusual flight of the ball

Double Hit: A player illegally contacts the ball twice in succession. It can be either two attempts in succession or the ball rebounding from one part of the body to one or more other parts on a single attempt to play the ball (except on the first team hit or a block).

Tips on how to judge ball-handling:

- The ball should never be allowed to roll.
- On a two-hand set or overhand pass the hands must contact the ball simultaneously, except on the team's first hit.
- No prolonged contact should take place on a tip. A good rule of thumb to watch for is did the player try to change the direction of the ball by holding or guiding it during contact.
- A palms-open hit is not necessarily illegal.
- It is illegal if a player carries the ball across the plane of her body.
- A spinning ball off the first pad of fingers is probably legal.
- Continued or steady contact or a steady force results in an illegal hit.

Good volleyball is about excellence of skills. An official's job is to enforce the rules and guidelines to ensure that athletes are given an equal opportunity to play to the best of their abilities. Be fair, be consistent, and follow the rules. Ball-handling is about constant, consistent judgment calls.

The ball-handling controversy has been around for ages and will continue to be an issue in the future. We will continue to educate officials and improve in this area statewide for the sake of consistency as teams compete throughout the state.