



BEACH VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE RULES

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SECTION 1 – SPORTSMANSHIP AND SPIRIT SCORES

Sportsmanship and the CVSSC:

The CVSSC endeavours to make all games as safe and fun as possible, emphasizing the 'Spirit of the Game' no matter the sport or level of play. All players are expected to play with an overriding emphasis on sportsmanship, fair play and a fun-first approach. Players, or teams, that do not play by these values may league discipline, including suspension or expulsion from the leagues.

Spirit Scores Explained (Not Collected for Volleyball):

To help ensure that teams adopt a sportsmanlike manner in games, the CVSSC collects post-game sportsmanship ratings known as 'spirit scores' from team captains in most leagues. In these 'spirit scores,' team captains are grading their opponents on a 0-5 scale on how fair and fun they were to play. These scores are kept private until the end of the regular season, but are used for the following purposes: (1) The first tie-breaker in the standings, thereby rewarding the more sportsmanlike team in the event of a tie; (2) Identifying whether a team may need to be addressed in regards to their behaviour, rules knowledge, or for safety concerns during the season; (3) Putting together an objective, peer-sourced review of each team to help support any decisions by the league to reward the most sportsmanlike teams in the CVSSC and/or discipline the least sportsmanlike teams.

Reporting Scores and Spirit Scores:

Captains can report the volleyball scores to the CVSSC coordinator after the game, where possible. If there is no CVSSC representative, or that rep is unavailable, please send the information to Scott Petersen (Director, CVSSC) at scott@comoxvalleysports.ca within 24 hours of your game. If you do not report these scores within 24 hours, whatever game score is submitted will be used by default.

Reporting Sportsmanship Concerns:

Captains are encouraged to communicate with each other before games, and during stoppages in play, if any issues need to be resolved. If not sufficiently resolved by the opposing team, please contact the CVSSC coordinator at an appropriate time for help, when possible. If you deem the issue requires further action, please send a summary of the incident to the league at the email address above.

SECTION 2 – WEATHER AND CANCELLATION POLICY

Indoor Sports Weather Policy:

The CVSSC is unlikely to cancel indoor games due to weather conditions, unless they result in the facility being closed or otherwise inaccessible. Teams will be contacted via the 'cancellation call' protocol below when that is the case.

Outdoor Sports Weather Policy:

While spring and summer in the Comox Valley can be absolutely stunning, these seasons can also be full of erratic weather, with conditions differing wildly from one part of the valley to another. The CVSSC will cancel and re-schedule games when it's believed the weather or field conditions may compromise safety or playing experience. However, since field space and available game nights are at a premium, players should expect to play through some wind/rain during an outdoor sports season for most sports.

- **Weekday Sports** – The initial decision on whether to play or cancel the games will take place by 4 p.m. on game nights. Unless notified of a cancellation via the 'cancellation call' protocol below, please proceed to your game as scheduled. The field coordinator and team captains can consult with each other on whether to delay the start time and/or cancel the games if the weather or field conditions have worsened.
- **Weekend Sports** – Unless otherwise notified before game time via the 'cancellation call' procedures below, teams should show up to the field for their game times regardless of weather. A call on whether to postpone start time, play or cancel, will be made by the team captains (in conjunction with the coordinator, when applicable). Missed games will be re-scheduled when possible.

Cancellation Call:

When games are cancelled, the CVSSC will notify its players via the following methods:

- **Facebook Posting** – When games are cancelled, a notice will be posted on the CVSSC Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/ComoxValleySports/ for all players to see. Typically, weather cancellations will be posted around 4 p.m.
- **Captains Email** – Once games have been cancelled (weather, gym closure, field closure, etc...), the CVSSC will send out an email to team captains and singles teams. This is typically only possible if the decision is received/made by 4 p.m.
- **Coordinator Phone/Text** – When cancellations are last-minute, or that decision is reached at the field/ beach courts, we will attempt to contact team captains and singles via phone call or text. Beach volleyball is a bit more weather dependant than most sports and more likely to have the info delivered this route.

SECTION 3 – EQUIPMENT, SET-UP AND CLEAN-UP

Equipment:

- **CVSSC Equipment:** A CVSSC coordinator will bring beach volleyballs, scoreboards, inflation equipment and court lines to the games. They will also typically have a music player.
- **Players' Equipment:** Players are welcome to bring their own beach volleyballs and use them for game action, as long as both teams agree on the ball.

Court Set-Up:

- Please arrive 15 minutes early to help set-up the court lines, stretch and warm up so that games can start as close to the noted start time as possible.
- Any obvious debris found on the court should be removed before beginning play.
- If the sand or nets need any maintenance, please notify the coordinator so that we can have someone from the city out to rake and level the sand or fix the nets.

Court Clean-Up:

- At the end of the evening, please help wind up the court lines (along with the bungies and stakes), collect the scoreboards and volleyballs and return them to the coordinator's gear station for storage. Many helping hands make this task easier and faster.
- Please make sure to clean up after yourselves and your team. This includes any garbage, water bottles, and clothing.
- The CVSSC is not responsible for any clothing, water bottles or valuables left behind at any sports or events.

SECTION 4 – ROSTERS, SUBS AND DEFAULTS

Rosters:

- There is no maximum number of players that can be on a roster, but teams are advised to include all players they expect will play on their roster when registering. Most beach volleyball rosters will have 4-7 players.
- A registered team can bring in additional players that are not on their roster during the season. They must fill out a waiver prior to playing.
- In the spirit of sportsmanship, players are expected to have played with the team during the regular season to be able to play with them in the playoffs.
- In the playoffs, teams that are playing for a chance at first place (typically the top 4 teams) can only field players that have played at least 1 regular season game for them. Teams outside the top 4 may bring in subs via the usual sub rules.
- Individual team rosters (aka singles teams) and league information will be emailed out within 48 hours of first scheduled game.

Subs:

- The CVSSC will attempt to post a publicly available 'Subs List' within the first 2-3 weeks of the regular season starting. The subs list can be accessed via a link on each sport's individual page on the website at www.comoxvalleysports.ca.
- Teams may also contact Scott at the CVSSC for a list of potential subs at scott@comoxvalleysports.ca.
- Teams may bring in subs whenever they are short players. Those subs must fill out a waiver prior to playing.
- In the spirit of sportsmanship, teams are expected to bring in subs of a similar skill level to those missing. Bringing in 'ringers' for games is heavily discouraged.
- Team captains are advised to run any subs past their opponents before the game, for their approval. This is designed to give a team a say in which player(s) they get to play and avoid the possibility of a ringer swinging the game result.
- Teams may borrow player(s) from another team (such as a team in a previous time slot), as long as said player(s) are needed to make a game happen, and meet the subbing requirements (similar skill level of player(s) replacing, and agreed upon by opposing team).

Defaults:

- If a team is unable to field the minimum number of players (2 players, with at least 1 female) within 15 minutes of the scheduled game time, the result will go

down as a first-set victory for the opponent. The second set will also be forfeited at the 25-minute mark.

- Any team that defaults more than once in a season can face further league discipline, including potentially being removed from the league.
- Because the leagues are about playing, and having fun, an opponent may waive their right to a default victory before the game and choose to play. They may even loan players to make it happen. But both teams must agree before the game whether the result will count in the standings. That decision cannot be reversed after the fact.

*If a game is a default, please split up players and play for fun. The idea is to have as good of a time as possible, each time out. Ask the coordinator for ideas or help to make it work if you need it.

SECTION 5 – MATCH PLAY AND FORMAT

General Format:

- Most game nights will be 75-90 minute time slots, though sometimes they may be 45-60 minutes in duration. Please arrive early to change, warm up and stretch before taking over the court for your time slot and start your games promptly.
- Double-opponent game nights are best-of-3 sets for each game. Single-opponent games may be either best-of-3 or best-of-5 sets. A team has won the game when it has won a majority number of the sets.
- Games can end in a tie during the regular season if there isn't enough time to suitably complete a tie-breaker set.
- Points are scored on a 'rally serve' basis, where either team can record a point on each serve.
- All sets other than tie-breakers will go to a hard cap of 21 points. Tie-breaker sets go to a maximum hard cap of 15, but will often be shorter due to time constraints. Teams do not need to win by 2 points.
- When approaching a tie-breaker scenario, there must be at least five minutes left in the time slot to start a new set. Please attempt to consult with the coordinator for a suitable number of points to compete to as a hard cap. If time constraints (or weather/darkness) cause the coordinator to stop the game before a hard cap point total is reached, the team with the most points gets the victory – assuming at least 5 points have been scored in the set.
- Teams are comprised of four players on the court, with at least one being a woman.
- Players can rotate off the court for subs, but at least one woman must remain on the court at all times.
- Players should rotate one position clockwise after every change of serve.

SECTION 6 – GENERAL RULES

Game Play Rules and Guidelines:

- During warm-up, team captains should meet to discuss any issues, decide who gets first serve with a game of RPS (rock, paper, scissors) and promptly get the game started.
- Teams switch sides for each set. The team that lost the previous set will always get first serve to start the next set.
- Teams are responsible to call their own fouls and whether the ball was in or out on the boundary lines. If there is a dispute over a point (whether the ball was in or out of bounds, a carry was committed, or whether someone had a net infraction), please re-serve the point.

Serving:

- Players should attempt to serve from behind the back boundary line without stepping onto the line or into the court.
- A player can only have five consecutive successful serves garnering points before rotating to the next player on his/her team to serve.
- If a serve touches the net on the way over, it is still in play.
- Serves cannot be blocked or spiked by the opponent.

Touches:

- Teams have up to three touches to volley the ball back to the other side of the net, and please do your best to use all of them to keep everyone involved. (A block does not count as a touch.)
- Players are allowed to contact the ball with any part of their body. However, players should attempt to use their arms/hands when possible and do their best to avoid kicking motions that could end up contacting someone else going for the ball and/or spray sand into the air.
- Players are allowed a double-hit on a service reception (ie. The ball hits the arms and then the chest in quick succession) with it only counting as a single hit. (This same rule applies when returning a hard spike.)

Blocking:

- Players are allowed to put their hands above the plane of the net to block an attack, as long as they do not contact the top band of the net.
- Players cannot reach over the plane of the net to block an opponent's set or otherwise interfere with their attack.

- When an attack is partially blocked and the ball ends up on the blocker's side of the net, the block does not count as one of the three allowable hits.

Hitting (Recreational to Intermediate Leagues):

- Safety and inclusiveness are priorities in all CVSSC Leagues and our recreational and intermediate leagues have a default setting of no 'hard hitting.' Teams are encouraged to talk about the level of acceptable hitting with each other before a game to make sure a suitable level is being played for both teams that is safe and inclusive for all players on the court. Teams can agree on full hitting before the game (or perhaps only hard hits directed away from certain players) if both are comfortable with that decision.
- 'Hard hitting' is loosely defined as a level of hitting that could cause injury or discomfort to a member of either team. Players should use discretion and be aware of how hard and where they are spiking the ball.
- If at any point the level of hitting doesn't seem suitable, or is a worry, please pause play and talk it over with the other team to reach a consensus. The coordinator can also be involved to ensure a fun and safe game for all.
- Try not to contact the net when hitting and playing and call your own net infractions, particularly when they're obvious. A net infraction is a stoppage of play and awarding of the point to the opposing team.
- Players are expected to rotate through the positions to give everyone a chance to hit. Teams are not allowed to repetitively set the same person to hit.

Hitting (Competitive Leagues):

- The competitive league is full hitting. However, if a team winds up in the competitive league that is not comfortable with full hitting, they should contact the coordinator and see if a solution can be found.
- Back row attacks are allowed.

Hitting and Net Infractions (General):

- A player's hands may cross the plane of the net on the follow through of an attack, as long as initial contact is on their side of the net.
- If an attacking player contacts the top band of the net, it is a foul and a point is awarded to the other team.
- Players are allowed to contact the net (aside from the top band) as long as it does not interfere with the play or cause an unsafe situation. However, players

are asked to stay in control on the court and ensure they're avoiding collisions with the net, as well as teammates and opponents.

- Players are allowed to go slightly under the net in making a play, but again are asked to keep in control of their bodies and avoid contact. If a player contacts an opponent under the net, it is a foul and a point is awarded to the other team.

SECTION 7 – SCHEDULES, SCORES, STANDINGS AND PLAYOFFS

Schedules:

Schedules will be posted online and accessible via the 'Schedule' link on each sport's page online within 48 before the first game, with team captains and singles registrants all notified via email. Each subsequent schedule update will follow the same protocol. Please double-check your schedule online before each game and notify the CVSSC of any issues or discrepancies at scott@comoxvalleysports.ca.

Scores:

Game Scores should be submitted to the CVSSC coordinator by both teams at the end of the game. If a coordinator is not available, both teams should email the info to scott@comoxvalleysports.ca within 24 hours. If only one team submits a score, that score will be used in updating the standings.

Standings:

The Standings Page of the CVSSC will be updated on a weekly basis (typically by Friday mornings) and can be viewed online at: www.comoxvalleysports.ca/league-standings.php. Players can click their team name to review game scores, while the standings page also has filters to allow players the ability to search the results for various seasons and years.

- **Final standings** – Are determined by number of points (two for a win; one for a tie; zero for a loss).
- **Tie-breakers** – (1) Spirit points totals (in all leagues that collect spirit points); (2) Most wins; (3) Points differential; (4) Head-to-head result; (5) Coin flip or RPS.

Playoffs:

Playoffs will be scheduled to take up anywhere from 1-3 weeks of the scheduled season. All teams make the playoffs, but typically only the top four seeds have a shot at finishing in first place to allow for closer games and hopefully allow for as much fun as possible. Playoff matches will be set by the CVSSC based on the standings at the end of the regular season and teams will be notified via the 'schedule' protocols listed above.

*The CVSSC reserves the right to alter the schedule and adjust match-ups, tiers, and tweak the final standings in order to make sure everyone is playing at the level most suitable to them, and to maximize safety and fun.

SECTION 8 – WAIVERS, FIELDS AND FACILITIES

Waivers:

All players must sign a waiver, which outlines the CVSSC's liability and sportsmanship policies (among other things), before playing a game. Players need only sign a CVSSC waiver once since 2014 to be allowed to play, regardless of the number of sports or seasons they are participating in. Captains must make sure any new players and subs have signed a waiver before playing. Coordinators will typically have access to waivers they can sign.

Field and Facilities:

The CVSSC rents playing fields and facilities from various providers throughout the Comox Valley. Please be exceptionally respectful of each location, whether indoors or outdoors, to ensure the CVSSC maintains a great reputation and can continue booking many of the best fields and facilities available and offer these recreational sports leagues. Here are some important things expected from our players:

- **Smoking/Drinking:** Please follow proper protocol on smoking. And unless otherwise specified, the CVSSC establishments are alcohol free.
- **Garbage:** Please clean up after yourself before leaving – including water bottles.
- **Damages:** You will be held responsible for any damages you cause. Please be respectful of the facilities and fields we rent.
- **Footwear:** Bring clean, non-marking shoes for indoors. No metal cleats allowed for outdoors.
- **Changing and Warm-Up:** Please arrive 15 minutes early to get changed and warm up. But make sure your warm-up doesn't affect games in progress, and for indoor sports, please don't play with balls in the halls. It is disruptive and can cause damage.

Alcohol Policy:

The CVSSC rents public facilities for all its leagues and tournaments. These facilities, unless otherwise stated, are unlicensed. As such, the consumption of alcohol during CVSSC league games and tournaments (unless in a licensed area) is not legal and prohibited.

Sponsor Bars:

If players would like to socialize over some food or drink, the CVSSC sets up Sponsor Bar deals at various locations. Check out the details online at:

<http://www.comoxvalleysports.ca/sponsors.php>.