Volley 4s in Suffolk

Organisational guide for players and teachers

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Introduction

At the 2026 Suffolk VA AGM it was agreed to move the rules applied to the inter-school events which we run in partnership with Suffolk PE & Sports Network closer to Volleyball England's Volley4s rules with an aim to allow novice officials to apply them correctly[1].

Participating teams will continue to officiate matches when they are not playing.

To aid application of the rules:

- We will no longer prioritise line judges over a dedicated second-ref, but squads of five or six will still have line judges
- Scorer will be asked to keep track of how many consecutive serves a player has won
- Teams will be required to hand a line-up sheet to Rotation Tracker prior to each game. Clipboards will be provided to clip these to and pegs to indicate who served most recently. When Scorer indicates a new team to serve, Rotation Tracker will tell serving team which player should serve.
- Each team should arrive at the event with a captain already selected. Amongst other things they will be responsible for:
    - Determining which of their players will perform each officiating role for each of their matches
    - Submitting line-up sheet to rotation tracker official

For each match teams of four players will require:

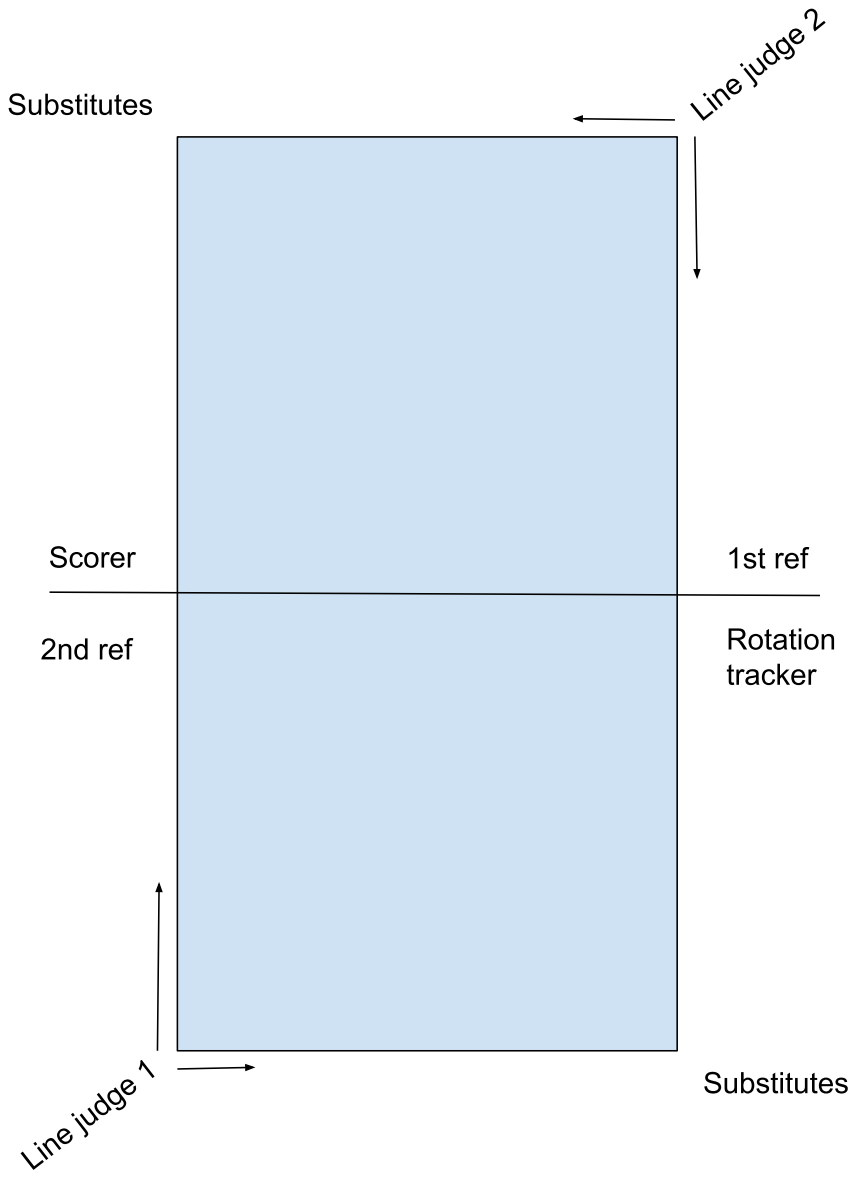
- **First referee** - good communicator and knowledge of the rules
- **Second referee** - willing to watch action around net rather than the ball and squeeze whistle repetitively to intervene
- **Scorer** - able to remember how many consecutive points a team has won from a given player's serve and shout "new server" / "team who lost that point now rotates and serves" after three / six points have been won from a given player's serve
- **Rotation tracker**
    - Willing to interact with both teams to ensure they can match entries on line-up sheet with players on court
    - Able to remember players names / identify them from kit and keep track of who's turn it will be to serve next, quickly communicate with first referee when incorrect player is about to serve.

Teams with five or six players will additionally require:

- **Line judges** - line judges each watch two lines. They must be able to position self well to allow them to clearly see the baseline at their end of the court and the whole length of the sideline on their side of the court (i.e. beyond the net and up to the far end of the court).

[1] Proposal presented to 2025 Suffolk VA AGM - link

Positioning of officials and substitutes



Role descriptions

Officials

First referee

- Call captains together to arrange rock-paper-scisors as soon as both teams are on court to determine serving team / court end
- Intervene if incorrect player is about to serve
- Intervene if serving team attempts to serve before officials and receiving team are ready
- Stop play if ball from another court comes onto court
- Determine & indicate who won each point (with help of second ref and line-judges where available)
    - Squeeze whistle if it is not clear point has ended (e.g. catch, four touches, double touch, net touch)
    - Indicate winner of point and check scorer awards to correct team
- Resolve any disputes, calling on event organisers where necessary

Rotation tracker

- Collect lineup sheets from teams after who will play at each end and who will serve first has been determined
- Attach lineup sheets to correct side of clipboard
- Work with teams to ensure they understand which player each entry on line-up sheet corresponds to and ensure teams are lined up in correct order
    - Serving team
        - Server will be at top of sheet
        - Any players starting off court will be next
        - Remaining three who start on court will follow
    - Receiving team
        - Any players starting off court will be at top of sheet
        - Right-most front-court player will be next
        - Remaining three who start on court will follow
- Use pegs to track who has served most recently
- Understand from first referee and scorer when it is time for a team to rotate
- Quickly communicate with first referee when incorrect player is about to serve.

Second ref

- Keep track of which player is the backcourt player
    - Serving team: Server
    - Receiving team: Most-recent server or player in “serving” position if team hasn’t yet served
- Squeeze whistle repetitively during rally in following situations:
    - Stop play if ball from another court comes onto court
    - Foot over centre line
    - Net touch
    - Backcourt player attacking or blocking in front court

Scorer

- Award points on scoreboard as indicated by first ref
- Remember how many consecutive points a team has won from a given player’s serve
- After three points have been won from a given player’s serve: Shout “new server”.
    - The serving team must rotate one position to the next server. The receiving team does not rotate.
- If the same team wins another three consecutive points: Shout “team who lost that point now rotates and serves”.
    - The team which has just won six points does not rotate.
- The scorer will double-up as second ref if the team has only three players.
- At end of game ensure organisers have correctly recorded result before scoreboard is reset.

Playing teams

Captain

- Before event / first match:
    - Bring a pen or pencil - keep with your water bottle
    - See role descriptions above - if possible, discuss with teacher who in your team should take on each officiating role in first match
    - See tactical notes below
    - Prepare line-up sheets for games when you are starting serving and receiving
- When your first playing match is announced:
    - Play “rock paper scissors” with opposing team’s captain
    - Arrange your teammates in order according to the line-up sheet you’ll be handing over
    - Hand lineup sheet to rotation tracker
- During game
    - Demonstrate good sporting conduct and encourage the same from your teammates
    - If any of your team don’t agree with a decision, keep them away from the officials and politely ask the first ref to explain the decision. You may ask

follow-up questions respectfully including asking them to consult tournament organisers.

- End of game:
    - Collect used line-up sheet from rotation tracking official
    - Lead your players in thanking officials and opponents for the game
    - Consult organisers re. where your team needs to be for the next match - which court and what role?
    - Debrief with teammates and, if possible, teacher then let them know where you need to be next
    - Decide whether to continue with a line-up you already have prepared or change to new line-up - get it written down right away if changing
- See also the notes below for Server and, if you'll have more than three teammates, Off-court Players as you'll be in these positions at times too

Server

- Ensure receiving team and officials are ready before serving

Off-court players

- Stay focussed. Be ready to come on to serve as soon as it is your turn.
- Move out of the way if your teammates need to chase the ball outside the court for touch 2 or 3
- Stay out of the way of line judges on adjacent court

Tactical notes for squads with more than four players

- Your substitutes will begin to come on court as soon as you win back serve. These may be on court longer than players who start front-court
- If, following "rock - paper - scissors", you will receive the first serve: Your first server will be your first substitute.

Volley4s Line-up sheets (for squads up to six players)

