



Program Guide

Reno, Nevada

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NATIONAL QUALIFIER TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

RULES OF PLAY

The rules of play are as prescribed in the USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations. (Note for the 2017-2018 season, the “Test” rules regarding what happens when an illegal player is found on the court will be in effect—see Rule Book for updated language (DCR pg. 15)).

TOURNAMENT FORMATS

The tournament format determines the number of pools in a division, the number of teams in each pool and the sequence of play, from pool play through playoffs. A tournament “flow chart” illustrates the sequence of the format components.

MATCH FORMATS

The preferred match format is pools of 4 playing the best 2-out-of-3 sets.

- The first 2 sets play to 25 points, rally scoring, with one (1) team winning by two (2) points and no point cap.
- If a 3rd (deciding) set is necessary, it is played to 15, rally scoring, with one (2) team winning by two (2) points and no point cap.
- Some pools of 3 may play all three (3) sets to 25, regardless of whether a team wins the first two (2). This exception depends on the number of pools of 3 in a division.
- In a 3-team pool, where three (3) sets to 25 are played instead of 2 out of 3, and the final finish in the pool is determined by match record. Should one (1) team win the first 2 sets of the match, that team has won the match, but teams will still play the 3rd set. Should there be a 3-way tie in the pool with all 3 teams having a 1-1 match record, ALL sets played will be used when determining set percentage when going to a tie-breaker. When playing the 3rd set, there will be a coin flip between sets 2 and 3 to determine side, serve and receive, and teams will switch sides when a team reaches 13 points.

For division sizes of 8-16 teams, pools comprised of more than 5 teams may be utilized.

Open Division Formats

The top 4 to 12 teams in an Open Division play 3 rounds of pool play, and, if necessary, a single elimination bracket to determine the overall winner of the tournament.

- The 3rd round of pool play is known as the Gold Pools.
- If a team in one of the top 3 positions in an Open Division previously qualified for the 18’S GJNC, additional matches may be required to determine which teams are awarded bids via the trickle-down process.
 - The Events Department approves formats for additional trickle-down matches prior to the start of the NQ; and,
 - The formats are announced in the tournament information prior to the start of the NQ.

Teams in finish positions lower than the Gold Pools play two rounds of pool play followed by a single elimination bracket.

Some teams may have an additional qualifying, crossover or seeding match prior to Gold Pools or playoff brackets, depending on the number of teams in a division.

- For a field of less than 17 teams, should large pools (more than 6 teams) be used, one round of pool play followed by single elimination brackets is allowed.

USA and American Division Formats

All teams in National USA or American Divisions play 2 rounds of pool play, followed by single elimination playoff brackets.

Some teams may have an additional qualifying, crossover or seeding match prior to Gold bracket or other playoff brackets, depending on the number of teams in a division.

SEEDING OF DIVISIONS

The seeding of divisions within a NQ may be either done by the NQ or the NQ may request that it be done by the USAV seeding committee. Should the NQ choose to seed the Open Divisions, the seed order must be approved by the committee prior to the release of the competition schedule. Alterations to these guidelines must be approved by the USAV Events Department.

Seeding for the 18'S GJNC is determined by team results throughout the year as collected by USA Volleyball and entered into the official registration system using team codes. According to these results, the top quarter of all participating teams in a tournament (first seeded teams in the first round of pool play) are seeded numerically by strength.

POOL PLAY SEQUENCE

Pool play sequences, listed below, are allowable for use with all respective pools in a NQ, unless another sequence is approved by the Events Department:

Round	Four-Team Pools	Three-Team Pools	Five-Team Pools on 2 courts
Match 1	1 vs. 3 (ref 2)	1 vs. 3 (ref 2)	1 vs. 5 and 2 vs. 4 (ref 3)
Match 2	2 vs. 4 (ref 1)	2 vs. 3 (ref 1)	1 vs. 4 and 2 vs. 3 (ref 5)
Match 3	1 vs. 4 (ref 3)	1 vs. 2 (ref 3)	1 Hour Break
Match 4	2 vs. 3 (ref 1)		1 vs. 3 and 4 vs. 5 (ref 2)
Match 5	3 vs. 4 (ref 2)		2 vs. 5 and 3 vs. 4 (ref 1)
Match 6	1 vs. 2 (ref 4)		1 vs. 2 and 3 vs. 5 (ref 4)

Round	Four-Team Pools court 1	Four-Team Pools court 2
Match 1	A 1 vs. 3 (ref B3)	A 2 vs. 4 (ref B2)
Match 2	B 1 vs. 3 (ref A3)	B 2 vs. 4 (ref A4)
Match 3	A 2 vs. 3 (ref B3)	A 1 vs. 4 (ref B4)
Match 4	B 2 vs. 3 (ref A2)	B 1 vs. 4 (ref A4)
Match 5	A 1 vs. 2 (ref B4)	A 3 vs. 4 (ref B1)
Match 6	B 3 vs. 4 (ref A1)	B 1 vs. 2 (ref A3)

A team's final pool finish is determined by match results. If team(s) are tied at the completion of pool play, tie breaker procedures will apply (See [Procedures for Breaking Ties](#)).

PLAYING SCHEDULES

- All pool play matches are scheduled at least one (1) hour apart. Some pools may have play on two days to complete the pool (for example, begin play one day in the evening and finish the next morning).
- The first match of a pool must begin at its scheduled time. Within a pool, and after the first match, a match may begin up to 15 minutes before the scheduled starting time provided the two (2) teams competing, the officials and the tournament staff all agree to it, and provided that there is sufficient time for the warm-up protocol.
- For NQs, trickle-down matches are required to be played only if necessary to determine bid awards.
- Playoff brackets may not be larger than 24 teams.
- All teams will be scheduled for at least 1 match on the final day of competition.

COURT USE

- Events may not schedule more than 13 matches on a court in one day, unless otherwise approved by the USAV Events Department. Tie-breaking sets do not count as scheduled matches.
- Final matches of the day must be scheduled to begin no later than 9:00 p.m. (with an 8:00 a.m. start) or 9:30 p.m. (with an 8:30 a.m. start).
- For NQs matches on day 3 of competition, matches may not be scheduled to begin later than 3:00 p.m.
- For NQs if a division is larger than 64 teams, the first round of playoffs can be scheduled for the second day. Teams must still be given a minimum of 1 match on the third day.

WARM-UP PROTOCOL

For Junior competition, when one team has exclusive use of the court, the other team must either be at its team bench or out of the playing area. Warming up with balls at the team bench or in the spectator walkways is not permitted. Only USAV members may be on the playing surface to assist with shagging balls during warm-ups. Only USAV members may be on the playing surface to assist with shagging balls during warm-ups.

Primary Warm-up Protocol – (5-4-4): – For all teams in their first match of a round of play.

- Five (5) minutes of shared court time for ball handling; and
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the serving team; and
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the receiving team.
- There will be no shared hitting time.

Secondary Warm-Up Protocol (2-4-4): For all other matches within the round of play.

- Two (2) minutes of shared court time for ball handling; and
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the serving team; and
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the receiving team.
- There will be no shared hitting time.

A crossover match or tie-breaking match that immediately follows pool play is part of that previous single round of play; teams follow the Secondary Warm-Up Protocol set out below.

A crossover match, seeding match or qualifying match that occurs after a scheduled break, after the conclusion of pool play, is a separate round of play; teams in this round follow the Primary Warm-Up Protocol. If all Parties agree, the warm-up time may be shortened.

Only USAV members may be on the playing surface to assist with shagging balls during warm-ups.

PROCEDURES FOR BREAKING TIES

At the conclusion of a pool, the pool finish positions of the teams are determined by their pool match records.

- If there is a tie in match record among 2 or more teams in the pool, tie(s) will be resolved using the 18'S GJNC National Tie Break Rules.
- Even in 3 team pools where all 3 sets are required to be played, match record - not set record - will determine a team's finish in the pool.

TWO-WAY TIES: 2 teams tied in match record

There will be *no* tie breaker sets.

- The higher finishing team will be the team that won the pool play match between the 2 tied teams (head-to-head). This is the procedure for **all two-way ties**, even when one team might still win a bid.

THREE-WAY TIES: Where **no team can advance** to win a bid OR Non-Elimination Scenarios

If 3 or more teams are tied in match record, the ties are broken by applying the following steps, in order, without repeating any step, except when two (2) teams remain tied when all steps in the process have been exhausted.

- Pool match record.
- Head-to-head results. (Pool larger than 4 teams.) Applied when a team has either defeated or lost to all teams with which it is tied.
- Set percentage (sets won divided by total sets played). This is done by determining each team's set percentage (divide each team's total sets won in the pool by the total sets played). The team with the highest set percentage is first.
- If some or all of the teams have the same set percentage, then determine the point percentage of the teams that are still tied (divide each team's total points scored by the total points scored by all the team's opponents in that pool).
- Should 2 teams remain tied, the result of their Head-to-Head match will break the tie.

THREE-WAY TIES: Where **1 or more teams may advance** to win a bid

There are several scenarios in which three-way ties can occur. The resolution for each tie breaker scenario depends on both the number of teams that can advance to win a bid from the pool, AND which pool finish position is at stake for the tied teams.

SEEDING TIE BREAKER SETS

The *seeds* for teams tied in match record involved in the tie breaker sets are determined by:

- Set percentage: The total number of sets played in the pool (sets won divided by total sets played).
 - The team with the highest set percentage is seeded highest.

If the teams are still tied:

- Point percentage: Each team's total points scored divided by the total points scored by the team's opponents in that pool.
 - The team with the highest point percentage is seeded first.

If the teams are still tied:

- Should two (2) teams remain tied, the result of their Head-to-Head match will break the tie.

PLAYING TIE BREAKER SETS

Scenario One – 1 Team Advances

- All tied teams will participate in tie breaker sets.
- Set 1: the #2 seed will play the #3 seed, and the #1 seed will officiate. The loser of Set 1 will be in position #3 of the tied teams and will officiate the next tie breaker set.
- Set 2: the winner of Set 1 will play the #1 seed and the loser of Set 1 will officiate. The winner of Set 2 will be in position #1 of the tied teams and the loser will be in position #2.

If, for any reason at the start of the warm up period for the receiving team (second warmup period), 1 of the tied teams is unavailable for the resolution of the tie at the time the court official is ready to proceed, that team will automatically become 3rd of the tied teams and the other 2 teams will play one (1) tie breaker set. "Unavailable" is defined for a team playing in the tie-breaker set as not having a legal roster to begin a match. For a team assigned to officiate a tie-breaker set, a team must have every required position covered.

Scenario Two – 2 Teams Advance

- The #1 seed does not have a playoff set. The #1 seed finishes in position #1 of the tied teams.
- The #2 seed will play the #3 seed and the #1 seed will officiate. The winner will be in position #2 of the tied teams and the loser of this set will be in position #3 of the tied teams.

If, for any reason at the start of the Second Warmup Period, one (1) of the tied teams is unavailable for the resolution of the tie at the time the court official is ready to proceed, that team will be ranked third of the tied teams. The remaining teams will finish 1st and 2nd in the pool based on the tie breaker seeding process. No other penalty will be applied and no tie breaker set is played. "Unavailable" is defined for a team playing in the tie-breaker set as not having a legal roster to begin a match. For a team assigned to officiate a tie-breaker set, a team must have every required position covered.

Scenario Three – Ties Involving More Than 3 Teams

Within a pool, should a tie occur involving more than 3 teams, the process for breaking that tie should be coordinated by NQ staff with a member of the USAV Events Department prior to the start of the event.

TIE BREAKER PROCEDURES FOR THIRD ROUND OPEN DIVISION POOLS (GOLD POOLS)

If 3 teams are tied, ALL 3 TEAMS WILL PARTICIPATE (PLAY and/or OFFICIATE) IN TIE BREAKER SETS. Follow the *Seeding the [Tie Breaker Sets](#)* to seed the teams, and *Scenario One* above for the Set Play Order.

If ***all teams in the Gold Pool are qualified, OR the result of a tie breaking process has no bearing on the awarding of a bid(s) in that pool (i.e. all teams involved in the tie either already have a bid or will receive a bid regardless of the tie break process) or any other teams in another pool of this round of play, there will be no tie breaker sets for that pool. Ties are resolved by ranking according to set percentage, or, if necessary, point percentage.

In the case that there is only one Gold Pool in the third round and 2 bids are available:

- The #1 seed does not have a playoff set. The #1 seed finishes 1st in the pool and receives the 1st bid.
- The #2 seed will play the #3 seed and the #1 seed will officiate. The winner will be 2nd place in the pool and will receive the 2nd bid. The loser of this set will be 3rd place in the pool.

FORMAT FOR TIE BREAKER SETS

- Tie break sets are played to 25 points with one (1) team winning by two (2) points, no cap.
- Teams will switch sides at 13 points.

PENALTIES FOR MISSED TIE BREAKER SETS

- It is the responsibility of a team's coach to know if there is a potential tie in pool play finish and to have his/her team available courtside for tie breaker sets as soon as the last match of the pool is finished. Play of tie breaker sets will not be delayed in order to locate a team or provide time for a team to return to the court. "Unavailable" is defined for a team playing in the tie-breaker set as having a legal roster to begin a match. For a team assigned to officiate a tie-breaker set, a team must have every required position covered.

In a three-way tie, where 1 or more teams is not at courtside at the finish of the last match of the pool, the teams remaining will play for position, if necessary.

- The team(s) that left will finish lower than the team(s) that remained.
- The position of the team(s) that left will be determined following the tie break procedure as it pertains to the pool and advancing positions available.
- There are no other penalties for a team that is not present for tie breaking sets.

TEAM AND PLAYER POLICIES

TEAM FORFEITURES

A team that intentionally forfeits a match at an Event will be excluded from further participation in that NQ.

- The forfeit is intentional unless the team shows good cause for the forfeit.
 - The Event Arbitrator will determine if good cause exists.
 - The Event or Arbitrator will report any team that intentionally forfeits a match to the Events Department.
- Forfeiting teams may be subject to a fine paid to the event in the amount not to exceed that as posted by the event in its pre-tournament information.
- For all NQs, if a team intentionally forfeits a match in the Gold Level during the third round of pool play or bracket play in an Open Division or during Gold playoff bracket matches in a National, USA, or American Division, the team's penalty will be:
 - The forfeiting team is ineligible for participation that that years GJNC and 18'S GJNC ALL Adult Members listed on the verified event roster and the Club Director will be suspended from participating in all NQs, Regional Qualification Events and the GJNC for the remainder of that season and the following season.

Last Day Forfeits

Teams that enter a NQ are committing to participating in the full event. Teams have control over their travel plans and those plans should be made so that a team will not have to forfeit any matches.

A team that forfeits a match for any reason other than illness, injury or emergency is denying another team a match. Additionally, in a single elimination format, it is poor sportsmanship to deny a team the right to move on by beating them and then forfeiting out of the event. Furthermore, it is even more unacceptable to forfeit and then, as loser of the match, not to remain and officiate the next match.

Teams that have no flexibility in their travel plans and know they will need to leave before their division completes play will report to the tournament director no later than the end of play on the day prior to the final day of tournament.

The Event Arbitrator with the input of the tournament director will decide what forfeitures are needed. Teams forfeiting should recognize that additional penalties may apply.

- Teams that refuse to play a match to determine 3rd and 4th place in the tournament will both finish 4th, and there will be no 3rd place awarded in the tournament.
- Teams that forfeit a last day match are still responsible to officiate the next match scheduled on their court. Teams playing the next scheduled match may not be required to begin play early.

TEAM OFFICIATING DUTIES

The NQ must publish an officiating assignment schedule for the teams; the teams must fulfill all their scheduled officiating assignments.

Teams are responsible for providing an officiating/work crew for matches in which they are not scheduled to play. Those work assignments can be found in the official play schedule. For planning purposes, be prepared to provide the following officials:

- Second Referee (18's GJNC provides R2)
 - NEW!!! Must be a rostered adult for **ALL** age division matches
- Certified Scorer (PENALTIES NOTED BELOW)
- Scoreboard Operator
- Libero Tracker
- 2 Line Judges

Non-rostered personnel may be allowed to work on the officiating team, with the exception of the R2 position, provided they can provide documentation that they are registered with a region of USAV to include a current membership, cleared background screening, and taken SafeSport, as well as have the appropriate certifications. Appropriate paperwork would need to be provided for Foreign Team personnel.

- A team's failure to have a complete officiating crew—including a rostered adult for that team—available and on time for an officiating assignment will result in the team having to forfeit the first game of its next match.
- For every minute an officiating team is late to fulfill its assignment, one (1) point will be awarded to that team's next opponent in the first game of the next match for up to 25 points. No more than 25 points will be awarded to the team's next opponent, even if the team designated to officiate misses the entire match. The time that determines how many penalty points are assessed begins at the start of the receiving team's warm-up.
- A team will forfeit its entire next match for failing, a second time, to have an officiating crew available on time for an officiating assignment.

**Penalties for missing officiating assignments in a three-way tie breaker differ from these Team Officiating Duties penalties (see [Procedures for Breaking Ties](#)).*