

Wisconsin Independent Volleyball League

RULES FOR SPRING 2026 SEASON

A) General Administration

- 1) **League Objective.** The purpose of this league is to find a means to introduce the game of volleyball to girls at an age where they can become interested in the game, develop gradually and are more productive as players by the time they get to high school. We want to do this in a way that doesn't force athletes to choose between volleyball and basketball, and, where possible, softball, soccer or another sport. Communities who participate will be encouraged to put the focus on learning the game in a practice or clinic context. This will be coupled with matches to give the players an opportunity to apply the skills they've learned at practice in competitive situations. While we may establish a boys or co-ed portion of the League if interest exists, play in the WIVL is currently open only to girls.
- 2) **Regular Meet Fees.** For the 2026 Spring season, each team will be assessed meet fees of \$30 per match and will also receive a hosting credit of \$17 per match for each team hosted (including the host team). Each team can play as many matches as they like at each meet, provided that they play at least three. For example:
 - If team A chooses to play three matches on April 11, that team's meet fees for the day will be \$90 (3 matches x \$30 per match) and the host will receive a hosting credit of \$51 (3 matches x \$17 per match) for hosting that team.
 - If team B chooses to play four matches on April 25 that team's meet fees for the day will be \$120 (4 matches x \$30 per match) and the host will receive a hosting credit of \$68 (4 matches x \$17) for hosting that team.
 - If team C chooses to play five matches on May 2, that team's meet fees for the day will be \$150 (5 matches x \$30 per match) and the host will receive a hosting credit of \$85 (5 matches x \$17 per match) for hosting that team.
- 3) **Directions.** By March 2, 2026, each hosting association (or team) must designate the gyms at which meets will be played, with detailed narrative directions on how to get to each gym from all four directions. As part of those directions, each host must provide an exact street address for each venue to facilitate the use of GPS by traveling parents and coaches. These will be posted on the League's website for access by all coaches, parents and players.
- 4) **Rosters, Liability Waivers and Concussion Agreements:** All teams must submit the following information at least two weeks before the first meet your team will play or no later than **March 14:**
 - A roster for your team. Rosters can be submitted on the "roster form" that is posted on the website at gnbl.org (or a word-processed document with all of the required information). On the website, simply click on the link for "Roster Form" on the "Volleyball League" drop-down menu. Rosters must contain each player's first and last name, jersey number, home address, school and grade during the 2025-2026 school year (you can update this list as needed via email throughout the season by providing the names of new players, delete names of players no longer on the team, changes in jersey numbers, etc.).

Rosters can be returned to the league by scanning and emailing to jen@gnbl.org, or faxing to 715-796-2872, or mailing to GNBL, P O Box 506, Hudson, WI 54016.

- A "Consent for Medical Treatment and Voluntary Release, Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Risks Indemnity Agreement" (hereafter "Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreement").
 - The Liability Waiver, the "Parent and Athlete Concussion Law Agreement" and the coach's Concussion Agreement have been combined into one document to simplify paperwork for coaches and associations. To have parents/guardians submit Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreements online, have them visit our website at gnbl.org, then click on "Waiver/Concussion Info" in the top menu bar. From there, they can follow the online instructions.

Liability Waivers/Concussion Agreements must be submitted each school year for each player and each coach – we must have a newly submitted form each season. We strongly urge you to take this process seriously. The Liability Waiver/ Concussion Agreement provides legal protection to you as a coach, your school and your referees, not just those parties organizing the League.

- All coaches and assistant coaches are also required to complete the online Waiver/Concussion Agreement. The Coach Concussion Agreement has been made a part of the Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreement – so if you have signed this document for your child, you are in compliance. If you are coaching and do not have a child participating, please complete the Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreement form using your own name instead of the player name.
- If a player was on a basketball team that participated in The Great Northwest Basketball League, that player's Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreement from basketball also covers her for the volleyball league. The parent/guardian does not have to complete the waiver/concussion agreement again.

Failure to comply with these rules by not returning completed rosters or having parents/guardians complete Liability Waivers/ Concussion Agreements online, could result in loss of meets this year or exclusion next season.

5) **Website.** The League maintains a website which includes the following items:

- **Rules:** League rules are posted for all coaches, parents and players to access.
- **Roster Submission Form**
- **Consent for Medical Treatment and Voluntary Release/Concussion Agreement:** Parents/guardians and coaches can fill this form out directly online.
- **Schedules and Scores:** Meet schedules will be posted and updated as changes occur. A schedule of meet participants will be posted and updated as changes occur. By Monday, March 2, a detailed meet schedule will be posted on the website for all teams playing on Saturday, March 7.

On March 9 the detailed meet schedule will be posted on the website for the next Saturday's meet on March 14, showing each meet match-up, court assignments and start times.

By March 9, "skeletal" meet schedules will be posted on the website for the March 21, March 28, April 4, April 11, April 18, April 25, May 2 and May 10 (for regular 4th/5th and 6th grade meets; not League Championships). The "skeletal" schedules will list who plays where and how many matches, but not the exact opponent and time of each match. This process will be repeated every Monday for the next Saturday's meets. The detailed schedules will be posted by Monday each week showing the next Saturday's match-ups, court assignments and start times.

Host teams will be required to submit scores within 48 hours of the completion of each meet. Scores will be posted on the website on a weekly basis.

- **Standings:** Standings for 7th and 8th grade teams will be calculated and posted weekly.
 - **Camps & Clinics:** We will post any WIVL team hosting a volleyball camp or clinic flyer, registration forms and information to the website on the "Camps & Clinic" page.
- 6) **Communication with League.** If a team has a question, complaint or suggestion, it must come to us from one of that team's coaches or the team manager. In that way, we know the point raised represents the view of that team and not an individual. We will respond only to those phone calls and e-mails from those individuals whose names are submitted to us when each team registers (or subsequently) and are, therefore, listed in the League's official contact list. Questions, complaints and suggestions from parents should be voiced to the team's coach or team manager and if he/she concurs, the coach/manager should contact Tracie Tilton at 715-749-9048, email tracie@gnbl.org.

B) Scheduling

- 1) **Play Dates.** Spring league games in 2026 will be played on ten consecutive Saturdays: March 7, March 14, March 21, March 28, April 4, April 11, April 18, April 25, May 2 and May 9 (regular meets for 4th/5th and 6th grade and League Championship Tournaments for 7th and 8th grade).
- 2) **League Divisions.** The Spring 2026 season will have four separate playing divisions: one each for 6th, 7th and 8th grade, and a combined division for 4th and 5th grade teams.
- 3) **Meet Format.** We will again use a flexible form of scheduling. By "flexible," we mean that there will be no specific number of teams at a meet placed into specific pools. Instead, teams will be scheduled into a specific number of matches designed to maximize the diversity of competition, giving each team the option of how many matches they want to play at each meet. Teams can choose to play three, four, five or more matches per day as follows:
 - If a team chooses to play three matches, it will likely be scheduled in three consecutive time slots, or over no more than four time slots, so that this team is making only a half-day commitment.
 - If a team chooses to play four matches a day, these matches will likely be scheduled over five to six time slots, with some back-to-back matches and some one time slot breaks between matches.

- If a team chooses to play five matches a day, it will be making a full day commitment (e.g., 8:00 a.m. or 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m.), with five matches over a six, seven or eight time slot day. The length of a team’s day, however, will depend on how many courts are being used by the host team that day, how many other teams are in attendance and how many other grades are being hosted on that day by the host team.
- If a team wants to play more than five matches per day, it won’t likely have any longer day than those teams playing five matches, but it will play more back-to-back matches.

For illustrative purposes, let’s assume that Amery is hosting a 6th grade meet on three playing surfaces. Also, assume the following:

- Five teams (Clayton, Spring Valley, Cameron, New Richmond and River Falls) attend and want to play three matches each.
- Three teams (Hudson, Prescott and Barron) attend and want to play four matches each.
- Four teams (Rice Lake, Altoona, St. Croix Central and Osceola) attend and want to play five matches each.
- One team (Amery) wants to play seven matches.

The resulting schedule might look something like this:

<u>Start Time</u>	<u>Court 1</u>	<u>Court 2</u>	<u>Court 3</u>
9:00 a.m.	Amery v. Clayton	New Richmond v. Barron	St. Croix Central v. Osceola
9:50 a.m.	Amery v. Barron	Clayton v. New Richmond	Rice Lake v. Altoona
10:40 a.m.	Amery v. St. Croix Central	Osceola v. Barron	Rice Lake v. New Richmond
11:30 a.m.	Prescott v. St. Croix Central	Osceola v. Altoona	Clayton v. Hudson
12:20 p.m.	Amery v. Rice Lake	Prescott v. Barron	River Falls v. Hudson
1:10 p.m.	Amery v. Osceola	Altoona v. Spring Valley	Cameron v. St. Croix Central
2:00 p.m.	Amery v. Hudson	Rice Lake v. Prescott	River Falls v. St. Croix Central
2:50 p.m.	Osceola v. Spring Valley	Rice Lake v. Cameron	River Falls v. Altoona
3:40 p.m.	Amery v. Prescott	Spring Valley v. Cameron	Hudson v. Altoona

- 4) **Who Plays When, Where and at What Time.** Teams can play as many or as few meets as they want. Teams can specify on which date they are available to play and on which ones they aren’t. They also can specify on which dates they want to host. Teams playing five or more matches per day need to be prepared to start as early as 8:00 a.m. and play as late as 5:30 p.m. (some teams may start at 8:30 a.m. and be done by 3:30 p.m.; others may not start until 11:00 a.m. but play their last match at 5:30 p.m.). Although teams playing only three or four matches per date may request an a.m. or p.m. time slot assignment *on a specific date or two*, we cannot guarantee teams that they will play only early (8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) or only late (1:00 to 5:30 p.m.). Also, making such a

request may increase travel time if, on a given date, the closer host at a team's grade level is not hosting in the preferred time slot.

Please be aware that the League reserves the right to limit the number of matches for teams needing to be scheduled in the same location in opposite time slots because they have only one coach. In many cases, it is not possible to allow two teams of the same grade to play in opposite time slots at a meet. Coaching two teams of the same grade and wanting no overlapping matches may not be possible and the total number of matches for each team will be reduced when needed.

- 5) **Hosting.** When hosting, a community needs two playing surfaces for a full day for each grade (first match starting between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m., and last match starting sometime between 3:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. depending on attendance at that meet). A community can also host a meet for one or two grades on three playing surfaces on the same Saturday. If a host has four or more playing surfaces, it can host meets for multiple grades on the same date (up to three grades if four surfaces).

If the League has an insufficient number of hosts to accommodate the number of meets that registered teams want to play, the League will be forced to cut down the number of meets teams are playing in. The League will cut down on meets for those teams requesting the largest number of meets compared to the number they plan to host. This process will be continued until such time as demand for playing space is reduced to match our meet capacity.

Conversely, if the League has too many hosts to the point that meet capacity exceeds the demand for play dates, the League will ask teams hosting a larger number of meets to host fewer. This process will be repeated until such time as the total capacity of playing space is reduced to match the demand for play dates.

- 6) **Length of Matches.** 4th/5th and 6th grade matches will be scheduled at 50 minute intervals, with actual anticipated match time of 45 minutes and 5 minutes allotted for warm-up for the next match.

7th and 8th grade matches will be scheduled at 55 minute intervals, with actual anticipated match time of 50 minutes and 5 minutes allotted for warm-up for the next match.

- 7) **Season-Ending League Championship Tournament (LCT) for 8th Grade and 7th Grade.** On Saturday, May 9, the League will hold two separate League Championship Tournaments (LCT) for teams in 8th grade and 7th grade, provided that centrally-located communities with adequate playing surfaces agree to host on that date. (There will be regular meets scheduled for teams in 6th grade or 5th/4th grade.) Each LCT will be hosted by a different community or group of communities. A team must play in at least two meets prior to May 2 to be eligible to participate in the LCT. If more teams at a given grade level sign-up to play in the LCT than court capacity allows, we will give preferential treatment to teams with the best match and set records as of the completion of the May 2 meets.

At the LCT, each team will play between five and six matches. Teams will be seeded based on their season's record. Trophies will be awarded to the 1st through 4th place finishers in each grade, as well as to the Consolation Champions (there will be no Consolation Championship in any field with less than 16 teams). Medallions will be awarded to individuals on those teams that win a trophy. The League will provide ten awards per team at the event. Players on teams that fail to win a trophy will not receive individual awards. The cost to play in the LCT will be \$185. The slightly higher cost of the LCT relative to regular meets accounts for the increased number of matches each team will be playing, the cost of the awards and added staff time to organize a large event. Hosts of

the LCT will be allowed to charge \$8 per adult and \$3 per student (versus \$5 adult/\$2 student during the regular season) to also help cover the added cost of hosting a larger event of this nature. As with regular League meets, LCT host communities (not the League) retain all admission proceeds and all concession profits.

C) Meet Organization Issues

- 1) **Roster Options.** Players are allowed to play "up" a grade (as well as at their own grade level), but not "down." In other words, a 6th grader can play up" with a 7th grade team, but a 7th grader cannot play "down" on a 6th grade team.

Players can play for two different teams from the same district, or can play up a grade and for their own grade. For example, a 7th grade player could play for her 7th grade team and also play on the 8th grade team; or a player could play for the "Blue" team and also play on the "Red" team.

All players on a team must reside in the same school district, except where:

- Two Wisconsin Division 4 or Division 5 communities – or one Wisconsin Division 3 and one Wisconsin Division 4 or Division 5 community – can combine their players if one or both communities otherwise would not have enough players to field a team at that age level. No Division 1 or 2 community can field a team in the League with players from another community, nor can two Division 3 communities put forward a combined team. For Minnesota communities the rule is very similar. Two Minnesota Class A communities – or one Minnesota Class A and one Minnesota Class AA community – can combine their players if one or both communities otherwise would not have enough players to field a team at that age level. No Class AAA community can field a team in the League with players from another community, nor can two Class AA communities put forward a combined team. **Teams that decide to use this rule exception must notify the League that they are doing so and include both community names in the team name.**
- A player attends a public school in another community, or a private school in her community of residence or another community, in which case the player in question will have the option of playing for either her school's team, or playing for the community's team, but she cannot play on both. (An example: a player living in Elk Mound, but attending school at Chippewa Falls Notre Dame, can play for Elk Mound or Chippewa Falls McDonell, but not both.)
- In a joint custody situation, a player who lives with one parent in District A and whose other parent coaches a volleyball team that plays in the WIVL, who lives in District B, can play on a team representing either District A or District B, but cannot play on both.
- The children of a school district paid teacher who also coaches the varsity volleyball team, where that varsity coach lives in a district other than the one in which he or she teaches and coaches, can play on a team representing either district, but cannot play on both.

- 2) **Uniforms, Colors and Numbers.** All players on a team must wear the same colored jersey, shirt or top (except for the libero, where allowed – see Section D-12 of these Rules), with a number on the back. A number on the front is **strongly** recommended, but not absolutely required.

- 3) **Officials and Scorekeepers.** Hosts must provide only one official per match. While WIAA certified officials are preferred, there is no absolute requirement that game officials be certified. They are, however, expected to be fully knowledgeable of all WIAA and League rules, as well as experienced, mature and patient. The official in each match will act as the time-keeper.

New for 2026: Each team must provide one scorekeeper to keep scores for the matches they are playing in. One scorekeeper per team will be allowed into the meet with no admission fee.

- 4) **Line Judges.** Each participant team will provide one of two line judges in all regular season matches and LCT matches. Teams who refuse to provide a line judge will forfeit the match in question for purposes of win/loss records in the standings, but the match will be played for "fun." A player from a team competing in a given match can be used as a line judge, but must do so for a full set (not necessarily for the full match). It is strongly recommended that line judges be 6th grade or older.
- 5) **Pre-Meet Contacts.** Each team is responsible for confirming their participation in the next week's meet by contacting Tracie at tracie@gnbl.org (only one coach or contact from each team should confirm). Teams will have until the **Monday, 12-days prior** to the meet at 10:00 p.m. to confirm their attendance. Unconfirmed teams will be removed from meets.

It is important when confirming your attendance that you include your team name and grade, as well as the date of the meet and host site (*for example: "I'm confirming attendance for Hudson Navy 7th grade at the April 11 meet in Barron"*).

Here are the deadlines for each date meets will be held:

- **March 7 meets:** Teams playing on March 7 will be notified via email on or before February 23 and will need to confirm their attendance for that date. Schedules for this date will be posted on March 9.
 - **March 14 meets:** Confirm by March 2. The "skeletal" schedule for this date will be posted as soon as possible after the host dates are confirmed.
 - **March 21 meets:** Confirm by March 9.
 - **March 28 meets:** Confirm by March 16.
 - **April 4 meets:** Confirm by March 23.
 - **April 11 meets:** Confirm by March 30.
 - **April 18 meets:** Confirm by April 6.
 - **April 25 meets:** Confirm by April 13.
 - **May 2 meets:** Confirm by April 20.
 - **May 9 meets for 6th and 5th/4th grade teams:** Confirm by April 27.
 - League staff will contact teams to confirm attendance at the **May 9 League Championship Tournaments for 8th and 7th grade teams.**
- 6) **Admission.** Each host community is allowed to charge admission for entrance to each meet but is not required to do so. If a host community decides to charge an admission fee, it cannot be more than \$5 for an adult and \$2 for a student (high school or under). All admission proceeds go to the host community.

If a host community decides to charge admission, it must use some form of ink stamp to designate who has already paid. Since most attendees will leave the gym area from time to time during the

meet, this will avoid disagreements about who has and hasn't paid. All players, and up to two coaches per team, will be admitted without paying an admission fee.

- 7) **Practice Balls.** Each team participating in a meet must bring their own warm up balls.
- 8) **Game Balls.** The host team will provide game balls at each court.
- 9) **Concessions.** Hosts at all meets need to provide full concessions. All costs associated with the running of the concession stand, as well as all proceeds, will be retained by the host community.
- 10) **Cancellation.** Teams that drop out of League meets will be charged as follows:
 - Teams that drop out of a particular meet after the skeletal schedule has been posted, but before the detailed schedule has been prepared, will not be required to pay for that meet.
 - Teams dropping out of a particular meet on less than **ten (10) days** notice, after confirming their attendance to League staff via phone or e-mail, will be required to pay 100% of the cost of the meet from which they are canceling. Coaches who intentionally and repeatedly wait to drop out of a meet on five or fewer days notice, after having confirmed their attendance by League staff, or who don't communicate the fact to the League on a timely basis that they will be a "no show" before the meet commences, will not be invited back the next season and may be removed from subsequent meets this season, including the League Championship Tournament.
 - Teams that leave a meet early for reasons other than legitimate concerns about inclement weather, or a lack of players due to illness or injury, also risk expulsion from the League. For such an early departure to be "excused" and not subject to sanctions, the departing team coach must first talk with the host's meet director and persuade him/her that the reason(s) for their early departure are legitimate. The League will consider expelling a coach, a team or players on a given team if:
 - The team drops or misses one or more meets without a legitimate, non-weather-related excuse.
 - The team leaves a meet early for reasons other than weather, illness or injuries and without first consulting with the host's meet director.
 - A coach or parent is repeatedly disruptive at games.
 - A coach violates the League rule by having players "play down" or otherwise knowingly uses an ineligible player in a League-sponsored event.
 - A team fails to pay its meet fees, the coach of that team and sponsoring association will be suspended from League participation until all past due fees for that team have been paid -- parents who are in arrears for their proportionate share of a team's fees will not be allowed to have any family member participate in the League until all past due fees have been paid (those teams that had fee payments materially past due, who eventually make full payment and are not expelled from the League, will be required to make fee payments for any subsequent seasons, in advance, when submitting their Enrollment Forms).
 - If a team fails to submit a roster and have parents/guardians for each player complete a Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreement for each rostered player (Section A-4) as required by the League.
 - If a coach is knowingly engaged in conduct detrimental to the best interests of the League. The League will decide whether circumstances warrant immediate expulsion. If expulsion

isn't immediate, the League will decide after a season is concluded whether or not a program or a particular team or coach will be invited to participate next season. A local association's entire program may be dismissed from the League if it fails to pay an invoice or fails to control the attendance and/or conduct of all its players and coaches. The League has full discretion to determine participation in League scheduled matches.

- **Weather-related Cancellations:** If poor road conditions exist in and around the host community the night before the meet, the meet host should contact all meet participants. In most cases, delaying the start of the meet by one or two hours will allow road crews to clear streets and make travel safer. The host can discuss with visiting teams whether their teams plan to attend the meet, or if the host may need to cancel. Where appropriate, contact must also be made early the next morning for the same purposes. In all cases, the decision should be made based on actual road conditions, not simply on a forecast. When severe weather is forecast, the League will provide hosts with contact information for teams attending their meet on the Friday before the event.

- 11) **Re-formatting -- If a Team Fails to Show.** If a team fails to show at a particular meet, the host and those teams whose schedules are affected by the no-show team, can seek to make minor adjustments in the schedule to make up for the lost match. For instance, if team A was to have played the no-show team at 10:00 a.m., and team B the no-show team at 10:55 a.m., these two teams can approach the host and seek to move another match to an adjacent time slot to allow A and B to play each other at either 10:00 a.m. or 10:55 a.m. This, however, will not always be possible. Hosts will not entirely re-do the schedule to cover for a no-show team and will make only those modest efforts that do not materially impact other attendees.
- 12) **Reporting Meet Results.** Each host team must report the exact score of each set of each match played at its meet to the League no later than 10:00 a.m. on the Monday after Saturday's meet. Hosts who fail to report scores on a timely basis will have their hosting credit reduced by \$100 for each week, or portion of a week, that they are late in reporting. For the Spring 2026 season, all scores will again be directed to Tracie Tilton.

Scores must be reported in the order listed on the schedule page. The best way to report scores is to take a photo with your cell phone and email directly to Tracie (tracie@gnbl.org) or write or word process the scores on the schedule page that can be printed from the website for the appropriate division. Options for submitting scores are as follows (these are listed in order of League preference, although any option is acceptable as long as it's on time, complete, accurate and legible):

- Fax: 715-749-4198
- E-mail: tracie@gnbl.org
- Call: 715-749-9048 and leave a voicemail message if Tracie doesn't answer. Those calling in scores have two minutes of space per call to report, so speak quickly, but clearly.

Individuals reporting scores should leave a phone number at which they can be reached on Monday during business hours if Tracie has a follow-up question (those reporting should take scores with them to work Monday morning so they can clarify any issues).

- 13) **League Standings.** League standings are published on the website for the exclusive purpose of seeding the season-ending League Championship Tournament for teams in 8th and 7th grade. No standings will be posted for 6th and 5th/4th grade teams.

- 14) **Complaints/Suggestions.** Coaches at a meet with complaints about officials, concessions, player/coach conduct, etc., should first voice these to a representative of the host community or the coach of the host team. If the problem persists, a written complaint should be filed by the coach with the League. This can be emailed to Tracie Tilton (tracie@gnbl.org) or Terri Green (terri@gnbl.org). The League will only accept complaints from one of the team's coaches, varsity coach or association contact; complaints from parents, players or other non-coaching individuals will not be acknowledged or processed.

D) Game Rules

- 1) **General Rules.** Except as specified below, WIAA rules will be followed. The fact that a specific rule issue is not addressed below, doesn't mean that the League is not concerned with that rule. It simply means that, on that point, WIAA rules control. A copy of such rules can be obtained from your varsity coach or by contacting the National Federation of State High School Associations (www.nfhs.com, then click on "Volleyball").
- 2) **Conduct.** WIAA rules regarding player conduct will be strictly observed. Players, coaches, parents and others who use profanity, are demonstrative or loud in their criticism of the official, or are in any way belligerent, will be dealt with decisively. The official will not confront a player, parent or other relevant party in the stands. The official will identify for the coach the offending party and the nature of the offense. There will be one warning. If there is a second incident, the offending individual or individuals will be instructed by the relevant coach to leave the playing area. That person will then be given two minutes to leave the area; failure to do so will result in the team involved forfeiting the match. If a forfeiture in a match is declared, and if the offending individual has still not left the area by the time that team's next match is scheduled to begin, that match will also be forfeited by the team associated with the offending individual.

Once the ejected individual or individuals involved leaves the area, he/she will be banned from the playing area for the rest of that play date (any of the remaining matches), even if the offending party is a player. The official(s) involved in officiating the match(es) in question will make a telephonic report to the League. The League will have the authority to determine whether the ban will apply to the affected individual or individuals for a specific number of subsequent meets or possibly the entire season.

- 3) **Scoring.** All matches will use a rally scoring system. Scoring in the various divisions will work as follows:
 - **4th/5th and 6th Grade Matches.** Each match will consist of three sets (even if one team wins the first two sets), the first two of which will be played to the score of 25 (win by 2 – no cap).
 - If the first two sets in a 4th/5th or 6th grade match are concluded 20 or more minutes in advance of when the next scheduled match on that surface is posted to begin, then the third set will also be played to a score of 25 (win by 2 – no cap).
 - If the first two sets in a 4th/5th or 6th grade match conclude less than twenty minutes, but more than ten minutes, in advance of when the next scheduled match on that surface is posted to begin, then the third set will be played to a score of 15 (win by 2 – no cap).

- If the first two sets in a 4th/5th or 6th grade match are won by the same team and conclude less than ten minutes in advance of the next scheduled match on that surface is posted to begin, then the third set will not be played.

The official will notify both teams before the third set begins what score will win the third set of that match. In those situations where a meet is running more than ten minutes behind schedule, the host will inform participants that the third set in a match will either not be played (where the same team won the first two), or will be played to a winning score of 11 (where each team won one set).

- **7th and 8th Grade Matches.** Each match will be played until one team wins two sets. The first two sets will be played to a winning score of 25 (win by 2 – no cap). The third set, if necessary, will be played to a winning score of 15 (win by 2 – no cap).

If a preceding match is concluded early, teams in the next match should be prepared to start their match ahead of schedule. If a match on a given playing surface at a meet concludes more than 10 minutes before the time of the next scheduled match, that next match will commence 10 minutes after the conclusion of the last set to be played on that playing surface, rather than at the originally-scheduled time. For example, in a 7th grade meet, if the 2:00 p.m. match on Court #1 concludes at 2:35 p.m., instead of taking a 20-minute intermission, the next match on that court will start at 2:45 p.m. - - 10 minutes after the last set of the previous match concludes.

- 4) **Let Serve.** Consistent with WIAA rules, let serves will be counted as legal serves.
- 5) **Balls.** Regulation WIAA balls will be used at the 8th, 7th and 6th grade levels. In the 5th/4th grade division, the "lite," "volley-lite," "first-touch," or "starter" ball will be used. If both teams involved in a given 5th/4th grade match want to use a regulation ball (i.e., not a "lite," "volley-lite," "first touch," or "starter" ball) they can do so, but only if both coaches agree of their own free will (i.e. one coach doesn't badger the other coach into doing so). If the opposing 5th/4th grade head coaches in a given match disagree on which ball should be used, the "lite," "volley-lite," "first touch" or "starter" ball will be used. The host will provide game balls.
- 6) **Net Height.** The net will be set at 7' 4¹/₈" for 7th and 8th grade matches; and at 7'0" for 4th/5th and 6th grade matches. Where a host community's nets do not adjust down to the specified height for a 4th/5th or 6th grade match, it will be set at the lowest height possible.
- 7) **Service Line / Foot Faults.** The 7th and 8th grades will use the WIAA's 30-foot serving line. The serving line will be set at 24-feet if serving underhand and 30-feet if serving overhand for 4th/5th and 6th grade meets. Foot faults will be called in all 6th, 7th and 8th grade matches. 4th/5th grade teams foot faults will not be called in 4th/5th grade matches where the serving player is serving underhand **and** provided that the serving player starts her serving motion behind the 24-foot line **and**, at the point of release, in the subjective estimation of the referee, is not more than two steps over the 24-foot line. (Note that in 4th/5th grade meets, where the player is serving overhand, foot faults will be called.) Where the 24-foot service line is used, the end line remains at 30 feet. In other words, the playing surface is not shortened just because the serving line is moved up.
- 8) **Serving.** In 4th/5th and 6th grade matches, each player will be limited three successful serves when her turn to serve. On the next point (what would otherwise be the server's fourth serve), the serve will rotate to the next player on her team. The purpose of this rule is to avoid having one dominant player at the younger age levels serve out a match and limit the opportunities for rallies. "Jump" serving is **not** allowed in 4th/5th and 6th grade matches. Regular WIAA rules on serving apply in all 7th and 8th grade meets.

- 9) **Warm-Up Time.** All teams will be allowed up to ten minutes of warm-up time before their **first** match of the day (combined time, with both teams warming up at the same time, not ten minutes per team), even if that match isn't until later in the day and the meet is running behind schedule by that time. The average warm-up time for a team's subsequent matches will be five minutes combined for the two teams. If a meet is behind schedule, and the next match does not involve a team playing their first match of the day, the tournament director or the match official has the authority to prohibit any warm-up time.
- 10) **Time-Outs.** Each team will be allowed two 30-second time-outs per set.
- 11) **Movement of Coaches.** WIAA rules regarding the movement of coaches during sets will be observed in 6th, 7th and 8th grade matches. In 4th/5th grade matches, one coach (not two or more) will have unfettered movement along the sideline in front of their bench, as well as along the baseline behind the team (but not on the actual playing surface). The liberalized rule in 4th/5th grade matches is intended to give coaches at the younger age levels the opportunity to do more targeted coaching and teaching.
- 12) **Libero.** The libero will be allowed in 7th and 8th grade meets during the Spring 2026 season. WIAA and National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) rules will apply. Use of the libero is prohibited in 6th and 5th/4th grade matches.
- 13) **Coin Toss/Bench Selection.** WIAA rules generally apply relative to coin tosses and bench selection. Under WIAA rules, both issues are dependent on who is the home team. Since most WIVL matches involve no home team, which team will be the home team is determined as follows:
- In any match involving the host community, that team is the home team, even if a host is fielding more than one team at a given meet.
 - During meets on even-numbered dates (i.e., March 14, March 28, April 4, April 18 and May 2), of the two teams in a given match, the community/school (as listed on the official schedule printed on the League's website), with a name whose first letter is listed highest in the alphabet ("A" before "B", "B" before "C", etc.) is the home team.
 - During meets on odd-numbered dates (i.e., March 7, March 21, April 11, April 25 and May 9), of the two teams in a given match, the community/school with a name whose first letter listed is lowest in the alphabet ("T" before "S", "S" before "R", etc.) is the home team.
 - The home team has the choice of bench for the first match and the visiting captain gets to call the coin toss to see which team serves first in the first match (the winner of the toss has the choice of serving or receiving first).
 - For all third sets in matches, the home captain shall call the toss. The winner of that toss shall choose between serving and receiving, or shall choose the playing area/bench preference for set 3. The loser of the toss shall be given the remaining choice.
 - At the May 9 League Championships for 8th and 7th grade, the highest seed is always the home team (i.e., no preference is given to host teams).
- 14) **Number of Players.** *Inconsistent* with WIAA rules, in all meets except the League Championships, if a team does not have at least six players on the surface at the start of a match

(or at any time during the match), the set will continue and there will be no forfeit. If one of the teams has less than four players, either team can choose to discontinue the match and the match will be forfeited by the team with the shortage of players. Even in these situations, if both teams want to proceed, the set will be played for fun. The exception to this Rule D-15 is during the League Championship Tournament for 8th and 7th grade teams, where WIAA rules requiring at least six players be available to take the floor at the start of the first set of a match will be enforced and a forfeit declared where appropriate.

- 15) **Substitutions.** The WIVL generally tracks with the WIAA's rule on substitutions. However, we want to avoid the situation where a coach substitutes on every dead ball, or every other dead ball, as a means to get a multitude of players on the bench into a set. While we want coaches to have the flexibility to make substitutions, it does not help the flow of the set to rotate 12, 14 or 16 players onto the court in every set. This lengthens each set and stops the set from developing any flow or rhythm. As a result, the official has the authority to deny a coach the opportunity to substitute on certain dead balls, and force substitutions to be made in groups (i.e., six play stoppages to substitute three players at a time is much less disruptive to the flow of the set than 18 individual substitutions). Individual substitutions for strategic reasons, or to get a smaller number of players into a match, will not be discouraged. Teams with a large number of players should consider fielding more than one team at a given meet or rotating which girls attend which meets, to avoid excessive substitutions.