

New volleyball rule makes lives of setters easier, extends rallies

By Olivia Lee

A new rule for high school volleyball makes setters' lives easier and allows longer rallies.

According to Jeff Stauss, assistant director of Nebraska Schools Activities Association, removing the double contact rule will make it easier for officials to stay consistent.

"Potentially the largest flashpoint between officials and coaches was the call of a "double contact," when a setter would set the ball to a teammate, and the ball would come out of the setter's hands with rotation," Stauss said.

Sophomore setter Jersey O'Brien said that she has struggled with two-hand touches in the past. O'Brien said that it is "less pressure" now that she does not have to make the perfect set every time.

Freshman setter Hadley Havelka may not have struggled as much with double hits, but it still affects her playing style in a different way. According to Havelka, there is more to work for, because the position is more open to anyone since double hits will not be called.

"It takes the pressure off," Havelka said, "but it is hard because anyone can set now."

When Mead's head coach Keshia Havelka heard about this rule, she was worried it would take the skill out of the position, but so far, she has not seen that. She feels that some positives can come out of this rule.

“Our players can gain confidence without the fear of making an error,” coach Havelka said.

The NSAA was not the organization that changed this rule. Rather, Stauss said this is a national rule change made by the National Federation of High School Sports.

“I believe it will bring consistency to the high school game while also aligning rules codes across the different levels of volleyball – club, high school and college,” Stauss said.

The rule change allows longer rallies for a team to have all three hits on their side. With the opportunity to use all three hits, the athletes can have the potential to be scrappier.

“Players can make a lot more pursuit, scrappy plays which equate to longer rallies,” coach Havelka said. “Setters can use their hands freely and remain confident that as long as they are delivering a ball to their hitters, they are doing their job.”

Olvia Lee

Mead High School