



Carolina Region Rating Team Notes

PREPARATION

- Before you arrive at your rating site, review the Critical Errors List, as well as the rating sheets (particularly if you haven't rated recently). These documents are attached.
- Get plenty of rest (mentally, emotionally and physically). We expect candidates to be at their best, and they expect the same from us.
- If you arrive at the site to work as a referee before the rating session, or if you stay afterwards, remember that you are viewed as a member of the Rating Team. Referees and staff will be watching, so we must make the right decisions with our on- and off-court behavior.

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE RATING PROCESS

- There are no "0" matches! For matches that have few decisions/challenges and little pressure, the candidates must perform well. Focus on their signals/mechanics, teamwork, eye contact and communication.
- Be at your court to observe captains meeting and warm-ups.
- Do not discuss a candidate's status with anyone -- fellow referees, or tournament staff. Those conversations take place only among the raters/rating team.
- We must speak with a unified voice when discussing techniques, protocols and procedures that are specifically covered by USAV; same for rules and interpretations; we should use the phrase "the USAV technique/protocol/mechanic is...". When in doubt, please ask the Ref Chair directly as opposed to asking another rater; it's better to get information from one source.
- The process includes a certain amount of training, but ultimately each candidate must demonstrate that they have come prepared, and they must show improvement (as appropriate) during the rating process.
- The ratings are not a cumulative average of scores in each position. Each match is evaluated individually.
- For upgrades, you need to establish a match score, determine pass/fail and make the points work. We all have varying methods of scoring a match – i.e., start at 100 and deduct, start at 85 (Regional) or 80 (Provisional) and add, etc. Extremely high/low scores need justifiable cause. 100% means "a perfect match" – there aren't too many of those. When failing someone, it's not necessary to give them below 80%, for example.
- **REMEMBER, we will NOT be giving candidates their scores during the debrief. Likewise, we should not indicate to them that they are "doing well" or "having issues". Only review pertinent match details, and give them 2-3 things they did well, and also 2-3 things they must work on. When you turn in the rating sheets to me, you should have the score recorded in the designated box at the top of the sheet and the numbers filled out to the left.** Your rating notes MUST support a failing score.
- Complete all preliminary information at the top of the rating sheet!!
- In the past, we have seen scores that are too high during the first or second rating. Give the candidate room to improve instead of starting them with high scores right from the start. "Easy" matches shouldn't necessarily equate to a high score. (See below for more debrief info.)

DURING A RATING MATCH

- Watch a few points in the match to “absorb” before beginning comments.
- When training/evaluating, you may offer feedback during a match, but do NOT interrupt the flow of the match. When rating for an upgrade, do not become involved in a match or offer feedback while a match is in progress, i.e., during a time-out or between sets.
- If a protest occurs, do not become involved unless asked by a Head Referee.
- **Be aware of your surroundings and those sitting near you; avoid commentary that may be overheard by any candidate, another referee, or a spectator; keep your notes/rating sheets covered; turn in rating sheets immediately. You will NOT be paid by the region until your rating sheets are completed correctly and turned in to the Ref Chair.**
- Coaches who know us may turn to us to ask questions or to complain about a referee that we’re rating. Be wary of these situations – candidates watch us, and we don’t want them to have the perception that we have thrown them under the bus.
- A single signaling error is not worthy of comment during a debrief – we all make a mistake from time to time; identify signals that are consistently done incorrectly.
- Change your perspective/move around the court so that you can get different angles on the play. It is acceptable to sit near the scorer’s table if space permits.

DURING THE DEBRIEF

- We can have differing opinions and preferences for transition styles, communication styles, methods of handling unusual situations, etc. We should clarify this by saying, “My preference is...”
- A passing score on-court can turn into a failing score off-court (Professionalism category) if a candidate is argumentative, has a bad attitude or is not receptive to feedback. TRUST YOUR GUT INSTINCTS! We all know of “that problem child” among our cadre. Let’s not add another to the list.
- DO NOT give candidates any indication of how they are doing overall. Limit your comments to the specific matches you observed. Do not suggest that they may/may not receive another rating in either position. Avoid saying things like “you’ll be fine”, or “you’re doing ok”, or “you’ll have to work hard to make it”.
- During the debrief, ask candidates to hold questions until the end (as appropriate).
- Do NOT overwhelm candidates with information. Pick the three biggest points that would have increased their overall score, and emphasize those; record them at the bottom of the page in the Comments space. Highlight 2-3 things that they are doing well, and record them at the bottom of the page.
- Avoid making specific references to a particular point in a set, i.e., “At 15-9...”. Only make those references if the score is of particular importance, i.e., set/match point, both teams’ scores in the 20s, etc.
- DO NOT debate any particular point or become outwardly frustrated during the debrief. Remain calm and stay focused; don’t let the conversation stray. If a candidate is defensive or not receptive, do not drive the point home; let this attitude/demeanor be reflected in their score (Professionalism category). If you have concerns that any candidate may be argumentative, ask another rater (or Ref Chair) to sit in on the debrief with you.
- Use phrases like “From my perspective,” or “From where I was sitting”. This avoids the perception that we see all/know all. It’s subtle and easy for the candidates to swallow.
- Avoid allowing a candidate to “justify” their on-court decisions. When we recognize that they have an excuse or justification that they want to share, nip it in the bud and remind them, “I’m a referee too, so I know how/why that happened. I’m sharing my experience with you so that you might handle it differently the next time.” And obviously, when we ask them a question as to why they did something, we should allow them a reasonable explanation.

- Ask candidates to bring a notebook to their debriefs. Make mental notes of the candidates who do not bring a notebook, and let me know afterward. If they are training because they are new, please suggest that they bring something to write with next time. Candidates for upgrades should always bring a notebook.
- Regarding copies of the rating sheets – The Ref Chair will send each candidate a summary of their ratings. If copies are requested, I do my best to scan them and forward via email. Hence, be aware of any comments you make on the sheets! As a rule of thumb, copies of the rating sheets are not provided to candidates unless there are extenuating circumstances. We view the rating sheets as “internal documents” for use by a rater to facilitate the debrief.
- Make note of any techniques/procedures that might be areas of concern. We'll include them as POE next year. Also, for the VRT blog and training, pay attention for recurring issues that we can address to the masses through the training site.
- Upgrade candidates will sign the bottom of the rating sheet after the debrief. NO SCORE will be included at that time. Training new officials does NOT require a signature
- You will also notice a box in the lower right corner (“Recommended Level of Play for this Referee”). I would like your opinion as to the highest level of play that the candidate can comfortably work

GENERAL NOTE

- If you have time and when appropriate, mingle with the officials that are working the event. The perception is the Rating Team is a bunch of stuck up referees. I know we cannot change the perception of some people.
- Be careful of conversations about candidates in the ref room.
- You might be asked to do re evaluations. If this is the case, please make sure you fill out your sheets as you would a referee candidate's sheet. 3 points at the bottom of things they did well and things to improve on. If you fail someone, your sheet must reflect your decision. Re evaluations are a pass/fail. Please tell the official if they passed or were unsuccessful.
- Rater attire - When rating you must wear professional attire. While evaluating you can wear shorts or pants and tennis or dress shoes (No flip flops) When selecting your attire (outside of the shirts) think about professionalism.
- If you are consuming alcohol, you are NOT allowed to wear any attire that reflects that you are a rater or official. A plain USA Volleyball shirt or jacket is ok.