

## Collegiate Beach Volleyball Suggested Format June 2008



- a. Collegiate beach is a team sport with flighted competition—unlike the quasi-individual sport at the pro and Olympic levels. A college team consists of five doubles teams, each pair playing against the similarly ranked pair from the opposing school. The winner of a dual match is the team winning three of the five flights.
- b. Coaches must divide their squad into doubles teams with their best team playing #1, second best #2, etc. As with collegiate tennis, a set of guidelines will be put in place to ensure the integrity of the order and keep coaches from "gaming" the system to win a dual competition.
- c. The #1 doubles team from each school plays a dual or a mini-tourney with the other top doubles teams from each school. The #2's play each other, #3's, #4's, #5's.
- d. In a tournament format, points are awarded for each win in each bracket. The winning team is the one whose doubles teams collectively accumulate the most wins.
- e. A place for flexibility is in the scoring system. Pro beach is 2/3, first two games to 21, 3rd game, if needed, to 15. Teams switch sides of the court every seven points in the 21 point games and every five points in the 15 point games. For dual matches, this scoring is preferred. Each match will take 35-45 minutes. The optimal number of courts for a dual match is three. The time window for a dual match on three courts is similar to 7-inning softball game and lends itself to double headers.
- f. If organizing a tournament, it may be preferable to shorten the matches to guard against fatigue, especially if pool play is used before a tournament bracket. Options include playing 2/3 to 15, or in case of a need for a sudden death format, one game to 15. Student-athletes can easily play two matches a day, and three or four in a shortened scoring format.
- g. A second place to experiment in the interests of participation is in the area of substitutions. Make a format where all of your athletes get a chance to play but protect the integrity of the beach discipline which rewards generalists. For instance, allow substitutions only in the case of injury during a game, or between games. Another option is the soccer rule for substitution where you can come out but not return.
- h. Do not experiment with the numbers of players on a side. Beach volleyball is two players on the court at one time. Anything else is a different game and very confusing to the players and the public.

