



GWAC VOLLEYBALL
2026 SEASON



GWAC PURPOSE

The Girls' Western Athletic Conference (GWAC) is committed to providing a fun yet competitive environment where the young ladies of our community can compete, develop general and advanced skills in specific sports, and learn the values of teamwork, respect, and sportsmanship.

At all times, we, as their leaders, shall conduct ourselves in word and action in a manner that sets a good example and contributes to the girls' roles as young, Christ-centered women firmly rooted in the Catholic faith, stressing the following:

Discipleship – to empower young women to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.

Participation – to draw young women to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.

Growth – to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young woman.

Dear Coach,

Thank you for coaching, and welcome to the Girls' Western Athletic Conference (GWAC). Founded in 1970, the conference organizes leagues for girls' volleyball, basketball, and softball. The conference has 18 member parishes and one affiliate member from the west side of Cincinnati. We hope you and your team enjoy the upcoming season.

If you would like to share thoughts or opinions that could help us continue improving our league, please contact your league representative, who can then discuss them with the other league representatives at the next monthly league meeting. You are always welcome to attend these meetings, which are held on Zoom on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM. Please check our website, www.gwacsports.com, for each month's meeting ID and passcode.

This clinic book contains the updated 2026 GWAC volleyball league rules. If you have any questions about the rules, please reach out to your league contact.

Sincerely,

Girls' Western Athletic Conference

President

Jenny Nie – jenlou@roadrunner.com

Vice President

Eric Fay – erictfay@live.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Bev Rosemeyer – berosemeyer@yahoo.com

RULES – GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

The GWAC follows the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules, with the exceptions and clarifications listed in this book.

Please note: The complete rules are available on the NFHS website: www.nfhs.org/activities-sports/volleyball/

HOME TEAM

- The home team is indicated on your schedule.
- The home team picks its bench; the visiting team takes the other bench.
- The home team serves the 1st set, and the visiting team serves the 2nd set.
- A coin is flipped for the 3rd set; the home team calls the flip.

In keeping with the spirit of our Catholic faith and good sportsmanship, **the home team leads the prayer before each match.**

SCOREKEEPER

The home team provides the official scorekeeper. It is recommended that the visiting team have a representative at the scorer's table to monitor the scoresheet.

SCORESHEET

Copies are available online at www.gwacsports.com. The match winner should keep the scoresheet in case the league needs to verify scores.

LINEUP SHEETS

Copies are available online at www.gwacsports.com. List all eligible players' numbers on the lineup sheet and reflect the serving order at the start of the game. Turn in the lineup sheet to the scorekeeper before each game, and keep it at the scorer's table throughout that game.

LINE JUDGES

Each team must provide a responsible person (high school age or older) to act as an impartial line judge for the entire match. The line judges will meet with the referees before the match to review their duties and responsibilities.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

If only five eligible players are present at game time, a team will be permitted to play with those five. The coach should list all players expected to arrive, even if they are not present at game time, and should indicate on the lineup sheet which position will be left empty to start the game. **Each time the empty position rotates into the serving position, the opposing team will be awarded a point and a side-out.** When an eligible player listed on the lineup sheet arrives, she will be substituted into the empty position. If six players are available to start the game, all six must play.

SUBSTITUTIONS

A team is permitted a total of 18 substitutions per game.

GUEST PLAYERS

To avoid forfeits, the GWAC allows a team to use players rostered on other teams within its organization as Guest Players in league volleyball games, as follows:

1. A team may use no more than two (2) Guest Players.
2. Guest Players must be entered in the #5 or #6 position in the lineup to begin the game.
3. A Guest Player may serve only four (4) serves in a row.
4. A Guest Player cannot play longer than any regular team player.
5. A Guest Player may be pulled up from a younger grade level but cannot play down at a younger grade level. A player from an A-level team cannot be a Guest Player for a B-level team at the same grade level.
6. **Before the start of the game, a coach using a Guest Player must notify the opposing coach, with an official present, that his/her team will be playing with a Guest Player.**

Note: This rule allows games to be played with a full complement of players, avoids forfeits, and improves the balance of play. It is not intended to be used to gain an overt competitive advantage.

TIME-OUTS

Each team is permitted two 60-second time-outs per game. Unused time-outs do not carry forward, and no extra time-outs are awarded.

CAPTAIN'S DUTIES

Each team must designate a captain before the match to take the ground rules. When the ball is dead, the captain may request a time-out, a substitution, or information pertinent to the game.

GAME SETUP

Teams do not switch sides unless a clear competitive advantage exists.

A 5-minute warm-up occurs before the start of every match.

RESCHEDULING

Coaches may not reschedule any games requiring paid officials.

The GWAC will consider a change **ONLY** when a school or church calendar change occurs after scheduling has taken place. The only exception is a conflict with a **SAY soccer team** involved in the fall tournament state finals.

PLAYING TIME

All A and B1 teams must play every team member the equivalent of one game (25 points).

All B teams must give every team member roughly equal playing time (37 points).

A coach who questions whether this is being done should report it to the league contact listed on the back of the schedule. If the league finds that a coach has not been playing all team members, that coach will be suspended for one league game, and the team will forfeit the games from that match.

Any coach who wishes to discipline a girl by not letting her play in a match must inform the opposing coach and the referee before the match starts. Once a player is disciplined, she may not enter the match for any reason.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Any high school girl whose name has appeared on a high school roster may not play for GWAC in that sport in that year.

Important: It is not acceptable to pull players from another team to play a game. You must follow all rules regarding Guest Players.

SCORING

All grade levels use rally scoring: a point is scored each time the ball is blown dead. Each match consists of three games. In the first two games, the first team to reach 25 points or more with at least a two-point margin wins. In the third game, the first team to reach 25 points or more with a two-point margin wins, or the first team to reach 30 points wins, regardless of margin.

SERVING AREA

For 5th & 6th grade A, 7th & 8th grade, and High School, the serving area is behind the end line, from sideline to sideline.

Exception: 5th & 6th grade B and B1 teams may use the service area line (step-in box), which extends 5 feet from the end line toward the net and 10 feet in from the right sideline toward the center of the court.

BALL

The home team provides the game balls. The GWAC allows the colored-panel ball for competition; use is optional and up to the home team. All 3rd & 4th and 5th & 6th grade levels use Volley Lite balls.

NET HEIGHT

The top of the net shall be level, at the following heights:

Level	Top of net (measured to the floor)
5th & 6th grade	7' 0"
7th & 8th grade	7' 4 1/8"
High School	7' 4 1/8"

This rule must be somewhat flexible, especially when a team must use a public facility as its home gym. At some schools, the net cannot be adjusted to the heights above. Please be tolerant!

LET SERVES

Let serves are legal serves. A let serve is a served ball that hits the net, without touching the net antenna, and continues across the net into the opponent's court.

LIBERO

Optional use of a libero (a specialized defensive position) is permitted at the High School, 7th & 8th A, 7th & 8th B1, and 5th & 6th A competition levels only. Teams using a libero must provide a separate libero tracker for each game in which a libero is used. The libero must wear a solid, numbered shirt in a contrasting color.

UNIFORMS

All girls on a team must wear shirts and shorts of identical color and style. All uniforms must have a number readily visible on the front and back. If shirts and/or compression shorts are worn under the official uniform, they must all be of the same color.

All players must wear kneepads and non-marking gym shoes. Only stud earrings are allowed this year. Chewing gum is not permitted on the court.

PLAYER SAFETY

Ohio's law regarding concussions in youth sports took effect on April 26, 2013. The law aims to ensure proper recognition of and response to possible head injuries in youth sports programs. The Sport Coordinator for your parish is responsible for making sure that all GWAC coaches in your program have registered for and completed

the required online course before they coach. Go to www.gwacsports.com for a link to the online concussion training.

BALLS PLAYED OFF THE BODY

A ball that hits any part of a player's body is legal and may continue in play.

REPORTING SCORES

League standings are determined by the team winning the match (best two out of three games); however, all three games are played. The winning team must report the win within 72 hours after the match. Failure to do so will result in the team not being credited with the win in the league standings. A coach who wins by forfeit must still report the win within 72 hours to receive credit.

New Auto Coach Scoring Email

- The new system sends an email to coaches (primary and alternate) right after a game ends.
- Click the "Score This Game" link in the email.
- Type the scores on the page.
- Click the Score button.

Either team can report the score. If you have any problems, please contact your league contact or send an email to cincygwac@gmail.com.

You can also report your score through the TeamSideline app, available from the App Store or Google Play.

WEATHER

To check a game's status, visit the league website for updated information.

AWARDS

1st and 2nd place awards are distributed in all competitive leagues at the end of league play for all sports, except possibly in the case of a tie in the final league standings.

If there is a tie for 1st and/or 2nd place in the final league standings, the following rules apply:

- If two or more teams are tied for 1st place, all of those teams will receive 1st place awards, and no 2nd place awards will be given.
- If there is a single 1st place team and two or more teams tied for 2nd place, the league winner will receive 1st place awards and all of the teams tied for 2nd place will receive 2nd place awards.

FORFEITS

If your team cannot make a scheduled game, the forfeiting coach must contact Jenny Nie, who will inform the opposing coach. Coaches should not pay any officials' fees at the game site if a forfeit occurs. The forfeiting school will be billed for officials from both schools.

OFFICIALS

The GWAC recruits high school-aged or older individuals as volleyball officials. They are trained and tested through both written and practical assessments. As a coach, you must understand, and make your girls understand, that a referee has complete authority from the moment he/she takes charge of the game until the game ends. The referee has authority over the game, the players, the coaches, and those observing the game, and may take any action deemed necessary to ensure a fair game. This may include ejecting fans, coaches, or players at any time.

Please be patient and understanding. Common sense tells you you will occasionally see a bad call, and we know you'll sometimes feel compelled to question it. We ask only that you extend these officials the courtesy and respect that their position deserves.

CRITICISM OR COMPLAINTS CONCERNING OFFICIALS

If you have a concern about an official's officiating, we ask that you email your complaint to your league representative. Include the official's name, your name, school, and division, the game date, and the nature of the complaint.

PROTEST RULE

1. Any protest must be placed with the game's official(s) and the opposing coach at the time of the infraction. Both coaches and the official(s) must sign the official scorebook. From that time on, the game will be played under protest. At the end of the game, the official will take this page from the official scorebook and submit it to the Director of Officials. **No protest may be lodged after the game ends.**
2. The protesting coach must submit the reason for the protest, in writing or by email, to the league contact listed on the back of the schedule within twenty-four (24) hours after the game. A protest fee of \$25 must accompany the protest. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be refunded.
3. The protest board will consist of the Director of Officials and two impartial parish representatives from that sport's committee.
4. The GWAC President will preside over the protest meeting. Attendees will include the Director of Officials, the protest board, the league contact listed on the back of the schedule, the game official(s) if necessary, and one (1) coach from each team involved in the protest. The league contact will notify everyone required to attend of the meeting date, time, and location.
5. The outcome of the protest will be decided by a majority vote of the three members of the protest board. A protest concerning an official's decision(s) or judgment call(s) will NOT be considered; a rule interpretation may be protested. If a protest is upheld, the game resumes from the point of the protest, or the protest board may take other appropriate action.

CONDUCT OF PLAYERS, COACHES & SPECTATORS

Misconduct by players, coaches, or parents is any behavior or action that contradicts the purpose and goals of the GWAC.

If the GWAC receives a written or verbal complaint stating that, in the opinion of the complainant, a coach, player, or anyone else connected with a team has conducted him/herself in an unsportsmanlike manner, that person may be notified of the complaint by the GWAC President. Depending on the nature of the complaint, an investigation may be made. If, after an investigation, the GWAC league representatives deem the complaint valid, appropriate

disciplinary measures can and will be taken. Discipline may range from a warning to suspension from any further league activity for the remainder of the season.

Any coach, team member, or other team-affiliated individual ejected by an official for unsportsmanlike conduct during a game will be suspended not only for the remainder of that game, but also from participating **in that team's next league-sanctioned game**. During the suspension, the individual will not be permitted on the premises. Failure to comply will result in the team's forfeiture of the game(s) played during noncompliance.

The individual being disciplined is entitled to appear before the GWAC league representatives, either during the investigative process (if feasible) or to appeal any disciplinary action taken after the investigation is complete. Any appeal must be in writing, and any disciplinary measures imposed by the GWAC must be complied with pending completion of the appeal and appearance before the GWAC. Failure to comply with disciplinary measures will result in the team's forfeiture of any games played during noncompliance.

If a coach, parent, or fan is ejected for any reason, they must leave the premises.

For additional information on the Code of Conduct, please visit the download page on our website or the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (AOC) page: resources.catholicaoc.org/wpfd_file/charter-on-catholic-youth-athletics

AVENUES OF COMMUNICATION

Questions or Concerns within the GWAC

Contact, in this order:

1. Your Volleyball Coordinator
2. Your Parish GWAC Representative
3. Your GWAC League Contact::

5th & 6th grade levels – Jenny Nie, jenlou@roadrunner.com

7th & 8th grade levels & High School – Bev Rosemeyer, berosemeyer@yahoo.com

Questions or Concerns for Your Athletic Board

- Questions regarding team selection and try-outs
- Questions regarding coach selection
- Conflicts within your school's teams or volleyball program
- A conflict with your coordinator (go to your AC for advice or support)

Questions or Concerns Regarding Officiating

Please see the Officials section of this booklet.

GWAC MEMBERS

FOUNDING MEMBERS – 1970

Our Lady of Victory	St. Catharine
Our Lady of Visitation	St. Jude
St. Antoninus	St. Martin

CURRENT MEMBERS – 2026

Our Lady of Grace	St. Ignatius Loyola
Our Lady of Lourdes	St. James – White Oak
Our Lady of Victory	St. John – Dry Ridge
Our Lady of Visitation	St. John the Baptist – Harrison
St. Aloysius – Bridgetown	St. John Paul II (formerly St. Bart)
St. Antoninus	St. Jude
St. Bernard – Taylor Creek	St. Lawrence
St. Catharine of Siena	St. Teresa of Avila
St. Clements	St. Williams
St. Dominic	

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Oak Hills Youth Association	Three Rivers Association
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GWAC WEBSITE

www.gwacsports.com