As we enter this season with more and more schools using CRS, I want to remind referees and coaches of the importance of being very specific as to what is being challenged. It is not enough for a coach to say, “I want to challenge that touch” or, “I want to challenge a net”. If that verbiage is used, clarification must be obtained as to which specific play the coach is challenging. You must hear verbiage such as, “I’d like to challenge that there was a touch by the opponent on the attack that ended the rally.” Or, “I am challenging that the opponent was in the net mid-way through the rally, as we attacked the ball.” There must be mutual agreement between the coach and the second referee as to exactly what is being challenged.

Additionally, when a rally ends that has the potential to be challenged, the conversation between the second referee and coach should be brief before one of two things happens; either a challenge is lodged, or play resumes. Plays that can be challenged involve judgment, and you would not entertain extended conversations or delay the resumption of play for other judgment calls. There is only one difference in this brief conversation during a CRS match - if it is one of the four reviewable decisions, you may want to end the conversation by saying something like, “If you’d like to challenge the decision coach, you have two challenges left. Otherwise we need to resume play.”

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