



Athlete and Coach Pathways Committee April 2, 2026

Minutes

Attendees: Brian Newman (Chair), Dawna Sales (Vice-Chair), Kerry MacDonald, Monette Boudreau-Carroll, Keith Hansen, Megan Conroy, Dave Preston

Regrets: Matt Krueger, Josh Nichol

- (1) Rules of the Game Working Group Update
 - (a) FIVB Test Rules
 - (i) FIVB rule changes are only approved at Congress every two years.
 - (ii) Limited correlation between FIVB (one court, audience focused) and VC (development and participation focused)
 - (b) Rules Proposed:
 - (i) Double Contact permitted on 2nd contact if ball doesn't cross the net
 1. Approved by ACPC for implementation in the 2026-2027 Season of play
 - (ii) 2 Libero at 18U
 1. Approved by the ACPC for implementation in the 2026-2027 Season of play with the following caveat: if using two liberos, playing roster is strongly recommended to be 13-15 athletes.
 - (c) AB Pilot Update
 - (i) Survey will be sent to athletes, coaches, and parents for feedback
 1. Results will be provided to Rules of the Game working group in mid-May.
 - (d) Communication Strategies
 - (i) VC Website link that will eventually include the following.
 1. FIVB rule tests
 2. Rules change process (currently in draft stage)
 3. VC Rules of the game that are in discussion, along with rationale. (currently in draft stage)
 - (ii) Included in Nationals Newsletter
 - (e) *ACTION: Substitution rules to be considered based on tiering level of play vs age category.*
- (2) Coaching Committee Update
 - (a) Composition
 - (i) Coach Educators, PTA Representatives (Megan and Jerome), Large Club Technical Staff, Curriculum Design specialists.
 - (b) Objectives
 - (i) Provide feedback, direction and support to coach education across Canada
 1. Including NCCP, Non-NCCP, and Coach Education Eligibility
 - (c) Priorities
 - (i) Restructure of coach education delivery, implementation of Master Coach Developers
- (3) Canada Games Considerations



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- (a) The ACPC did not feel that Beach was represented on the committee to proceed with any recommendations on age category.
- (b) All discussion and feedback were presented for implementation for 2029 based on the technical package changes required to be finalized before release (3 years out from Games).
- (c) Survey Results
 - (i) Survey results gathered from PTA technical staff including the following results:
 - 1. U19 – 1, U18 – 4, U17 – 7 (no response from BC)
 - 2. Additional PTA feedback provided (summarized using Copilot):
 - a. **Potential Benefits of Moving to U17 Canada Games**
 - i. Streamlines programming by eliminating the need for a separate Canada Games (CSG) team; the 17U team naturally becomes the CG team.
 - ii. Provides increased training reps and exposure for 18U athletes and a clearer recruitment window for post-secondary coaches.
 - iii. May encourage younger athletes to enter and stay in the club system.
 - iv. Aligns girls' Canada Games eligibility at 17U with athlete realities:
 - v. Fewer conflicts with NCAA departures and declining interest after Grade 12.
 - vi. Better alignment with U19 National Team programming.
 - vii. Enables consistent provincial programming year to year.
 - viii. Makes the Games a meaningful “final” competitive experience, aligning with Grade 12 athletes' last club season.
 - b. **Concerns and Risks**
 - i. Showcases less physically developed athletes at the Canada Games level (though other sports operate this way).
 - ii. Many top male athletes do not begin club volleyball until 15U, which may limit the talent pool at 17U.
 - iii. Moves the Games away from a peak performance stage toward a more developmental phase, potentially lowering overall competition quality.
 - iv. National Team programs involving 18U athletes may conflict with running the Canada Games in the same age group.
 - c. **Provincial and Pathway Considerations**
 - i. Quebec's pathway relies heavily on the CEGEP system (ages 18–20/21), where the provincial federation plays a key development role.



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- ii. Moving the Games to U17 would weaken alignment with Quebec's high-performance structure and remove a major competitive target for 18–20-year-old athletes.
 - iii. Athlete loss to U SPORTS or NCAA varies by province; a national shift to U17 may solve issues for some provinces while creating misalignment for others.
 - d. **Strategic Questions**
 - i. Ongoing trend toward younger age categories raises the question of whether greater emphasis should instead be placed on older competitions (U19, U21) that better support transition to high performance, National Teams, and senior volleyball.
- (ii) Discussion:
- a. The role of the Canada Games in the development system for volleyball has changed due to the following:
 - i. *Consistent Age Class national team programs for both genders*
 - ii. *Canada Cup is offered as an annual high-performance event that is controlled by Volleyball Canada with various age groups and flexibility to manage the competition structure*
 - iii. *Few PTAs offer programming beyond 17 years of age due to cost and commitment of athletes.*
 - b. With increased programming at the 17U and lower level, the pool of athletes exposed to high performance pathway will improve the opportunity for a quality training environment.
 - c. It will be inevitable to avoid conflicts with national team programming, and post secondary commitments and with a larger pool of athletes at the 17u age category, the impact will be reduced.
 - d. The opportunity for 17U athlete to return to their communities with the experience and leadership gains of the Canada Games, will positively impact the sport at the community level.
 - e. Athletes will be better prepared to continue in their high-performance journeys.
 - f. The team composition across Canada would better reflect the top athletes in the age category (best on best) vs limited due to athlete participation restrictions.
- 2. Coach: Advanced Development Certified, same gender as part of staff compliment.
 - 3. Rule Changes from Tech Package: 5 – 6 months out, 3 – anytime, 6 – 1 year out from games.
 - 4. Decision:



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- a. The athlete and coach pathways will recommend to the Canada Games Council that the age for 2029 indoor will be U17 (born in 2012) and Advanced Development Certified Coach Requirements.
- b. Beach – sub committee will be formed to review and provide recommendations in advance of 2033.

(4) Next Meeting: June 2026